

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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January 24, 2017
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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
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Mark Treyger
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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Amy Way

Executive Director of the Office of Teacher
Recruitment and Quality within the Division of
Human Resources

Anna Commitante

Senior Executive Director of the Office of
Curriculum Instruction and Professional Learning

Karen Alford

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Karen DeMoss

Bank Street College

Shael Suransky

President of Bank Street College

David Bloomfield

Lesley Guggenheim

New Teachers Project

Charissa Fernandez

Teach for America

Leonie Haimson

Class Size Matters

Maria Gill

Coalition for Educational Justice

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

Josephine Ofili

Bronx Borough President Appointee for CEC9

DeJohn Jones

Parent Action Committee

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2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Good afternoon
3 everybody, and let me just start off by saying the
4 absence of Council Members is probably due to the
5 fact that they're receiving a budget briefing by the
6 Mayor right at this very moment. So, I do expect
7 them to be in as soon as that briefing is over and to
8 have questions as well. But with that said, let me
9 do my introduction. Good afternoon and welcome to
10 today's Education Committee Oversight Hearing on
11 Teaching Recruitment and Retention in the New York
12 City Public School System. There is currently a
13 nationwide teacher shortage for two basic reasons:
14 fewer people are pursuing teaching as a career and
15 more teachers are leaving the profession. Research
16 shows that enrollment in teacher preparation programs
17 has decreased by 35 percent in the past five years,
18 and about a half a million teachers move between
19 schools or leave the teaching profession annually
20 costs in the United States an estimated 2.2 billion
21 dollars a year. This problem is further exacerbated
22 by the simultaneous increase in student enrollment.
23 In addition to this nationwide decline in teacher
24 supply, specific subject areas such as math and
25 science are experiencing significant teacher

1 shortages. There's also a shortage in the supply of
2 Special Education teachers, bilingual teachers and
3 English as a second language educators. Teachers of
4 color are also in short supply nationwide. According
5 to the latest national data in the 2011-2012 school
6 year, 82 percent of public school teachers were
7 white. Not only is it important for children of
8 color to have teachers of the same race and cultural
9 identity to serve as role models, research also shows
10 that having teachers of color benefits all students
11 by helping to dispel negative stereotypes and
12 preparing students to live and work in a multi-racial
13 society. In addition, studies have found that black
14 students are more likely to be disciplined by white
15 teachers while having a black teachers actually
16 decreases the chances that black students will be
17 suspended. The lack of teacher of color in New York
18 City where approximately 85 percent of students are
19 non-white is a serious problem. According to data
20 from the Independent Budget Office, during the
21 2014/15 school year, 59 percent of New York City
22 teachers were white, 18 percent of teachers were
23 black, 15 percent were Hispanic, and six percent were
24 Asian. To address the lack of teacher diversity, the
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1 City launched the New York City Men Teach Initiative
2 in 2015 to recruit more men of color to the City's
3 teaching force. We hope to hear more about the
4 progress of this initiative today. Recent changes in
5 New York State certification process have also
6 created obstacles for many aspiring teachers,
7 particularly applicants of color. Previously, New
8 York State teaching candidates took three exams, but
9 they must now pass four, including the new teacher
10 performance assessment, an exam that requires
11 candidates to submit a portfolio of work and a video
12 of them teaching to be reviewed. According to press
13 reports, 20 percent fewer applicants are meeting the
14 new requirements. While recruiting teachers is a
15 major concern, many researchers argue that teacher
16 retention is even more important. Some have used the
17 analogy of a bucket with holes in it to describe the
18 teacher supply problem. The bucket is losing water,
19 and simply pouring more water into the bucket is not
20 enough unless the holes are patched, too. In the
21 past, teacher retirement was the main reason teachers
22 left the profession, but in recent years resignation
23 has been the leading cause of teacher departure.
24 Teachers leave the profession for a variety of
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1 reasons, including compensation, teacher preparation
2 and support, and teaching conditions. Research has
3 shown that most teachers leave because of poor
4 teaching conditions, including such things as a lack
5 of support from the school administration, student
6 discipline problems, lack of teacher input into
7 school decision-making process, lack of adequate
8 curriculum, supplies and other resources, and large
9 class sizes. Class size is a particular problem in
10 New York City which has the largest class sizes in
11 the state. In fact, New York City is the only
12 district in the state that was required to develop a
13 class-size reduction plan and to use state Contract
14 for Excellence, or C4E funding, to reducing class
15 sizes starting in 2007. Unfortunately, due to the
16 recession, this funding stream was never fully phased
17 in, and as a result, class sizes in K-3 reached a 15-
18 year high in 2013 according to the Education Law
19 Center. When I was teaching I had classes as large
20 as 38 students, and many teachers today still have
21 extremely large classes. Not only is this
22 unacceptable for our students, these large classes
23 are contributing to the exodus of city teachers to
24 other districts. In addition, according to a survey
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1 administered by the National Education Association,
2 increased emphasis on standardized testing also
3 drives teachers to leave the profession. The NEA
4 found that the focus on high-stake testing has
5 squeezed out much of the curriculum that could make
6 schools an engaging and enriching experience for
7 students and teachers have been forced to dilute
8 their creativity to teach to the test. Research
9 shows that the highest rates of teacher turnover are
10 at high-poverty, high-minority schools and for new
11 teachers. Unfortunately, we don't have current data
12 from the Department of Education on teacher turnover,
13 because they don't publish any of this data on their
14 website, but in 2014/15 more than one-third of new
15 teachers left within the first five years of
16 teaching. I do know that many of these teachers
17 leave New York City to teach on Long Island and other
18 areas. We train them, and then they take that
19 training and go elsewhere. Today, we want to learn
20 more about what supports are being provided for new
21 teaches, such as mentoring and other induction
22 programs. The cost of teacher turnover based on
23 expenses to recruit, hire, process, and train
24 teachers is huge, and we hope to get information
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1 today on those costs as well as the cost-
2 effectiveness of various recruitment and retention
3 strategies. At today's hearing, the Committee will
4 examine the DOE's current policies, practices and
5 incident to recruit and retain teachers. We also
6 look forward to hearing testimony from parents,
7 students, educators, advocates, unions, and others
8 about their concerns and recommendations for
9 recruiting and retaining teachers. I would like to
10 remind everyone who wishes to testify today that you
11 must fill out a witness slip which is located on the
12 desk of the Sergeant at Arms near the front of this
13 room, and to allow as many people as possible to
14 testify, testimony will be limited to three minutes
15 per person. And please note that all witnesses at
16 this hearing will be sworn in. And we've been joined
17 by Council Member Vincent Gentile from Brooklyn. And
18 Council Member Garodnick is here as well. So, I want
19 to thank them for coming. So, if I can ask our
20 panelists to raise your hand please so I can swear
21 you in? Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the
22 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and
23 to answer Council Member questions honestly? Okay.
24 And would you like to begin by identifying yourself?
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2 AMY WAY: Good afternoon, Chair Dromm and
3 members of the New York City Council Committee on
4 Education. My name is Amy Way, and I'm the Executive
5 Director of the Office of Teacher Recruitment and
6 Quality within the Division of Human Resources at the
7 New York City Department of Education. I am joined
8 by Anna Commitante, Senior Executive Director of the
9 Office of Curriculum Instruction and Professional
10 Learning within the DOE's Division of Teaching and
11 Learning. We are pleased to be here today to discuss
12 this important issue. While the strength and
13 diversity of our schools and neighborhoods makes New
14 York City an attractive place to teach, we are
15 confronted with challenges common to public school
16 systems across the country, including a national
17 shortage of qualified teachers, particularly in high-
18 needs subject areas. The Administration has taken a
19 vigorous proactive approach to recruiting high-
20 quality educators to ensure that all our students
21 have the excellent teachers they deserve.
22 Recruitment and retention is central priority at
23 every level of our organization. Our partners, some
24 of whom are in the room today includes schools of
25 education, community-based organizations, our

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2 superintendents, and most importantly, the nearly
3 78,000 educators who are in our classrooms today. In
4 a system as large as ours, the driving experience for
5 teachers and students is at the school level, while
6 in the past, candidates were recruited centrally and
7 assigned to schools often without regard to the
8 wishes of teachers or principles involved. Today,
9 teacher hiring is a matter of mutual consent between
10 the candidate and a school. The concept of mutual
11 consent is critical to a schools' ability to deliver
12 a high-quality education for its students and remain
13 a competitive and desirable place to work. The
14 empowerment of school leaders and teachers to find
15 the best fit for their school communities is an
16 overall strength-- it is an overall strength of our
17 approach. In order to meet the needs of our City's
18 schools, the DOE must hire around 6,000 new teachers
19 before the beginning of each school year. The hiring
20 demands are driven by the scale of our system, growth
21 of teaching positions and priority areas such as Pre-
22 k for All, or changes in requirements for serving
23 English language learners as well as resignations and
24 retirements. These teachers must meet certification
25 requirements set forth by the New York State

1 Education Department. To meet this substantial need,
2 teacher recruitment is not an annual event, but an
3 ongoing process of building short and long term
4 pipelines of high-quality teachers in order to
5 support school-level teacher recruitment and
6 retention. Our system talent needs are highly
7 complex, but we believe the DOE is unmatched in scale
8 and innovation of our efforts. Our recruitment
9 pipeline draws from a variety of sources. We have
10 deep partnerships with over 20 local schools of
11 education, collaborate with local organizations to
12 cast a wider net for teaching talent and engage
13 current DOE talent including the para-professionals
14 who serve students in our classrooms every day. We
15 see talent at all levels of experience, from veteran
16 teachers to current students at institutes of higher
17 education to career-changers, and we are working to
18 build interest in the teaching profession among our
19 high school students. This past school year, we
20 established a relationship with Educators Rising, a
21 national nonprofit organization through with the DOE
22 is creating opportunities for high school students to
23 build teaching skills and establish pathways into the
24 profession with local schools of education. Having a
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2 mix of pathways strengthens the DOE's approach and
3 allows for optimal choices for principals. Our
4 partnership with schools of education and area
5 colleges and universities is especially important to
6 our recruitment efforts, not just in terms of
7 numbers, but in ensuring that new teachers are as
8 prepared as possible to meet the needs of the system
9 and their students from day one. Toward that end, we
10 have regular meetings with leaders of local
11 institutes of higher education together with my
12 colleagues from Division of Teaching and Learning
13 about our instructional initiatives and vision, and
14 our hiring projections. We also share data that
15 provides these schools with useful information on
16 their own graduates and what we know about their
17 pipelines. A centerpiece of our collaborative
18 efforts is to find ways to increase and further
19 develop the opportunities for student teachers to be
20 prepared in our schools in a robust and structured
21 apprenticeship experience. To reach a broad range of
22 potential candidates, we employ extensive marketing
23 strategies including internet, taxi and subway
24 campaigns and small and large-scale events. This
25 past October, the DOE sponsored its first Pathways

1 into Teaching Conference, attended by nearly 1,000
2 interested individuals. Current teachers and
3 principals support our outreach through events and
4 webinars as well. The Chancellor is personally
5 engaged in these efforts and speaks at recruitment
6 events and through videos about her vision,
7 emphasizing that teachers and teacher development are
8 at the center of school success. We do not just wait
9 for summer to begin for this school-based
10 recruitment, especially as evidence shows early
11 hiring to be an important way of attracting the best
12 teachers to school. In 2016 we launched a more
13 targeted early hire program for high-need areas of
14 our system so that schools and candidates could make
15 matches starting in late winter. We provide other
16 supplemental hiring support for the highest need
17 schools, like our renewal schools through targeted
18 events as well as via the Teachers of Tomorrow Grant
19 which provides a financial incentive to attract
20 teachers to these schools. The DOE's field support
21 and superintendent's offices also play an important
22 role in supporting schools as they seek to recruit,
23 select and retain candidates to meet their needs.
24 These offices work to facilitate strong talent
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1 matches between principals and pools of applicants
2 through events, interview opportunities, school
3 tours, and open houses. A robust online tool also
4 allows principals to do their own search and
5 recruitment of an applicant pool. A critical
6 priority in our recruitment work is improving the
7 diversity of our teaching force for our diverse
8 student population, and we have adopted innovative
9 strategies to support this goal. While working with
10 the Mayor's Office we launched the NYC Men Teach
11 Initiative in 2015 with a goal of recruiting 1,000
12 additional men of color in classrooms and pipeline by
13 2018. This initiative involves partnerships with
14 multiple city agencies, the City University of New
15 York and teacher training programs including our own
16 New York City teaching fellows. In addition to
17 working closely with community organizations we have
18 sent recruiters to historically black colleges and
19 other cities including Philadelphia, Atlanta and
20 Chicago, and have sponsored a series of in-person
21 recruiting events, workshops and school visits for
22 candidates. Teachers hired through this initiative
23 will be supported by dedicated mentors through the
24 first year on the job. The overall national shortage
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1 can pose challenges in subject areas such as STEM,
2 Special Education and for English language learners.
3 Alternative routes to teaching are particularly
4 important to our recruitment of candidates in such
5 areas. Our teaching fellows program offers a pathway
6 for individuals with no formal training to become
7 certified and to serve as educators in these shortage
8 areas through a subsidized Master's Degree program.
9 Each year we attract about a thousand new teaching
10 fellows into our schools. We are also able to
11 provide financial support for existing teachers to
12 earn additional credentials to teach in high-need
13 subject areas. Investing in teacher talent is a
14 critical part of this Administration's Equity in
15 Excellence agenda. Special initiatives within our
16 overall recruitment work focus on recruiting
17 candidates to support the City's educational
18 priorities including Pre-k for All and the expansion
19 of Arts Education and physical education instruction.
20 In order to support these special initiatives, as
21 well as the overall increase in education workforce
22 made possible by additional funding to our schools,
23 we negotiated to increase starting salaries by 1,000
24 dollars. This September, a new teacher with a
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2 Master's Degree will earn just under 61,000 dollars,
3 and in September 2018, a starting salary will
4 increase to 64,000 dollars for those with Master's
5 Degrees. We provide support through every step of
6 the recruitment and hiring process from screening
7 applicants to ensure they meet the state's
8 certification requirements to sponsoring online
9 search tools and in-person recruitment fairs,
10 networking events and interviews. To use the use of
11 additional resources where necessary to facilitate
12 hiring in high-need areas. While we are proud of the
13 progress we have made, we are always seeking to
14 improve. Indeed, the Chancellor is currently
15 discussing recruitment and retention ideas with her
16 Teacher Advisory Committee, which is made up of our
17 Big Apple Fellows who are winners of our Teacher
18 Excellence Award, and the recruitment and retention
19 is a priority echoed throughout the DOE. As I turn
20 this over to my colleague to talk more about
21 retention, I will set the context that despite the
22 complexities articulated, our system retains more
23 than 93 percent of our teachers year over year,
24 significantly outpacing national shortages, excuse
25 me, significantly outpacing national averages. We

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2 look more closely at our-- when we look more closely
3 at our early career teachers, the DOE continues to
4 exceed national statistics by retaining 91 percent of
5 our first year teachers and nearly two-thirds of our
6 teachers over five years. While we recognize there
7 are still challenges in this area, we are on the
8 right track. Thank you for the opportunity to
9 testify today, and I look forward to your questions.

10 ANNA COMMITANTE: Good afternoon Chair
11 Dromm and members of the New York City Committee on
12 education. My name is Anna Commitante. I am the
13 Senior Executive Director of the Office of Curriculum
14 Instruction and Professional Learning. Thank you for
15 the opportunity to testify today, excuse me, about
16 our efforts to support our City's educators to
17 sustain long-term careers in our school. None of us
18 forget the teachers who with a gentle nudge or a kind
19 word convinced us that we could achieve our dreams.
20 One great teacher can truly transform a life. In New
21 York City we have tens of thousands of public school
22 teachers who transform countless lives each day. The
23 student who goes on to become the first person in her
24 family to graduate from college, the student who has
25 a career because a teacher cared enough to see the

1 potential others may have missed, these are the
2 reasons our teachers teach. One of the most
3 important initiatives that Chancellor Farina took on
4 immediately was to shift the culture within our
5 school system from one of competition to one of
6 collaboration. As a former teacher herself,
7 Chancellor Farina understood that in order for
8 teachers to take on the hard work of teaching well,
9 and teaching well is very hard work, they had to be
10 treated as vital and essential partners. Chancellor
11 Farina also reinstated the Division of Teaching and
12 Learning in order to strengthen our ability to impact
13 over 1,800 schools in making real classroom
14 improvements. We firmly believe that in order to
15 achieve our vision of equity and excellence that is
16 ensuring all students regardless of zip code can
17 graduate as critical and independent thinkers ready
18 to succeed in college and careers. We have a
19 responsibility to hire and retain high-quality
20 teachers. Our strategy to support teachers and
21 sustaining long-term meaningful careers in our
22 schools is multi-pronged. First and foremost we are
23 pleased that the United Federation of Teachers
24 contract signed in 2014 provides every school in
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1 every corner of the City with 80 minutes of rigorous
2 weekly professional development. During this time,
3 teachers and principals come together at their
4 schools to engage in deep work to drive classroom
5 improvement. We believe that targeted professional
6 learning surfaced from the ground up and focused on
7 the needs and strengths of each school leads to long-
8 lasting improvement. To support this critical work,
9 one of the first resources we created was the
10 Handbook for Professional Learning, which signaled
11 the end of the drive-by one-day professional
12 development that we knew was not working for our
13 teachers. The handbook provides effective strategies
14 for schools to include teachers in the important
15 decision-making process that determines what they
16 themselves need to be better teachers. The handbook
17 also provides the strongest and latest research on
18 effective professional development, which at its
19 heart is about highly effective instruction in the
20 classroom. Coupled with robust professional
21 development, we provide rigorous high-quality
22 curricula and instructional materials created with
23 and for educators. When teachers have high-quality
24 materials and resources at their fingertip, they can
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2 focus their time and energies on instruction and on
3 implementing and adapting the curriculum to meet
4 students' needs. We are constantly developing
5 citywide resources based on what is needed to plan
6 strong lessons every single day and to support
7 teachers as they focus on and improve their craft.
8 These include a new highly popular and comprehensive
9 K-8 social studies curriculum called Passport to
10 Social Studies, a first of its kind comprehensive
11 English language arts and writing curriculum for high
12 school teachers, a STEM framework along with an
13 updated science scope and sequence and strong
14 literacy resources such as a vocabulary practice
15 guide, and most recently our handbook for independent
16 reading. All of these rich resources are widely
17 available and ultimately help create a common lens
18 around teaching and learning in schools across our
19 city. Our office also organizing large-scale
20 opportunities for thousands of teachers to learn and
21 share targeted content-specific classroom practices.
22 Generally, these events are focused on the use and
23 implementation of the curricula and programs. During
24 the 15/16 school year, our office held over 3,700
25 events for teachers, supervisors and principals

1 citywide and across subject areas attended by over
2 43,000 participants. As a result of these efforts to
3 put real improvements in teaching and learning at the
4 center of our work, in 2016, 38 percent of our
5 students met proficiency standards in English
6 Language Arts, outpacing the state for the first
7 time. The strongest gains were in the earliest
8 grades, third and fourth. Our top priority is to
9 continue building on this progress through more
10 intensive professional development opportunities as
11 well as continuing to develop high-quality resources
12 that we know our teachers need. We believe that an
13 essential part of continuing to build on our progress
14 is by giving our newest teachers ongoing targeted
15 support and development to make sure they can sustain
16 a long and successful career in our schools.

17 Starting in 2014 we expanded training for new
18 teachers from a half day to a full week through our
19 new teacher week. Previously, teachers received
20 about a half day of training. During this entire
21 week of training, teachers are able to choose from
22 among targeted sessions, setting high expectations
23 for teaching and learning. Approximately 6,000 new
24 teachers enter the profession each year, and all of
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1
2 them have access to attend the full week of targeted
3 support from teams and divisions across the
4 Department of Education who are committed to helping
5 them succeed. Research shows that teachers supported
6 by an experienced and talented mentor are more likely
7 to find job satisfaction and continue teaching long-
8 term. The new teacher mentoring program within our
9 Office of Leadership ensure we do exactly that, by
10 providing new teachers with a full year of
11 instructional mentoring from an experienced peer at
12 their school. This consists of 10 months and at
13 least 40 hours of conferring classroom visits and
14 reflecting on teacher practice among other mentoring
15 activities. Each year we train 600 new teacher
16 mentors through a mentor course and currently a total
17 of about 3,500 teacher mentors are trained, excuse
18 me, citywide. School-based mentoring builds
19 teachers' skills and self-confidence by equipping
20 them with practical tools and strategies during that
21 first critical year in the classroom.
22 Simultaneously, this opportunity affords mentors by
23 giving them leaderships-- sorry. This opportunity
24 supports our mentors by giving them a leadership
25 opportunity to expand their impacts beyond their own

1 classrooms. We must also give teachers opportunities
2 to develop and assume additional responsibility.
3 Teacher development goes hand-in-hand with our Equity
4 and Excellence for All agenda, the Mayor and
5 Chancellor's plan to put all students on the path to
6 college and meaningful careers. Teachers ready to
7 grow and take on additional challenges are central to
8 this mission. Elementary school teachers with a
9 strength in literacy instruction can apply to become
10 universal literacy reading coaches where they will be
11 at the forefront of our goal to ensure all students
12 are reading at grade level by the end of second
13 grade. Other elementary school teachers are taking
14 an intensive training to departmentalize math
15 instruction at their schools as part of the Algebra
16 for All initiative. Across the Equity and Excellence
17 initiative, teachers are raising their bar taking on
18 training to teach new advanced placement courses, new
19 computer science courses, and to implement a college-
20 going culture at their schools. These are 21st
21 century skills that will prime our students to
22 succeed after high school. To retain great teachers,
23 we must provide them with opportunities to grow
24 professionally through development and leadership
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2 opportunity. Along with the UFT, we believe that
3 extending educator's skills beyond their individual
4 classrooms can make teachers powerful levers of
5 change for school communities. Our contract
6 established and unprecedented career ladder for
7 teachers, model teachers who create laboratory
8 classrooms, peer collaborative teachers who coach
9 their colleagues and master teachers who drive
10 instructional practices at the school or district
11 level. We are proud to have over 1,200 teacher
12 leaders working across the city with an emphasis in
13 high-need schools. In particular, we have invested in
14 growing teacher leadership at our renewal schools
15 because we know that attracting and retaining great
16 teachers is so important there. We believe that all
17 our teachers deserve the best possible resource as
18 well as ongoing opportunities to grow and learn.
19 That is the key to delivering strong instruction for
20 our 1.1 million students every single day. We are
21 committed to creating strong and collaborative school
22 communities to put every child on the path to success
23 and to achieving our vision of Equity and Excellence
24 for all New York City students. I thank you for the

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2 opportunity to testify before you today, and we are
3 happy to answer any questions that you may have.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, thank you very
5 much both of you for your testimony. And just a
6 couple of thoughts before I go into questions. You
7 know, Ms. Commitante, you mentioned in your testimony
8 about the Chancellor's emphasis on collaboration
9 rather than competition, and I think that's really
10 important. I know for myself as a teacher I would
11 have hesitated to share ideas that worked for me in
12 the classroom if I thought I would be giving away my
13 secrets, so to speak, so that somebody else could get
14 a pay raise or look better in the eyes of the
15 supervisor, whatever it may be. So, I think that the
16 emphasis on collaboration has been one really
17 important change in the approach in the Department of
18 Education, and I see that visibly when I go into
19 schools. So, thank you for that. And you know, I
20 have to say also that for myself as a brand new
21 teacher-- now, this is going back to 1984, but I
22 remember thinking only after I had been teaching for
23 five years when I had that "ah-ha" moment, and I
24 said, "Ah, that's what I was supposed to be
25 teaching." You know, so that's-- those first five

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2 years are really crucial to a teacher's success in
3 the school, I think. I think it really takes that
4 amount of time to learn exactly what it is that
5 you're supposed to be doing in the classroom and
6 imparting that to your students. So, it's a big part
7 I think of the reason why we wanted to hold this
8 hearing today, because I do also have some concerns
9 about how we lose teachers before those five years
10 and the support that's needed, and I know that the
11 Chancellor has made a number of changes within the
12 system to support those teachers, and I just wanted
13 to go over a few of them that were mentioned in the
14 testimony here today as well. Let me before I get
15 started mentioned that we've been joined by Council
16 Member Maisel, Council Member Deutsch, Council Member
17 Levin, Council Member Kallos, Council Member
18 Salamanca, and Council Member Barron, also. And we
19 are also joined by the freshman class from the South
20 Bronx Community Charter High School who I believe is
21 up there in the balcony. Thank you very much for
22 joining us. It's great to have you, especially at an
23 Education Committee hearing. So thank you all for
24 coming in, and I hope that this is beneficial to you.
25 So, I just want to go to the support in the

1
2 curriculum area. When I was teaching, I remember in
3 my closet was left to me was and I inherited the
4 Charlotte Frank books which you may recall, but they
5 were actual lessons on how to go about teaching
6 certain subjects. I found that as the years went on,
7 though, we didn't have that much anymore. Do we
8 provide teachers with that type of specificity in
9 terms of giving them concrete lessons that they can
10 use in the classroom, because I think that that's
11 really important, especially those first few years.

12 ANNA COMMITANTE: Yes, we do. Through
13 our core curriculum program we provide resources and
14 materials to schools that give teachers resources
15 down to the lesson level. We do this for ELA. We
16 have math. As I mentioned earlier, the high school
17 work is very new. We just started that about a year
18 and a half ago, and our newest addition to
19 instructional supports to schools would be our K-8
20 social studies curriculum, which does give teachers
21 support down to the lesson level.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, the Passport to
23 Social Studies, that's for high schools, or?

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2 ANNA COMMITANTE: K-8. We're currently
3 working on the resource for our high schools. It took
4 us two years to develop that resources.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And one of the reasons
6 I wanted to question on that is because especially in
7 the area of social studies, often times that was
8 something that was overlooked, and I think it's
9 really very important to citizenship and just to an
10 understanding of what this country is about. Have
11 those lessons been, you know, defined in terms of the
12 studying of US History?

13 ANNA COMMITANTE: Absolutely.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And is that done on
15 fourth grade level, eighth grade level, 12th?

16 ANNA COMMITANTE: Most of the US History,
17 you start a bit of it in second grade with very New
18 York City focused work. It builds in fourth grade
19 which is much more focused on New York State. By the
20 time we get to seventh and eighth grade it's really
21 full on American social history, and then when we get
22 to 11th grade and high school it's your legitimate
23 American history.

24

25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And I'm also curious
3 to know how inclusive is it of-- let's say LGBT
4 history, African-American history--

5 ANNA COMMITANTE: [interposing] Well, I'm
6 happy to say that one of the reasons we developed our
7 own curriculum was because of our dissatisfaction
8 with what publishers were showing us. We could not
9 find a curriculum that we felt was fair to all of the
10 diversity that we see in New York City. So that's
11 why we gathered our cultural partners in the City,
12 local historians and also many, many teachers, and we
13 all work together to pull this curriculum together,
14 and I believe that it does address diversity in ways
15 that a curriculum hadn't before.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, because I'm very
17 interested in that intersection between LGBT issues
18 and other issues as well. It's something I've been
19 really working hard on. You know, I was also a
20 mentor for a fellow for two years of my career. Can
21 you elaborate further on how that program is going?
22 I know that I lost one of my fellows to Locust Valley
23 basically because of salary. So, can you give me
24 some details about how the New York City Teaching
25 Fellows Program is going?

1
2 AMY WAY: Sure, thanks for the question.
3 So, the New York City Teaching Fellows program
4 remains a critical part of our overall recruitment
5 strategy and fellows account for just under 20
6 percent of our overall-- I'm sorry. It's 1,000 hires
7 a year--

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Out of
9 6,000.

10 AMY WAY: out of our 6,000. Yep. So, in
11 terms of outcomes, you know, teaching fellows are a
12 critical part of our overall teaching community, our
13 retention rates for fellows track very similarly to
14 our overall teaching force. So, while on the
15 individual level, you know, certainly there are
16 instances of people making choices to go elsewhere.
17 We see that they are coming and staying and being
18 successful, taking on leadership positions overtime
19 as well.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, they're currently
21 required to make a two-year commitment to New York
22 City at this time, am I right about?

23 AMY WAY: So, different from other
24 alternative certification programs, the fellows
25 program does not have a service commitment. We--

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] It does
3 not?

4 AMY WAY: No. We hope to, that people
5 come and stay and make a career here and that's what
6 we see in our--

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Is that
8 a change from the past?

9 AMY WAY: You know--

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Because
11 it was my understanding that they had to stay for at
12 least two years.

13 AMY WAY: No, that's-- you may be
14 thinking of another program called Teach for America,
15 which has a more specified commitment.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: so, how long does it
17 take them to get the Master's Degree in the Teaching
18 Fellows Program?

19 AMY WAY: Takes between two and three
20 years depending on the program.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Maybe that's what I'm
22 thinking of, is that it took the two years to get it.
23 But there's no requirement that they stay after they
24 get that Master's Degree?

1
2 AMY WAY: There's no requirement,
3 although people do stay and--

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] And do
5 you have the number of who-- of the retention, how
6 many people stay with us?

7 AMY WAY: So, I can tell you that they
8 track the same way as our overall teacher retention
9 efforts. So, tracking 91 percent in the first year
10 and then three-quarters at three years, and then--

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Three-
12 quarters at three years?

13 AMY WAY: Uh-hm. And then tracking over
14 nearly two-third in the fifth year. I'd be happy to
15 follow up with more specific.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Sure, I would love to
17 get those specifics, and I think in your testimony--
18 just trying to find where it was in the-- yes, here
19 it is, that-- it said, "I will set the context
20 despite the complexities articulated. Our system
21 retains more than 93 percent of our teacher's year
22 over year." How do you get 93 percent figure? Is
23 that after the five years or is that-- does that
24 include the first five years?

1
2 AMY WAY: It includes the first five
3 years. So, that's if we took a snapshot of how many
4 teachers are in New York City one year and then
5 looked at the next year. That's our overall
6 retention is 93 percent.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And so during the
8 first five years, how many teachers do we lose, what
9 percentage?

10 AMY WAY: So we lose roughly 35 percent.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thirty-five percent
12 over the first five years, and do you know the
13 reasons why they're leaving?

14 AMY WAY: So, the reasons are varied. I
15 think for the most part when we've studied this the
16 kind of prevailing reason is personal. So,
17 individual choices to move elsewhere to take on
18 different roles, and we're really focused on all the
19 efforts that through Anna's work as she shared to
20 create supports and opportunities for teachers to see
21 a longer career here.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: The Administration
23 has recognized the importance of teacher diversity in
24 creating New York Men Teach. How much progress has
25

1
2 been made toward the goal of adding 1,000 men of
3 color thus far?

4 AMY WAY: So we are making a lot of
5 progress. Intentionally, the initiative was focused
6 on a pipeline in addition to new hires in our
7 classrooms, knowing that the barriers and challenges
8 for men of color entering the profession were longer
9 term. We looked for longer term solutions that would
10 allow us to build out a pipeline. So, comparing last
11 year to this year's hiring we've had an increase in
12 two percent additional men of color in our incoming
13 cohort of new hires which we're proud about. We know
14 we need to do more work, but we're heading in the
15 right direction.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And what is the number
17 of recruits so far?

18 AMY WAY: So, for this year we have about
19 600 men of color who started this school year.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And that's including
21 the two percent increase over last year.

22 AMY WAY: So, to clarify, the numbers I'm
23 talking about are for recruits for this school year.
24 We're still in the midst of our-- we just are in the
25 early stages of our recruitment season. So I can get

1
2 back to you on what our application numbers are like
3 for today.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Will you be making
5 any changes in this program, or you're confident that
6 the program is going the right way? I was pleased to
7 be able to speak at the opening event, I think it was
8 the beginning of this year or last year.

9 AMY WAY: Yeah, thank you for doing that.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yeah.

11 AMY WAY: So, we are committed to
12 continuous improvement. So, I believe we never get
13 it right, you know, 100 percent the first time. So
14 that as a part of that program we're always looking
15 for ways to improve. This year we're using some of
16 the lessons learned around what was successful for
17 outreach to increase our reach to engagement of color
18 in teaching. We're also looking to engage more of
19 our teachers and principals in our efforts to get
20 feedback from them on ways that we can continue to
21 improve.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, let's go back to
23 teacher recruitment in general. Have you had an
24 increase or decrease in the number of teachers that
25

1
2 have applied for positions in the City over the last
3 few years?

4 AMY WAY: So, this past year we've
5 received just under 20,000 applications for positions
6 in our system, that includes both the alternative and
7 their traditional pathway programs which is a strong,
8 we think, a strong number. However, we are seeing a
9 decline in the applications from recent college
10 graduates of schools of education. That is a concern
11 for us, and I think many of the issues that you spoke
12 about in your opening remarks around the increasing
13 requirements at the state level in addition to the
14 decline in interest in the teaching profession are
15 areas of concern, and we are engaging with schools of
16 education and other partners to really look at that
17 longer term pipeline and how we can build interest
18 and just by way of example, as I mentioned in my
19 testimony, we hosted that first new conference around
20 pathways into teaching to encourage and expose
21 individuals who may not have had-- may have an
22 interest in teaching, but aren't sure either what
23 pathway to take or what it really is like as a
24 profession. We want to provide more information and
25 work with partners to do that.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Can you just walk me
3 through because we're being recorded and this will be
4 seen on television, and I actually get an unusually
5 high number of people who tell me they watch this on
6 a Saturday night, but that being said, how do you go
7 about actually applying for a position? Do you do it
8 online now? I mean, I know that in the old days you
9 go down to 65 Court Street, but I don't think that's
10 true any longer.

11 AMY WAY: Right, so the first step is to
12 go to our TeachNYC website and there you would fill
13 out a profile and provide background information and
14 complete a set of essays and submit a resume and
15 submit additionally preferences around where you
16 might want to work in the system. And from there--
17 and to say not all applicants at the first step may
18 got through that site. Some candidates have
19 relationships with schools and may go directly to a
20 principal, but at some stage in that process,
21 individuals must fill out that application so that we
22 collect information at the front door, and then from
23 there those applicants are available to principals
24 through an online system and we use that database to

1
2 source candidates throughout the peak recruitment
3 season.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, they have the
5 choice of doing it, either getting a principal to
6 nominate them or coming-- or going directly to the
7 site and putting their application online.

8 AMY WAY: So, in terms of a first step,
9 you could either go to a school leader and have a
10 conversation or build a relationship and then you
11 would fill out your application. Either way, someone
12 must-- you must be selected by a principal and that
13 happens at the school level. So, the application
14 provides a set of information that helps someone to
15 quickly kind of get into our system, but that process
16 to get hired happens at the school level.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And what about
18 fingerprinting, how does that work?

19 AMY WAY: So, all new teachers must pass
20 a background check. So, they--

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] They
22 have to pay for that? They have to go to 65 Court,
23 still?

24 AMY WAY: Yes.
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Can you walk me
3 through that as well?

4 AMY WAY: I'd-- I can give you the high
5 level. This is not my particular area of expertise,
6 but just to say they-- you know, we have a welcome
7 center at 65 Court Street where individuals come in
8 and they can get fingerprinted. They pay for that.
9 They must pass a background check as I mentioned in
10 order to become employees. on some instances for
11 certain high priority initiatives like pre-k
12 expansion we've extended hours for candidates or had
13 offsite fingerprinting activities to make sure that
14 that's not overly burdensome, but it's an important
15 step to protect our kids.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, then once that's
17 done and the principal decides that they want to hire
18 someone, they come directly into the school provided
19 all of that stuff has been taken care of. I'm just
20 wondering how that affects the number of minority
21 candidates for positions, since it's based on mostly
22 principal selection. Is there any training of
23 principals around this issue, or how does that work?

24 AMY WAY: So, one other requirement just
25 to make sure it's clear is that everyone who applies

1
2 must have New York State certification. So, in
3 addition to background check they have to have the
4 certification. You know, our-- I guess it would be
5 helpful for you to elaborate more. I think that we
6 work with our principals to ensure that they're
7 picking the best staff for their schools, and we see
8 many principals demonstrating a real priority around
9 increasing the diversity of their teaching force, and
10 last, you know, at the event that you came to and
11 spoke at, you know we had a networking event for
12 principals, and that we had a tremendous amount of
13 interest from principals in our NYC Men Teach cohort.
14 So we think that's really indicative of the interest
15 across the system, and while of course, you know,
16 continued to look at that and make sure that there
17 aren't issues, see that our principals are really
18 seeking to diversify their teaching staff.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Does that make it
20 harder to place teachers in hard-to-staff schools?
21 Because one of the things I'm thinking is that a lot
22 of people would prefer to work in the school in a
23 more well to do area, let's say than in a hard-to-
24 staff school, an impoverished school.

25

1
2 AMY WAY: So, our-- we think our process
3 actually helps us to better serve our high needs
4 schools because we are able to recruit a broad pool
5 of candidates, and then we work with them
6 individually and promote specific events in our
7 harder to staff areas of the city. So, it gives us
8 more of an opportunity to support our schools because
9 we have a go-to set of candidates who we work from
10 and cultivate and work with superintendents and FSCs
11 to really drive up interest in their given district.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you track the
13 number of applicants for particular schools or
14 districts, one versus the other, or is that
15 information not available?

16 AMY WAY: I could follow up with
17 preference information that at the point of
18 application. We do not track. We have no way of
19 tracking kind of how many times a candidate may have
20 expressed interest in a given position at the school
21 level. That's not-- you know, principals manage that
22 in a variety of ways, and it's not something that we
23 track centrally.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, I'm going to-- I
25 have a lot more questions, but my colleagues are here

1
2 also, so I want to give them an opportunity to ask
3 some questions. And we've been joined by Council
4 Member Levine, Council Member Chin, Council Member
5 Rodriguez, and we have questions from Council Member
6 Salamanca, Levine, and Barron. Council Member
7 Salamanca?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Thank you, Mr.
9 Chair. Good afternoon. I represent the South Bronx.
10 One of the-- in visiting my schools, speaking to the
11 teachers, speaking to the principals about retention,
12 one of the main concerns that I hear on a daily basis
13 is teacher parking. Not-- teaching parking not being
14 accessible, and teachers leaving these schools and
15 going to work elsewhere where there is parking either
16 because teachers are concerned that they have to move
17 their cars for alternate side parking. Some teachers
18 I've heard experiences of teachers getting summonses,
19 getting towed, and so I ask well, what's happening
20 with the parking placards? I met with the Chancellor
21 about a month and a half ago. That's one of the
22 questions that I asked her, and she mentioned that
23 there's only a limited amount of parking placards for
24 school and which-- and whatever process that
25 principal has that's just their process. I just

1
2 don't-- I just cannot quite understand what's so hard
3 about getting parking placards for teachers that are
4 working in our schools so that they can focus on
5 teaching our students and not focus on moving their
6 cars. So can you in detail explain what the issue is
7 with parking placards?

8 ANNA COMMITANTE: I don't think we can,
9 because I think that's a function of the Department
10 of Transportation, not the Department of Education.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: So, better
12 yet, what is-- what has been your advocacy in
13 addressing teacher parking concerns?

14 ANNA COMMITANTE: Well, I have not been
15 aware that there were these shortages in terms of the
16 number that are given to schools. I'm actually-- I
17 would have to find out--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: [interposing]
19 So, in your position as Executive Director of Teacher
20 Retention, this issue has never come up?

21 ANNA COMMITANTE: It's-- my position is
22 Executive Director of Curriculum Instruction and
23 Professional Learning. I think as a system we all
24 bear the responsibility for teacher retention. I'm
25

1
2 happy to look into your concerns, but I just don't
3 have the information.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Alright, I
5 just-- Mr. Chairman, I just find it odd that they
6 don't have a response in terms of teaching parking,
7 which I'm pretty sure you hear these concerns in your
8 schools. I'm pretty sure all my other colleagues
9 have these same concerns. Alright.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Just to let you know,
11 that is how my won my Chapter Leader election was by
12 securing parking for my teachers in my school. So I
13 am fully aware of that issue, and we did the creative
14 things like allowed teachers to park on the unused
15 school yard, and we had an alternating system which,
16 you know, we had some teachers use it one month in a
17 lottery system so the teachers actually had an
18 opportunity for that, but I hear you. it is an issue
19 that I've heard as well, and I support you in it, and
20 actually the de Blasio-- not the de Blasio, the
21 Bloomberg Administration pulled back some of those
22 parking passes in the past and it would be good to
23 work together on seeing if we can't get some of the--
24 some more of those parking passes issued.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Yeah, and just
3 rest assured, you know, I know that I'm asking you
4 these questions, but you have an advocate here in
5 terms of helping secure parking placards for your
6 teachers. They should not be concerned about where
7 their cars are parked, or they need to move their
8 cars for the alternate side parking. They should be
9 concerned on how are they going to educate our youth
10 in our communities. My second question here in terms
11 of speaking to teachers and principals, and this more
12 is for elementary school kids, the lack of resources.
13 Low-income communities such as mine, I know that
14 teachers rely on parents to bring in those extra
15 supplies, but at times it may be difficult for my
16 families that I represent, and it's my understanding
17 that teachers are coming out of pocket to bring in
18 these extra crayons, these extra supplies, whatever
19 it is that they need to go on throughout the year
20 uninterrupted. What resources is your office
21 providing, or how are you helping out in terms of
22 helping these teachers with these extra costs that
23 they're incurring out-of-pocket?

24 ANNA COMMITANTE: Well, I know that when
25 they attend sessions that we run around professional

1
2 development where there's a tool that we are
3 recommending that they use, they walk away with that
4 tool. We actually give it to them. I think what
5 you're speaking about are materials that are used day
6 in and day out at the school level, which is a
7 responsibility I believe of the school principal to
8 ensure that teachers have the appropriate materials
9 that they need, but there's also the Teachers Choice
10 Program that allows teachers to purchase the supplies
11 they need for the classroom and then reimburses them.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: What is the
13 limit for that Teacher's Choice Program?

14 AMY WAY: Have to get back to you on
15 that.

16 ANNA COMMITANTE: I know it's gone up in
17 recent years.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I believe the budget
19 allocation was 175 dollars this year, which was up
20 from 125 dollars a year before, and we'll continue to
21 fight to get additional dollars put into the budget
22 so that we can get it up to its historic high, which
23 was 250 dollars, and I'd like to get back to that,
24 and that was a 20 million dollar cost in the budget.

25

1
2 So I think we're right now at about 13 or so million
3 dollars, and I would love to see it go up.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Alright,
5 awesome. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those are my two
6 questions.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Council
8 Member Salamanca. Now questions by Council Member
9 Levine.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Thank you, Chair
11 Dromm. Executive Director, great to see both of you.
12 I want to drill down a little bit more on the
13 question that the Chair raised a moment ago about how
14 we ensure that the schools with the toughest
15 conditions don't wind up struggling in the teacher
16 recruitment process, and I have a district which
17 spans a very diverse group of neighborhoods, and some
18 schools are really successful, and I talk to the
19 principal and they say, "Boy, all the teachers want
20 to come here." And I have schools in tougher areas
21 where the principals really lament the fact that
22 their best teachers want to leave and often have the
23 option to do so, and that they have a hard time
24 recruiting new ones. How do you overcome that? If
25 we don't, then it's the neediest kids in the lowest

1
2 income neighborhoods who suffer. How do we-- how do
3 we compensate?

4 AMY WAY: So, we-- 80 percent of our
5 schools hire teachers just to frame out that there's
6 a lot of hiring happening across our system, which
7 does create some of the market challenges, if you
8 will, that you're speaking to, and that-- and we have
9 many efforts underway to support harder-to-staff
10 schools like the establishment of our teacher
11 leadership positions which we see as our really big
12 incentive to retain and attract new talent to harder-
13 to-staff schools, and this past year we've put in
14 place partnerships at the superintendency [sic] level
15 like in District Six to support growth of those
16 positions so that school leaders can really work with
17 their existing staff to make sure that they are
18 creating those opportunities to grow and using it as
19 a way to kind of bring people in. we also prioritize
20 our resources centrally to supporting schools that we
21 know are historically harder to staff, and that may
22 look like having trainings with principals on how
23 they market their schools, giving them priority
24 access to candidate pools like our Early Hire
25 Program. So while we have more work to do always, we

1 think that we're on the right path to try to support
2 those school leaders, and the supports that Anna
3 mentioned in her testimony around professional
4 learning we think given that system wide approach
5 really helps every school to have access to strong
6 professional learning which can help provide that
7 great learning environment across all of our schools.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: You know, I just
10 observed there was a piece in the Times today about
11 school struggling in District Three, I'm sure you
12 read it, and it talked about the downward spiral that
13 struggling schools are in when the most capable
14 students then want to leave, which only makes it
15 tougher for those who remain and tougher for the
16 school. I don't think the piece addressed a similar
17 dynamic among teachers, that if a school seems to be
18 spiraling downward, then often teachers who can leave
19 do and that only worsens the problems. But I just
20 want to in my remaining time want to ask you about a
21 different question which is retention. When I was a
22 teacher many, many years ago back in District Seven,
23 the dynamic was, if you were the newest teacher, you
24 were the lowest on the totem pole, and you generally
25 got the toughest assignments, the toughest classes,

1
2 the toughest schedule, and there's a seniority system
3 that I understand-- there's a reason you want to
4 reward veteran teachers with discretion in the kinds
5 of classes they teach, but the effect is that it
6 really pumps up turnover for young teachers, because
7 those who are at least handle the toughest schedules
8 and the toughest classes often get stuck with just
9 that, which you could argue is backward. Is this the
10 dynamic that you're aware of, and what if anything
11 are you doing to overcome it?

12 ANNA COMMITANTE: I'm not sure that that
13 happens systemically anymore the way it might have
14 happened in the past. I know that I've heard the
15 Chancellor speak to principals on many occasions
16 where she actually advocates just the opposite, to
17 actually put your most experienced teachers in the
18 classes where the students need the most help.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Good to hear
20 about that progress. I'd like to talk to you more
21 about that in the future. Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
22 Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Council
24 Member Levine. And Council Member Barron? Been
25 joined by Council Member Rosenthal, Treyger, yep.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you, Mr.
3 Chair. Thank you to the panel for coming. In terms
4 of your recruitment, the Chair offered data that said
5 that the number of black teachers in New York City is
6 approximately 18 percent. So my question is, knowing
7 that the students population of black students is
8 approximately 85 percent, and we know that children
9 look for models and they're inspired by people who
10 have similar backgrounds as theirs-- as we see the
11 movie "Hidden Figures" you can talk about how people
12 were motivated to be able to pursue careers once they
13 knew oh, this can be done. So, my question is, do
14 you have a dedicated program that reaches out to
15 historically black colleges and universities, and if
16 so, how often do you go, and what has been the number
17 of students who have come from those colleges to come
18 to teach in New York?

19 AMY WAY: So, we are really committed to
20 increasing the diversity of our teaching force, and
21 our NYC Men Teach initiative is really the signature
22 component of that strategy. However, we know that
23 focuses on men of color, and we also would like to
24 have more women of color entering our classrooms. So
25 we take many of the practices for NYC Men Teach

1
2 campaign and apply them to women as well, including
3 these recruitment trips to historically black
4 colleges and universities. I need to get back to you
5 on the number of people who we've recruited through
6 those events. I will tell you that primarily across
7 the board we find that our local pipelines are where
8 we draw most of our teachers of color, really
9 engaging our own local community and establishing
10 pathways for individuals to get into the teaching
11 profession through either our alternative
12 certification programs or our para professional to
13 teaching pathway. So while it's not that our
14 national travel is not important or insignificant,
15 it's just the majority of our recruitment
16 particularly of individuals of color does come
17 locally.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I know that some
19 years ago, maybe as many as 20 years ago now, there
20 was recruitment done to teachers who were in the
21 Caribbean countries. Are you familiar with that
22 program? Are you familiar with that?

23 AMY WAY: I am familiar with the fact that
24 we've historically recruited in the Caribbean.

25

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And so what
3 happened to that program? I understood that there
4 were offers made to the teachers, "Oh, if you come
5 we're going to provide you with all kinds of
6 amenities," and that that didn't happen. So, my
7 question is what happened to those teachers who came
8 through that program and did not get in fact what
9 they had been promised? Were there efforts made to
10 make them whole?

11 AMY WAY: So, I will have to get back to
12 you on the specifics of the follow-up on that
13 program, because I don't have that information with
14 me. So, I think there would need to be a follow-up.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. Do you
16 think then that perhaps there might be an opportunity
17 to see if that program was successful, if in fact it
18 might be reinstated? And if in fact you might have a
19 dedicated program to go to historical black colleges
20 and universities to do an appeal for them to come, a
21 dedicated program?

22 AMY WAY: So, we do have a dedicated
23 program through NYC Men Teach to recruit from
24 historically black colleges, and I will take back for
25

1
2 consideration the recommendation around reinstating a
3 Caribbean-focused recruitment effort.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So the program
5 that you have, what does that look like? Is it
6 sending a letter? Is it going to the campus? Is it,
7 you know, interacting with them one-on-one to
8 encourage them to come?

9 AMY WAY: Yes, all of the above. So we do
10 communications, in-person visits, ongoing follow-up
11 to cultivate candidates.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay, thank you,
13 and I'd appreciate if you would let me know which
14 colleges you've reached out and what the result has
15 been. What is the source of teachers coming into New
16 York City through both the traditional teacher
17 preparation, PATH, and the alternative measures?

18 AMY WAY: So we recruit from a variety of
19 pathways. We--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] I'm
21 sorry, I couldn't hear.

22 AMY WAY: Sure. We recruit from a range
23 of pathways. A quarter of our new hires typically
24 come from alternative certification programs, and
25 those are focused primarily on our shortage subject

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2 areas. The remainder are traditionally prepared
3 teachers. About a third of those recruits who come
4 from the traditional program have prior teaching
5 experience, and the rest are new to the teaching
6 profession. Many of those individuals are graduates
7 from recent-- recent college graduates from
8 institutes of higher ed. from our surrounding
9 community. Ninety percent of our applicants come
10 from New York State. So this is really a local--
11 primarily a local market.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: What has been the
13 involvement of the unit that you're in charge of in
14 terms of working with the renewal schools that have
15 not been performing adequately?

16 AMY WAY: So like many offices, the
17 department renewal schools are very important
18 priority for all of us and providing as much support
19 to those schools is essential. So we have been a
20 part of establishing dedicated recruitment efforts
21 for those schools through dedicated resources of
22 people, time, events to support those schools to get
23 access to the best talent. We have many marketing
24 and communication channels under way to support those
25 schools. You may have seen the videos in taxis last

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2 springs as a part of that recruitment effort. In
3 addition, we support those schools with recruiting
4 teacher leaders, and we're proud that there are over
5 240 teacher leaders in those schools today and that
6 we have a cohort of emerging teacher leaders who are
7 also in renewal schools who will serve teacher
8 leadership positions in the future and see that as an
9 important part of building out the talent bench and
10 pipeline within those school communities.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: What do you do in
12 these renewal schools that may have very large class
13 sizes? What do you do to reduce the teacher/student
14 ratio? It's great that we go give them professional
15 development, but what do you do, what kind of
16 mechanisms exist to reduce class size if-- because
17 there are schools that are renewal schools that have
18 low total student population, low enrollment, and
19 they've got 32 classes, 32 students in a grade, 32 in
20 a class. So how are we doing that? If we're not
21 increasing teacher time on a one-to-one basis, all of
22 these other supports are not achieving what we need
23 to get, which is getting a teacher to interact one-
24 on-one with a student, getting students-- also
25 training teachers how to get students to work in

1 groups as well and making those circles that help.

2 But what are we doing in renewal schools particularly
3 to get better interaction, reduce the ratio?
4

5 AMY WAY: So, I'm not able to comment
6 specifically on renewal schools, but I can tell you
7 that our class size overall is in line with what it's
8 been historically and that we're--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing]
10 Which is what?

11 AMY WAY: Also there's been a slight--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing]
13 Which is what? Historically, it's like 32.

14 AMY WAY: Yeah.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right?

16 AMY WAY: Yes, I'd have to get back to you
17 on that, have my colleague. It's not my area of
18 expertise.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. A few more
20 questions, Mr. Chair? What is the entering salary
21 for a new teacher?

22 AMY WAY: It's just under 61,000 dollars
23 with a Master's Degree.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Six-- and without
25 a Masters?

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AMY WAY: It is 55,000.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: The requirements that are in place to become a teacher are that you must be state certified. Does that apply to all teachers in the New York City system, or are there some carve-outs for particular school types?

AMY WAY: All new hires must have New York State certification.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: That goes for charter schools as well?

AMY WAY: Charter schools, I just-- I am not a subject area expert on charters. I believe they have-- they do have some accommodations that are designated at the state level, those flexibilities, but I'm not familiar with the details of that, but all public school DOE-run schools require New York State--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] We pay the salaries of the charter teachers, charter school teachers. Yes?

AMY WAY: Yes. Yes, the DOE does.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay, but they may not have the same level of preparation as

1 teachers in the public school system regular public
2 schools.

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4 AMY WAY: They are offered additional
5 flexibilities, and as I said, I think we would be
6 happy to have colleagues who work more closely on
7 charters do a follow-up with you more specifically on
8 their recruitment strategy.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So if we have
10 teachers coming in, new teachers coming in and being
11 assigned to various schools, if at the end of the
12 first year the principal says, "Wow, I've really
13 worked hard with this person, and I don't see any
14 kind of growth or improvement," can the teacher, can
15 the principal have a sit-down and tell that teacher
16 that their services are no longer needed in that
17 school?

18 AMY WAY: So, our principals at the end of
19 any year should be-- ongoing throughout the year
20 having conversations around how things are going with
21 their teachers.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right, and if at
23 the end of the year-- and I think that they can't. I
24 think that the state has restricted principals from
25 terminating teachers who have not met the requirement

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2 at the end of the first year. I think that was put
3 in place four years ago, maybe around then. That--
4 public school principals were told that they could
5 not terminate teachers at the end of the first year
6 that they were required to give them a second year.

7 AMY WAY: No. So, if a teacher is
8 probationary which means they--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing]
10 Correct.

11 AMY WAY: are untenured, then they-- if
12 the principal has, as you said, you know, provided
13 support, documented that support, they may terminate
14 them at the end of the first year.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I think that
16 that's not the case, but I would urge you to check
17 it, and I will check it as well because when I was in
18 the State Assembly I raised that as an issue. I
19 thought that if a principal had a teacher that they
20 had worked with for the year and they didn't see that
21 this was going to work, that they should have the
22 ability to terminate that teacher, because charter
23 schools are not saddled with keeping that person if
24 at the end of the first year they feel that this is
25 not going to work. So I would request that you check

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2 on that, and we can get back and see if that's in
3 fact the case. And just one other question. What's
4 the average length of years of service for teachers
5 in the system?

6 AMY WAY: If you don't mind, I'm going to
7 refer to my data to make sure I give you the right
8 information.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.

10 AMY WAY: so, our-- I will, without doing
11 the math quickly on the spot, I will tell you that we
12 have over-- nearly 50 percent of our teachers have
13 more than 10 years of teaching experience. Excuse
14 me, just under 50 percent, and then about 50 percent
15 have less than 10 years of teaching experience.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And within the 50
17 percent that's less than 10 years, can you break it
18 down a little further? How many have five or less
19 and three or less?

20 AMY WAY: So, we have-- about eight
21 percent of our teachers are new to teaching in the
22 coming year, although as I mentioned, about a third
23 of those new hires have prior experience as a
24 teacher. So, they're new to the DOE, but not
25 necessarily new to teaching.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So, they're new
3 to the DOE, but not necessarily to teaching. So, do
4 you record that service? Is it noted some place that
5 they're bringing prior service?

6 AMY WAY: So, the teacher themselves
7 would put on their resume. So when they're looking
8 for positions, the principal would see it there.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Would that be
10 captured in your BEDS [sic] survey that you're doing
11 in October-- that you do in October?

12 AMY WAY: I'd have to get back to you on
13 that. I'm not sure whether it's captured there.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you. Thank
15 you, Mr. Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
17 We've been joined by Council Member Andy King. Just
18 to follow up a little bit on what Council Member
19 Barron was trying to get at, do you have a number of
20 how many teachers have been terminated for a cause in
21 recent years?

22 AMY WAY: Anna and I are not the subject
23 matter experts on that process. So, we're-- you
24 know, we're not able to provide that information.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And I would like to
3 see if we can get that for the first three years as
4 well, how many teachers are terminated for cause
5 during the first three years. Does it still hold-- I
6 know the evaluation system has changed somewhat, but
7 in the past it used to be if you had three years of
8 unsatisfactory ratings you were automatically
9 terminated? Does that still hold?

10 AMY WAY: So, our current-- again, I'm
11 not the subject matter expert on our new teacher
12 evaluation system. We do have provisions that allow
13 teachers who have multiple years of "ineffective" to
14 go through a more expedited termination process.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, I mean, one of
16 the reasons I wanted just to follow up on that if I
17 may before I turn it over is because, you know, one
18 of the things that helps people decide whether to
19 come into a school system or not are some of these
20 questions that we've been asking. And often times I
21 don't think the general public understands that, you
22 know, if you do get three "U" ratings in your first
23 three years, you cannot teach anywhere basically in a
24 New York City public school system. So, if you had
25 intended to teach in the New York City public school

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2 system, if you wanted to buy a house in the city and
3 live in the city and teaching to be your career,
4 should that happen, that's the end of your career
5 basically. And then try to out to the island with
6 that type of a record, you're not going to be able to
7 really find a position either. So, it's a tough
8 thing. It's not, you know,-- so I think the
9 objective here should be and I would argue for that
10 there's teachers who are borderline ineffective. I
11 think that may be the word that you're using now,
12 should be worked with more closely and have their
13 skills honed better, and I think that's something
14 that Council Member Barron may want to-- was trying
15 to get at as well. We provide that type of support
16 to those teachers.

17 ANNA COMMITANTE: I believe there is a
18 system that's established to support teachers that
19 have had one or two years of ineffective ratings, I
20 believe--

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Ms. Commitante, is
22 your mic on? It's a little hard to hear. I'm sorry.

23 ANNA COMMITANTE: Sorry. There are
24 additional supports provided to teachers who have a
25 year or two of ineffective rating. I believe they are

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2 required to have a targeted action plan where the
3 principal and the teacher work together to come up
4 with these are the things we're going to work on this
5 year to bring you up to speed. So, there is a
6 mechanism in place to work with those--

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] And I
8 think there was a mechanism which I still think is in
9 place for even tenured teachers who can go into a
10 peer evaluation program so that they can also hone
11 their skills even when they're tenured, if I'm not
12 mistaken. At least that was the case when I was
13 teaching. They had a peer mentoring program with the
14 UFT where if they had received the UFT rating, they
15 would get a mentor and that person would come in and
16 work with that person closely as well. I think that
17 that probably is still the case.

18 AMY WAY: Yes, it's still.

19 ANNA COMMITANTE: Yeah.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. So there are
21 some supports there as well for those who are getting
22 the lower ratings. And just to also pick up on
23 something else that was said, class size. You know,
24 when I was a UFT chapter leader I would often go to
25 delegate assemblies, and yes, we would have

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2 discussions about salary, which was very important to
3 us. We'd have discussions about health benefits,
4 retirement, pension benefits. But I have to say,
5 number two and often times even number one was class
6 size. We often times thought about, you know, like
7 giving up a pay increase in order to deal with the
8 class size issue. That's how important it is, and I
9 think when in terms of recruiting, when teachers look
10 at the class sizes here in New York City and you
11 think about 32, 33, 34, and sometimes I had 38, we
12 made special arrangements to accommodate the 38,
13 versus 18, 19 or 20 in the island, it's discouraging
14 for people to want to come into the city. So I think
15 that we have to realistically look at class size as
16 being an obstacle to teacher recruitment here in the
17 City. That being said, I'm going to turn it over now
18 to my colleague, I think it was-- the next question
19 was Council Member Treyger followed by Council Member
20 Chin, and then Council Member King.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you, Chair
22 Dromm, for holding this very, very important hearing.
23 I welcome the panel. I guess I'll also put my former
24 teacher hat on and my former-- I was a delegate in my
25 building. So, proud UFT delegate. So, I have quite

1 a bit to say and also ask on this topic. First, just
2 a general comment. You know, there has been a
3 concerted effort to bash, demonize and demoralize the
4 public school system, not just here but across the
5 entire country, and then some folks wonder why we're
6 having difficulty to recruit educators to work in our
7 schools. So, we need to be very mindful of the
8 language we use. I've always been very, very
9 critical of any government leader referring to school
10 or a kid as a failure. I think we are all works in
11 progress, and that's even-- I'll be very honest, even
12 when we refer to these renewal schools. I mean, I
13 welcome the resources. I welcome the additional
14 supports, but you have to admit that when you label a
15 school a renewal school or any other type of label,
16 it has an impact in that community. It does. I
17 mean, imagine calling a hospital a renewal hospital.
18 Will you feel comfortable having your survey there?
19 It is-- we have to deal with these labels. The data
20 is out there for people to draw conclusions about
21 schools. It's important for policy makers and those
22 in charge of government to make policy changes, to
23 make investments to address these issues but just
24 like I was critical as a teacher to call a kid a
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2 "special ed kid," I'm critical of calling our schools
3 failures or calling them renewal or calling them
4 special. All of our kids are special. We all in
5 theory have special needs and we all need some
6 accommodation in some respect. So I think we need to
7 be very mindful of language. I also just want to
8 first bring up the topic of the schools of education
9 that we work with to hire future educators. You
10 know, I was fortunate. I went to Brooklyn College to
11 actually see my former Education Law Professor, David
12 Bloomfield, here. He was a great professor. But I
13 will say this, some of the feedback I've heard, and I
14 was a teacher mentor as well, is that some folks are
15 just not prepared to deal with what comes to them the
16 first year of teaching in the sense where some of our
17 schools are so content heavy, which is great. You
18 should know your facts, but when you walk into a
19 classroom and some of the children, some of the kids
20 there are from a different country, this is their
21 first month here and they don't speak English very
22 well, it's a challenge for that teacher if they
23 didn't receive training on how to teach English
24 language learners. It's a challenge also sometimes
25 when how do you confront poverty where a child

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2 sometimes comes to school from a shelter. So they
3 were so busy teaching what happened in the 1400's,
4 1500's, 1600's, but what do you do when you have this
5 in front of you? You have to deal with it. You have
6 to address it. And so what is being done to work
7 with the different, you know, schools to better
8 prepare future educators to deal with the reality of
9 learning in an urban landscape, because I love the
10 professors, but some of them, you know, are not from
11 the City and some of them speak theory when we need
12 more practical hands-on application of learning. So,
13 if you could speak to that first, please.

14 ANNA COMMITANTE: I mean, I think you
15 raised some very important points for sure. While we
16 recognize that a teacher has to have a strong handle
17 on the content, I think what you raised is the
18 relational aspect of teaching, and I think in
19 particular this Administration has been doing quite a
20 bit to make sure that teachers understand that that
21 element is important, that they have to establish
22 relationships with students, with their families.
23 They have to have an understanding and a grounding in
24 social/emotional learning. They have to understand
25 principals of restorative justice so that they are

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2 better able to deal with student behavior, and I
3 think these are things that we have begun to do in
4 the last two years, and we need to continue to do
5 more of it.

6 AMY WAY: I can add to that to speak to
7 some of the partnership work with schools of
8 education. So, I think schools of education
9 themselves recognize that they would like to better
10 contextualize the preparation of their students, and
11 we have work underway with institutions to set up
12 through the student teaching component, stronger
13 partnerships around that element in establishing
14 schools in our system who can, that can serve as
15 teaching academies and places where schools of
16 education can become more aware of the best practices
17 underway today and in the DOE, and open up more
18 dialogue around partnership and opportunities for
19 training. So, we have an interest in having more of
20 a role in preparing our incoming recruits and see
21 that as a ripe opportunity to grow.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: If I may just
23 make a suggestion, I mean when I was a teacher my
24 assistant principal asked me to mentor some of the
25 new teachers and also some of the teachers that were

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2 doing training, and that was important, and reason
3 why that's important is to my next point. It's not
4 easy to ask school administrators to provide the type
5 of support that newer teachers need when they are
6 inundated with emails to respond to, paperwork, their
7 PPR, which everyone focuses on, the Principal's
8 Performance Review, all these compliance checklists.
9 That-- and again, I understand the value in
10 accountability, but when you overdo it, understand
11 what time you're taking away from that assistant
12 principal or principal. That is valuable time to
13 spend with a new teacher and mentor them, provide
14 feedback. As a new teacher I was yearning for
15 feedback, yearning for support, and it was not easy
16 in a large high school when my AP had over 25
17 teachers to oversee. So, thank goodness where I kind
18 of buddied up with another teacher and learned some,
19 and I observed, and there was some, you know, some
20 great people that helped me out, but in reality
21 sometimes you felt like you were on your own, and we
22 lost really good people because of that dynamic. I
23 do want to echo the comments, of course, of the
24 colleague, the Chair of the Committee, and my
25 colleagues who are also educators, Council Member

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2 Barron, others, that class size does have an impact,
3 because you learn very quickly it's not easy to get
4 the attention of one kid or a few kids, but when you
5 have-- I had sometimes up to 40 kids in a class.
6 That's not because I was only popular, it's because
7 it was a pretty large school. And we had to work
8 through it, but it's not easy, especially if you deal
9 with kids who have-- sometimes that require special
10 accommodations. It became a major challenge. So, I
11 think that we just left today a budget briefing with
12 the Mayor, that there is a commitment to invest in
13 having more seats, but I do think that we need to do
14 a lot more. It's not sufficient. So, I think class
15 size is critical. I think the issue of working with
16 the schools of education to prepare-- it can't just
17 be-- I say this respectfully. It just-- it can't all
18 just be about theory and content. It has to be about
19 social/emotional learning. It has to be about
20 knowing the community, how to build relationships. I
21 agree with you about that. Also, letting
22 administrators and educators do their work and not
23 just spend time at a desk doing paperwork all day.
24 Let them do their job. And of course, even though
25 I'm still going to vouch for higher salary to recruit

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2 the best and brightest of New York, but I do believe
3 that we have a lot of work to do especially-- if I
4 was to ask-- I don't know if you have it with you.
5 Is there a figure that you have on the number of
6 teachers that leave teaching after their first year
7 or two years? Do you have that type of data?

8 AMY WAY: So, the first year retention
9 rate for teachers in the DOE is 91 percent, which is
10 a third above the national average.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: So, it's 90--

12 AMY WAY: One percent.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Ninety-one
14 percent. And I imagine that some of the folks that
15 are leaving the system after the first year are being
16 signed challenging classes. That's been the trend.
17 That's been what's happening. But in reality, that's
18 where I think that they need the most support, and
19 quite frankly it's hard to provide that support under
20 the current system. Again, I favor accountability,
21 but we need to be mindful. I think the Chancellor is
22 mindful of this as well. We need to do everything
23 possible to try to reduce the voluminous amount of
24 paperwork and all these things to check off and just
25 let educators collaborate. When you walk into a

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2 school, rather than just focusing on their test
3 scores, I would ask how much time do you allow your
4 teachers to meet each other? How much time do AP's
5 and principals have a chance to talk to educators and
6 to provide support and feedback? So, I'll close
7 there, and I thank the Chair for being very generous
8 with his time.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Council
10 Member Chin followed by Council Member King.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair.
12 I have a couple of questions. First one is, I know
13 the chancellor is very supportive of dual language
14 programs, and I have one of the best programs in my
15 district, the Dual Language High School, and I've
16 seen the result of the students in those programs.
17 So, the first question would be like the progress of
18 recruiting dual language teacher. A second question
19 is on what are you doing to retain experienced
20 teachers, and how are you doing that to support the
21 school budget? because a lot of the more experienced
22 teachers, they've been around, they've taught for a
23 long time, and they cost-- you know, their salaries
24 are much higher. And often times I've heard from
25 some of them that they're not getting the support,

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2 and it's sort of like the principal would rather they
3 retire so that they could use that money to hire more
4 teachers. So, what are we doing to really retain
5 these experienced teachers, and they could really
6 help mentor younger teachers? And the third question
7 is relating to what some of my colleague has already
8 raised in terms of reducing class size. My husband
9 is a school teacher, and he has, you know, 32 kids
10 and he's a fifth grade teacher, and the time that he
11 spends with the parents and individual kids, it's a
12 big group. So, in order to really provide a better
13 environment for teachers, smaller class size is
14 critical. When I was teaching in a bilingual program
15 many, many years ago I was blessed to have a para-
16 professional, and that helps quite a bit, because I
17 was doing five reading groups at the same time. And
18 so like, in order for the teacher to provide, you
19 know, the extra attention, the class size does matter
20 on that. So, if you could answer those three
21 questions.

22 ANNA COMMITANTE: Well, first I'd like to
23 address your comment about experienced teachers,
24 because we do view them as a resource. They have
25 knowledge. They have expertise that actually is best

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2 leveraged to support the new teachers coming into the
3 system who probably need the support and guidance of
4 an experienced teacher. So, we view our most
5 experienced teachers as assets.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, but what are
7 you doing to support them, support the school?

8 ANNA COMMITANTE: Well, I think it's
9 about allowing the schools to provide them with
10 opportunities so that they stay in the classroom and
11 do the good work they're doing, but approach them
12 with opportunities around mentorship and teacher
13 leadership, because then they continue to grow while
14 they're also supporting their colleagues.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I guess-- part of
16 my question was does it really affect-- you know,
17 individual schools have a certain budget. So, how do
18 we sort of like create the incentive that principals
19 do value the experienced teacher and not like some
20 school that I've heard from that actually don't value
21 their experienced teacher? Because, you know, they
22 cost more money.

23 ANNA COMMITANTE: I think it's more about
24 challenges with budgeting and dealing with a limited
25 budget than not valuing, I hope, the experienced

1 teachers that they have in their midst. I'm not sure
2 of any messages like that being relayed to our
3 experienced teachers. I have not heard that, but it
4 certainly is something we can look into. Did you--

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6 AMY WAY: [interposing] So, I can build, I
7 can add to this. I mean, just to say that this, you
8 know, chancellor has made it a really central
9 priority to open up communications with all teachers
10 in our system, and she's established teacher
11 recruitment and retention advisory of Big Apple
12 Fellows, and that they most recently spoke about this
13 question of how do we ensure that we provide
14 differentiated professional learning and growth
15 experiences over the course of someone's career, and
16 so it's very much at the top of mind and we've
17 really-- we've taken steps to ensure that we're
18 recognizing our more experienced educators through
19 that awards program. So our chancellor has made it a
20 priority to focus those efforts on teachers who have
21 been in the system for more than five years to
22 celebrate, and we see the communities really
23 responding to that. So, while it doesn't address
24 your specific question about maybe the specific
25 school and that principal's comment [sic] with the

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2 teacher, overall we as Anna said are embracing our
3 teachers at every stage of the career and really,
4 really value those experienced teachers. To go back
5 to your first question on the progress with dual
6 language, so we are seeing a fair amount of progress
7 in expanding those programs that we're very committed
8 to creating for students and families, and the
9 recruitment efforts there are highly specialized.
10 So, finding, depending on the area of the language of
11 focuses, we have very tailored recruitment efforts
12 underway, and one of the strategies that we have in
13 place is to offer subsidized bilingual extensions to
14 individuals who have that, have the base language of
15 interest, and we will provide them with that subsidy
16 to get the credential that they need to fill the dual
17 language requirement, and we see this as a very
18 tailored way to grow those dual language programs
19 kind of at the pace and in the areas that are needed
20 in the system. So, while there are still challenges
21 it's hard to find, you know, bilingual Urdu speakers,
22 you know, or Russian, we really feel like we've got
23 the right strategies in place to get there. Yeah--
24 that's all I can say on that.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Any comments on the
3 last question about, you know, really working towards
4 lowering class size?

5 ANNA COMMITANTE: I do have some comments
6 just to share that we are continuing our efforts to
7 reduce class size, including 4.5 billion in capital
8 spending that will create more than 44,000 new seats
9 in overcrowded neighborhoods as well as being
10 involved in rezoning, effective space management and
11 teacher hiring to support smaller class size. I
12 think the DOE is committed to continuing to invest in
13 initiatives and pursuing options to reduce class size
14 and pupil/teacher ratio and looking at co-locations,
15 managing the space in underutilized buildings, and
16 hiring teachers and staff as needed to address these
17 class size issues. I believe the March amendment to
18 the capital plan provides an additional 1.4 billion
19 in funding to support the creation of those 44,000
20 seats in overcrowded areas across the City, bringing
21 the funding to that 4.5 billion total in spending.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, we're very
23 happy with the increase in the capital budget. Do
24 you have a target number in terms of like what would
25 be, you know, the class size number? Because right

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2 now I think for like fifth grade you still are like
3 over 30 kids as the--

4 ANNA COMMITANTE: [interposing] I think
5 you're men-- you're talking about the contractual
6 numbers in terms of the contract. I think the
7 actual, what we're seeing for average class size in
8 K-5 is approximately 25 students, slight decrease
9 from 2015/16. For grades 6-8, the average class size
10 is 27 students, the same as for 15/16. And I think
11 for high school courses the average class size is
12 26.5-- well, 27 students for 2015/16.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I mean, it's
14 average. I mean, for the one that's--

15 ANNA COMMITANTE: [interposing] Yeah.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: overcrowded, the
17 larger class, I mean, that's where the help is
18 needed. So, I think we really need to continue to
19 work on making sure that it's across the board.

20 ANNA COMMITANTE: Yes.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: That we can make
22 sure that the student get the attention they need.

23 ANNA COMMITANTE: For sure.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. Thank
25 you, Chair.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
3 Council Member King?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Good afternoon.
5 Thank you, ladies. Appreciate it. Excuse my
6 tardiness on today. I don't want to reiterate what
7 some of my colleagues said because they hit the nail
8 on the head. So if I do happen to repeat anything,
9 forgive me, but I do understand that being a teacher
10 requires a great commitment, a great sacrifice, and I
11 applaud everyone who wakes up every day and who walks
12 into a building not knowing what today would be like,
13 but hoping to put a game plan on that everyone will
14 walk out the building feeling better before the
15 started. I get an opportunity to spend some time in
16 classrooms. When I'm not a Councilman, volunteering
17 in a youth program that puts me in the schools to see
18 how kids are operating, and meeting with teachers and
19 principals to understanding some of the challenges
20 they experience each and every day while they're
21 trying to educate our children, and education goes
22 far beyond just what's in a text book, but being,
23 helping a young person develop so they can deal with
24 the world beyond the textbook. I say all of that
25 because as I moved around and trying to figure out

1
2 how some principals have challenges of keeping some
3 of their teachers on or some of the challenges that
4 teachers fuss about why they don't want to come back
5 to this campus or come back to this school. A couple
6 of questions come to mind. The first thing, I was--
7 as a union person I was always taught, you know, the
8 leadership should reflect the membership, and when
9 you look around the City of New York, I don't know
10 the numbers, but maybe you can tell me when it comes
11 to diversity what is the ethnic breakdown of our
12 teachers and principals in all of our communities.
13 Whether you have that answer today or not, but just
14 one question I wanted to put forward to you as well.
15 Reason I do ask that question because I remember
16 going into a high school and I'm guessing this, but I
17 feel pretty comfortable with saying this, about 98
18 percent of the school, the students were children of
19 colors. Ninety-five percent of the faculty were non-
20 community of color, Caucasians. So, I'm trying to
21 figure out when you got to educate a Malik or
22 Shadequa [sp?], who is challenge-- dealing with some
23 issues in the community, if I'm not no part of that
24 community, how do I connect with what they're
25 experiencing before I try to teach them fractions or

1 where to put a semicolon if I can't ex-- if I can't
2 connect with their everyday experience? And I think
3 that can be barriers to educating children,
4 especially if the class sizes are too high or there
5 are other issues that are in the building at all.
6 So, I would like for you to help me figure that one
7 out, and if there-- and what is the plan to make sure
8 that schools look-- the people who are working in the
9 schools look like the communities that they're
10 working. Another challenge that has been brought to
11 me from some teachers by other teachers that if
12 there's a weather problem or there's any other
13 challenge, the teacher who live in the neighborhood
14 can get there, but those who cannot can't get there
15 so it becomes another challenge for the operation of
16 that school. In addition, I know from sometimes
17 getting some educators to remain after hours if
18 they're not getting compensated, we lose them,
19 because why they're-- it's a job for them. Not that
20 it's a total 100 percent commitment, because at the
21 end of those school hours, they have to get back to
22 the community that they're from to take care of their
23 children. So, who loses out at the end, the children
24 that they're-- and the education system who's paying
25

1 the salary. So, I'd like to know what is the plan to
2 make sure that we have a real diverse school
3 community that's from that community or a larger
4 percentage that you don't look at at school, and a
5 majority of people working there have no connections
6 to their neighborhood other than coming to get their
7 salary, and they're gone at any given moment because
8 they need to go back someplace else. Another
9 question for you. In part of recruitment, I know you
10 have a number of strategies to recruit. About four
11 years ago when I first came in, I met with UFT and I
12 proposed this weird idea, and I think I even gave it
13 to DOE, and said, "That's a weird idea. We kind of
14 got that already going on." I wanted to know how are
15 we reaching out to high school students to figure out
16 how do we get them involved early on in the game, and
17 I said even maybe creating a teacher's college that
18 we know that we want kids to go to college, and we
19 want them to be well-rounded, but when it comes to
20 being an educator, hey, listen, if I want to teach
21 science, maybe in high school there's a teacher's
22 college that lets me go working on-- learning all the
23 things I need to know about science to teach a
24 classroom or high school science that by the time I
25

1
2 finish this teacher's college of going through the
3 book prep, classroom prep, maybe by the age of 22, 21
4 I've figured out this is what I want to do, not
5 waiting 'til I get my whole degree, go get a couple
6 of teacher certificates, and go through-- by the time
7 I'm 26, and I get in a classroom like, "I don't want
8 to do this." So, I'm saying how do we catch them
9 early so that by the time you can weed out some of
10 them, because not everybody can be a teacher, you
11 know. Not everyone can be one. So how do we catch
12 those good ones early on to be able to say they'll be
13 in it for the long-haul because we've trained them
14 up? It's like becoming a doctor. You know, you go
15 through all this early stuff. You know whether or
16 not. If you scared of blood at the age of 18, you
17 know you can't be a doctor, alright? But as a
18 teacher you've known at an early age that you're in
19 classrooms, you're helping teaching. You know, by
20 19, 20 you say this is where I want to be and you can
21 move forward, and it helps up with a better to try to
22 retain. It was a weird idea four year ago. People
23 thought I was crazy, but I'm trying to figure out
24 watching turnovers, watching school campuses'
25 communities not reflecting the kids, and watching the

1
2 interaction between some of the teachers and even
3 some of the principals whose behavior becomes
4 discriminatory to the teachers that make it that much
5 more challenging for a teacher to show up to a
6 building, because the principal is just some place
7 else. So, those are just a couple of questions I
8 just wanted to start with as I'm-- [laughter] if I
9 may?

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, that's a lot of
11 questions, Council Member.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Food for thought
13 whether you can give the answers today or come back
14 or just-- I stop there.

15 AMY WAY: Thank you for your comments and
16 questions. So, to start with, we, just to lay the
17 ground work, so 40 percent of our current teaching
18 force identifies teachers of color, and we know that
19 needs to be more, and it's a very focused, central
20 part of our recruitment strategy to increase those
21 numbers. On the school leader side, we have just
22 over 50 percent of our school leaders are identified
23 as people of color. So, slightly more diverse and
24 that's exciting for us, although still needing to
25 make progress there. So, what you're talking about

1 this looking at the opportunity in our own
2 communities to recruit teachers is something that we
3 have too been thinking about and putting in place a
4 number of strategies to tap that amazing talent. And
5 so, through NYC Men Teach we've established a more
6 robust community-based organization strategy where we
7 see kind of working with those organizations that are
8 in the after school space, that that's a place where
9 many individuals of color are working either part
10 time or fulltime, and that's a place to recruit, and
11 that those individuals have a chance to get to know
12 students in a different capacity in the after school
13 setting. So there are different skills that one
14 might develop if we're recruiting from that after
15 school community. So, we see a lot of opportunity
16 there and are looking to grow that strategy. In
17 addition, we have a para-professional to teacher
18 program which is another place where knowing the
19 school community, individuals who have maybe worked
20 in the community in other roles, that's another big
21 focus of ours, and we have 200 people in that
22 pipeline this year, and hope to grow. That's a part
23 of NYC Men Teach, but also a broader strategy. And
24 speaking to the high school efforts, so we too agree
25

1
2 that there's an amazing opportunity to try to recruit
3 our own students into the profession, and what better
4 way to kind of get talent than creating experiences
5 for our students to build skills and learn more about
6 this excellent profession which we all agree can be
7 wonderful as a career and has challenges, and we want
8 to expose people to the realness of teaching at
9 different stages in their growth. So, we have a
10 partnership with a national organization called
11 Educators Rising, and they're working at a national
12 level to encourage more high school level teacher
13 preparation and recruitment efforts. Our Chancellor
14 herself has said she wants to go as far back as
15 middle school to think about how we can be engaging
16 middle school students as tutors and thinking about
17 the skills, and looking at how do we make it count
18 for high school students who are taking part in
19 Educators Rising type programs. One of our high
20 school Brooklyn superintendent used-- just a couple
21 weeks ago had a big launch with a partnership with
22 local school of education to be able to say if you
23 participate in this program there will be smoother
24 and carved out pathway for you into that school of
25 education, and we really celebrate that and want to

1
2 see more schools of education taking the steps to
3 make it more feasible for high school students to
4 take the skills that they're learning through these
5 high school classes and clubs and take them to the
6 collegiate level. So, just resounding agreement on
7 the need to focus on that area, and that we have some
8 exciting things underway.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Thank you. I want
10 to just follow up, if I may? You mentioned on the
11 national level there is a commitment to reach to out
12 to high school. What are we doing here in the city
13 to tap into our high school students on-- are we
14 going to create a course, curriculum, you know,
15 Teacher 101, or? I don't know. What--

16 AMY WAY: Yeah, so to clarify, the
17 national organization is a partner of ours. We have
18 our own local efforts much like you've spoken about
19 that are either classes or clubs during school or
20 after school in a set of high schools across the
21 city, and it's small stage now, but we're looking to
22 grow and that the national effort helps us because we
23 have resources or partnerships. We can-- Educators
24 Rising hosts a competition where high school students
25 who have engaged in these clubs can go and practice

1
2 the skills of teaching and get feedback on it and
3 really get celebrated for the hard work that they're
4 doing to try to build the skills. So, we have our own
5 local efforts, and we see a lot of strength in
6 partnering with national organizations like Educators
7 Rising.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: And I'll wrap up
9 with this. I was listening to Council Member Treyger
10 speak about the overwhelming paperwork, and I've had
11 a couple of principals, you know, who have sometimes
12 told me they've had to rebel so they can go into the
13 hallways. They can walk into the classrooms so they
14 can identify with the students. The purpose of
15 smaller classroom sizes and breaking up campuses to
16 mini-schools is so the principals can get to know the
17 students. But if they're stuck in a answering emails
18 part of the day, how does-- it kind of defeats the
19 purpose of reducing class sizes. So, really what I
20 ask of you and oen thing I've learned in education is
21 sometimes keeping it simple means just that, just
22 keeping it simple. And if we can get back to a place
23 or some of the education parts where we just keep it
24 simple and whatever paperwork is necessary it works
25 in the best interest of educating the child as

1
2 opposed to protecting the system, and I think that's
3 what tends to happen with a lot of this paperwork;
4 it's designed to protect something as opposed to
5 educate something. So, if we can get to that place,
6 I think that can help us and help these principals
7 and help these teachers who are stuck and getting
8 frustrated as I've heard with all the requirements
9 that come out of Tweed [sic], and we're trying to
10 figure out what we got to do right here in the
11 building. So, if we can manage that, I think we'll
12 definitely be on the right road, and one of the most
13 played games in elementary school is, "I'm the
14 teacher and everybody else is." So maybe we might
15 want to start figuring out how to, because little
16 kids see the teacher as being somebody important in
17 their lives, and maybe that can be a way to start
18 another conversation, grabbing them young, and
19 whether it's a curriculum or in the middle schools or
20 the elementary, something that taps them in, because
21 they recognize the value of a teacher, where in high
22 school we're, you know, we're on another path by the
23 time you get to high school. But I just say that
24 all-- but I want to say thank you to all the
25 educators out there who every day meet the task.

1
2 Some sink, some swim, and some are soaring, but all
3 praise and prayers to all of them. So, thank you
4 again, and thank you, Mr. Chair.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much,
6 Council Member King, and before we let you go, I just
7 have a few more follow-up questions as well. So,
8 during the 2007/2008 school year, DOE adopted the
9 Fair Student Funding Formula under which school
10 budgets are charged for the actual salaries of
11 teachers and staff rather than for a citywide
12 average. Since that time, there's been concerns that
13 this budget policy provides an incentive to schools
14 to hire novice teachers in real-- and a real
15 disincentive to hire more experienced teachers at
16 higher salaries. It's something that Council Member
17 Chin, I think, started to discuss a little bit. What
18 are we doing to counteract this built-in disincentive
19 for schools to hire more experienced teachers,
20 because you know, to be honest with you, you can get
21 two new teachers for one fully experienced top salary
22 teacher, and I think that's something that we need to
23 look at in terms of retention of teachers. Are we
24 doing anything to-- ultimately we would like to see
25 the central Department of Ed. be responsible for

1
2 those salaries rather, and take it out of the school
3 budget. As a matter of fact, I believe that we're
4 going to have-- we have a resolution to that effect
5 coming up in the Council asking that that be done.
6 So, I'd like to just get a reaction from you on that.

7 AMY WAY: I think we, you know, we would
8 need to get more information, get back to you on the
9 Fair Student Funding. You know, we're not seeing in
10 terms of human resources shifts that experienced
11 teachers are getting pushed out, if you will, as our
12 retention rates kind of speak to, and the fact that
13 teachers on the whole are being retained. And so
14 we're not, I think, we're not seeing that bear out in
15 the data, although it is something that we do hear as
16 well, and we welcome following up.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I do hear it quite
18 often, but you know, it's anecdotally. So, let's
19 see. How many vacancies does DOE have in the area of
20 Special Education, ELL education, bilingual
21 education, math, and science? Do you have those
22 numbers with you?

23 AMY WAY: I'd have to get back to you. I
24 don't have them.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. So, you know,
3 we're going to have a number of data questions,
4 statistics, etcetera, that we're going to ask. We'll
5 follow up with you in a letter on those as well. I
6 heard you quickly mention the Para-professional to
7 Teacher Program. Can you just elaborate further on
8 that? How do people make themselves available, get
9 that, get involved in that program?

10 AMY WAY: So there are two kind of target
11 groups of individuals in that program. One group are
12 individuals who may be on the pathway to getting
13 their Bachelor's Degree, but yet have not yet
14 finished, or maybe you know, maybe in a couple of
15 years be on the pathway to finish, and so we are
16 recruiting those individuals to first become para's
17 while they complete those additional credentials to
18 be eligible for teacher certification programs. And
19 so that's one group. The second group are our own
20 current para-professionals, and we've did broad
21 outreach to those para-professionals to invite them
22 to apply for this program, and the program consists
23 of having kind of support offered monthly to develop
24 our new skills and clarify the pathways into the
25 teaching profession and have a more supported

1 transition from being a para-professional to become a
2 teacher. So, going back again, the first group
3 they're new hires as para-professionals with an
4 explicit intention that they're going to become
5 teachers over a period of time, and the second is
6 tapping our current talent.
7

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And do you have any
9 numbers on how many people take advantage of that?

10 AMY WAY: So we had over 600 people apply
11 this year. We have 200 individuals in the program
12 now. So we are-- we think this is a great place of
13 opportunity.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. I think that's
15 it for now. We will follow up with some questions,
16 and we look forward to continuing the discussion with
17 you further down the road. Thank you very much for
18 coming in.

19 AMY WAY: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. I'm going
21 to ask Karen Alford, the UFT Vice President to come
22 up now. Okay, Ms. Alford, would you raise your right
23 hand so I can swear you in? Do you solemnly swear or
24 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing
25

1
2 but the truth and to answer Council Member questions
3 honestly?

4 KAREN ALFORD: Yes, I do.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Whenever you're
6 ready, would you like to start?

7 KAREN ALFORD: So, good afternoon all.
8 Thank you Council, Council Member Chairman Dromm and
9 no longer the distinguished guests that were on the
10 panel, but thank you all for having us today. And on
11 behalf of Michael Mulgrew and the United Federation
12 of Teachers I'd like to share some highlights of our
13 testimony that we provided you with. It is a
14 pleasure. It is a wonderful career. There is passion
15 there. There's rigor, and teachers are committed to
16 what we do. However, we are seeing that the churn
17 rate is way greater than it should be, and when we
18 think about recruitment, some efforts that the UFT
19 would like to propose are as followed. Diversity is
20 extremely important to us, and clearly today there's
21 been lots of discussion around diversity, and we
22 certainly would like to see the expansion of the New
23 York City Men Teach Program, as it's important to
24 bring men of color into the system. We'd also like
25 to make sure that there are efforts around English

1 language learners and having teachers for that group
2 of students. And we'd like for schools to look
3 closely at their CEP's which should be living
4 documents, and embedded within these CEP's are a
5 portion called LAP, the Language Allocation Policy.
6 And within these policies it helps to outline through
7 both narratives and data who your students are, what
8 they need, what kinds of resources, what the
9 curriculum should look like, and we think that if
10 folks really take a greater look at these policies,
11 that that may help inform their decision on how and
12 who they hire regarding teachers for English language
13 learners. We'd also like to suggest that there be a
14 residency program so similar to what you see with
15 doctors, that we do something very similar for
16 teachers. So, while there is certainly learning
17 theory in our universities, we think that they
18 certainly need much more hands-on practical
19 knowledge, and there needs to be more time focused on
20 building these relationships with school communities,
21 with students, with parents, and creating this
22 residency program which should be in our idea, in our
23 estimation, certainly at least two semesters that are
24 spent within a school in a classroom just learning to
25

1 see how schools function, which is an education unto
2 itself. And then lastly, regarding recruitment, we'd
3 like to propose a summer bridge program. The concept
4 and the notion that for two weeks in the summer this
5 incoming teacher is working within their school
6 within their district getting to know the community,
7 understanding the students who they will be teaching.
8 We think that this will offer a glimpse of what's to
9 come once you really hit the ground running in
10 September. So, this notion of a summer bridge we
11 think would help with recruitment efforts. And then
12 I'd like to transition to retention. The UFT began a
13 new member's initiative two years ago, because again,
14 we saw the churn rate. We saw that within the first
15 year we were losing 10 percent of folks who had
16 trained, you know, for years and years to become
17 teachers, but yet they weren't lasting in the system.
18 And so we started working our retention efforts two
19 years ago. And some of the things that we're doing
20 that we'd like to see the DOE embrace and see more of
21 throughout the system, one is this notion of reduced
22 class size. We firmly believe in it. We support it.
23 We think that this needs to happen particularly for
24 first and second-year teachers to give them class
25

1 sizes of 32 or even 25 in the kindergarten, it's
2 excessive, and we're not even going to talk about if
3 a staff member is absent and you collapse the class
4 and you make it even more children. We don't want
5 those things to happen. We want folks to start with
6 a smaller class size. So that's something that we'd
7 like to propose regarding retention. Also, we'd like
8 to see for new teachers a reduced program schedule.
9 So, instead of having the full complement of all of
10 the classes that, you know, a more seasoned teacher
11 would teach, that there's time built in for folks to
12 be able to do inter-visitations, to talk to their
13 colleagues, to understand when, you know, the math
14 lesson just didn't go the way I had planned, and to
15 have that time to work with a veteran teacher or a
16 colleague so that you could walk back into your
17 classroom and redo that lesson. So we certainly
18 would like to see a reduced program schedule for
19 newer teachers. In addition to that, new teachers do
20 receive a mentor but what we found is that it's great
21 that folks get a mentor. However, there's no
22 teaching requirement for the mentor. So, in some
23 cases, and I'm not saying it's all, but in some cases
24 we have seen the second-year teacher acting as the
25

1
2 mentor. So we'd like to see some parameters put
3 around mentoring and who should be the mentor, and
4 that that person should have at least five years
5 classroom experience before they are permitted to
6 work with other folks around the pedagogy of
7 teaching. At the UFT we've created a workshop
8 series, and we've offered-- we offered 10 sessions in
9 the fall and now 10 sessions for the spring, and it's
10 actually a mix of content and also working with our
11 MAP program, our Member Assistance Program, because
12 at times a new teacher, yes, they need to know the
13 content of course, but then they just also need
14 sometimes that shoulder to cry on, that person to
15 talk to. The, you know, "I don't understand
16 classroom management. What does it look like?" And
17 so we're providing this mix of workshops with our
18 member assistance program which acts as a support
19 group along with more content-based workshops, and
20 within those 20 workshop offerings, we're even giving
21 teachers CTLE professional development credits. And
22 that's continuing teacher/leader education hours that
23 are now being required by the State Ed Department.
24 And as an approved provider, we are able to offer
25 those sessions to our new teachers. And then, we

1 thought it important and we've seen great turnout for
2 our financial wellness workshops. When you're a new
3 teacher and you're not making a top salary, how do
4 you juggle? And looking how do you manage your
5 finances? And so the UFT is offering that kind of
6 class for them. We're also working with AFT, our
7 national partner, and we're offering student debt
8 clinics so that new teachers who are burdened with
9 student loans, we have representatives meeting and
10 offering workshops on how do you pay down this
11 student loan, what opportunities are available
12 because you're working in a hard-to-staff district
13 are available for folks. So that's been an important
14 issue, and I think-- because I think we have to think
15 and look more broadly other than just content when
16 trying to support our new and newer teachers. And
17 then the last two or three items. We are providing
18 monthly newsletters and bulletins geared solely for
19 new teachers, because their needs are very different
20 than veteran teachers. So we're making sure that
21 we're zeroing on what they need and what they
22 require, and that's what those monthly connections
23 look like. We're piloting a Partners through
24 Experience Program, and we're utilizing our retirees,

1 and we're grouping for each retiree a new member.
2
3 And so when they have that question just about how
4 schools function, they have that person as a support
5 person in addition to their mentor. And then lastly,
6 one of the Council Members touched upon schools
7 supplies, because yes, the newer teacher, their
8 salary is lower. They haven't stocked up on the
9 school supplies as some of their veteran colleagues,
10 and so we've been working with a partner entitled UB
11 [sic], and they have provided school supplies free of
12 charge to 33,000 New York City students this year
13 alone through their partnership with the UFT. And we
14 gave every elementary teacher in District 14 school
15 supplies in addition to teachers across all five
16 boroughs. So those are some of the efforts that
17 we've been doing in terms of recruitment, and we
18 certainly hope that the Council who's always been
19 there acknowledges and supports what we do as well as
20 the Department of Education. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
22 Just reading through some of your testimony here, and
23 I think the DOE agreed with the 10 percent figure of
24 newly hired teachers.

25 KAREN ALFORD: Yes.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: But what was
3 interesting is that in your testimony, the written
4 testimony, it said that during 2015/16 5,545 teachers
5 left; 2,916 or 52 percent through resignation and 36
6 percent through retirement. So, the issue seems to
7 be more centered around retaining experienced
8 educators, and to me, that would seem to speak
9 volumes about support. It doesn't seem that these
10 teachers are getting the support that they need from
11 the DOE. Would you agree with that?

12 KAREN ALFORD: Well, we-- our numbers do
13 differ, and we looked at payroll statistics on folks
14 who were on payroll, and then a year later versus
15 five years later who's no longer on payroll, and
16 that's how we got our numbers which do differ. We
17 think that the DOE's moving in the right direction
18 with master teachers and model teachers and providing
19 inter-visitations, but we do believe that that needs
20 to be expanded and more works needs to be done on the
21 district level as well as the individual school
22 level, because it's very uneven. And so there are
23 some schools where you see lots of support, and then
24 there are other schools where you see very high
25 attrition, and things just aren't as smooth. And so

1
2 yes, particularly in those schools where you're
3 seeing the highest concentrations of new teachers. I
4 think the DOE needs to take a very targeted approach
5 to those schools where you see the churn rate is very
6 high.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, what's
8 interesting is that you can see that in terms of the
9 loss of your members at those particular schools. Is
10 that information that you could share with us as
11 well?

12 KAREN ALFORD: Yes, we could. For each
13 borough we've pulled the top 15 schools that have had
14 the highest concentrations of new teachers this past
15 year.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It'd be very good to
17 have that information. I'm curious also, teachers
18 are required I think to get, if I'm not mistaken, 174
19 hours of new teacher credits. Is that still the
20 truth? Is that still the case?

21 KAREN ALFORD: There's been a change at
22 SED. So, if we're talking about the same thing, it's
23 been reduced to 100 hours.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: One hundred, it's
25 been reduced.

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2 KAREN ALFORD: One hundred hours over the
3 five-year period, and the difference now and the
4 caveat is that it must come from an approved
5 provider, and the UFT is one of those providers. And
6 so we are making sure that we're doing lots of
7 outreach to our newer teachers since we provide that
8 kind of assistance.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, by signing up
10 with the UFT for those, those classes or those
11 courses, they would meet that requirement.

12 KAREN ALFORD: Yes, that's correct.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And in your testimony
14 you also mentioned that there are some examples of
15 second-year teachers becoming mentors. Can you
16 explain that to me further?

17 KAREN ALFORD: In a school, the principal
18 has the ability to cite who the mentor should be, and
19 in some of our schools, and we're seeing it more so
20 around some of our Pre-k sites, the new standalone
21 sites, where the teachers are all newer teachers; you
22 may not have that experienced person on staff. And
23 so in some of those in particular you are seeing
24 second-year teachers or in other cases where
25 principals are looking at, you know, their staff and

1
2 they are selecting second-year teachers, we don't
3 think that that's necessarily in the best interest of
4 the new teacher, because that second-year teacher is
5 still learning the craft as well.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So when I opened the
7 hearing, I made reference to the fact that I felt
8 that I didn't know the curriculum until five years
9 after I had started. So, that seems to be like a
10 reasonable request. Who determines the criteria for
11 the mentor?

12 KAREN ALFORD: It's part of DOE policy.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So that could be
14 changed by DOE?

15 KAREN ALFORD: I believe it could, but I
16 think you'd have to talk further with them about
17 that.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is part of it-- I
19 think I heard you say in your testimony just now that
20 part of the reason is that it may not be all that
21 many teachers that have that experience, especially
22 in the UPK classes?

23 KAREN ALFORD: In some cases, because
24 we've added so many UPK sites, which is a wonderful
25 thing. We want our earliest learners in school.

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2 There's been lots of recruitment efforts, and so some
3 of those teachers may have taught before, but
4 certainly not within the DOE public school system
5 with the same kinds of standards and policies, and so
6 just within the staff itself, you may not have that
7 veteran teacher to be able to offer that kind of PD.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, Ms. Alford, when
9 does mentoring take place? Does it take place in the
10 morning, the afternoon? How is that done? Do you
11 know?

12 KAREN ALFORD: It's up to each school to
13 decide the scheduling of that.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Are teachers paid for
15 that additionally? Do they get a per-session rate
16 for that or is it volunteer?

17 KAREN ALFORD: The mentor does receive a
18 small stipend.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is it a training
20 stipend or a per-session? Do you know?

21 KAREN ALFORD: That I'm not sure of.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. You mentioned
23 in your testimony as well the teacher centers. The
24 teacher centers that you mentioned, are those UFT
25 teacher centers, or--

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2 KAREN ALFORD: [interposing] Yes, those
3 are UFT.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: does every school or
5 every district have a teacher center?

6 KAREN ALFORD: So, those are UFT teacher
7 centers, and they can be found across the city, and
8 they are certainly within every district, but
9 certainly not every school has a teacher center, but
10 we found that as a great place for new teachers to
11 find support because they're on staff. There is this
12 one dedicated person who can do inter-visitations,
13 who can do model lessons, who can offer that support
14 within the classroom on a one-to-one basis.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is the UFT engaging in
16 any recruitment efforts itself to do outreach to
17 particular communities to get them to come into be
18 teachers?

19 KAREN ALFORD: Most of our efforts have
20 been centered around retention efforts. We've seen
21 that particularly in the Bronx there's the greatest
22 turnover there, and so we've been doing from the
23 items that I mentioned more of a focus in the Bronx I
24 think than anywhere else, but certainly across the
25

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2 City we've been, you know, working on retaining
3 teachers.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you work with the
5 para-professionals to get them to become involved in
6 the para-professionals recruitment program?

7 KAREN ALFORD: yes, we do, and we've been
8 supportive of new program for para-professionals as
9 part of a career ladder.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You mentioned the
11 reduced teaching load. Would there be a cost to
12 that?

13 KAREN ALFORD: There certainly is, and we
14 haven't cost it out, but we think that it's moving in
15 the right direction to offer a reduced teaching load.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And I would imagen
17 it's the same case for the residency program as well.

18 KAREN ALFORD: Correct.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: But both of them are
20 interesting models as well. ELLs, what is the reason
21 why we have such a hard time recruiting ELLs?

22 KAREN ALFORD: I think we've just seen
23 such a boon in the ELL population, and so the teacher
24 recruitment just hasn't kept up with the student
25 enrollment in that case, and so I think we have to do

1
2 very targeted efforts to make sure we're getting
3 teachers of ELLs.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, the CEP requires
5 a language allocation policy.

6 KAREN ALFORD: Correct.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Can you describe that
8 for me a little bit more? It's something I'm not
9 familiar with.

10 KAREN ALFORD: It's been in the CEP, and
11 we-- in some schools it is taken very seriously.
12 Folks are doing narratives there. It's very targeted
13 to determine what are the languages in the school,
14 how children have done on the NYSESLAT, what supports
15 might be needed, and in other places it's just become
16 more of a compliance doc with a cut and paste, and
17 we're just asking that schools take a very real look
18 at the SLAT policy, and we can certainly get you a
19 copy of one so that you could see it, because that
20 might help inform how you do outreach and what type
21 and what kind of teacher you need in your school
22 building.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Alright, well
24 thank you.

25 KAREN ALFORD: You're very welcome.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I appreciate you
3 coming in and offering your testimony and your
4 suggestions as well. Thank you very much.

5 KAREN ALFORD: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright. Our next
7 panel will be Shael Suransky, Bank Street College,
8 Karen DeMoss from Bank Street College as well, David
9 Bloomfield representing himself, and Professor Kelly
10 Parkes from Teacher's College. Welcome former Deputy
11 Chancellor Shael Suransky. It's good to see you
12 here, and congratulations on your appointment as
13 President of Bank Street as well. Would you like to
14 start us off?

15 SHAEL SURANSKY: Yeah, thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And I don't think the
17 mic is on.

18 SHAEL SURANSKY: Is that better?

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Oh, you know what, I
20 do have to swear you in. I forgot.

21 SHAEL SURANSKY: Okay.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So I would ask if
23 you'd raise your right hand please. Do you solemnly
24 swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth
25

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2 and nothing but the truth and to answer Council
3 Member questions honestly?

4 SHAEL SURANSKY: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.

6 SHAEL SURANSKY: I'm very grateful and
7 honored to be here today, and looking forward to
8 having this conversation. There are two issues that
9 I want to focus on amongst all of the different
10 important elements that we've been discussing this
11 afternoon. One is this idea of teacher residencies
12 and how we can make them sustainable and real in New
13 York City. And then connected but distinct is this
14 year you were just talking about around the needs of
15 English language learners and the teachers that serve
16 them. and the reason I'm raising that issue in
17 particular today is that with the new Administration
18 in Washington going on the attack against immigrants
19 talking about deporting millions of people, New York
20 City's begun a conversation about becoming a
21 sanctuary city, and so if we're serious about
22 supporting our immigrant communities, that also needs
23 to extend to the work in the school system. So, I'll
24 get to that second, but let me first talk a little
25 bit about the power of teacher residencies. As the

1
2 representative from the UFT noted, in our country for
3 decades our doctors get trained through residencies,
4 and the federal government spends billions of dollars
5 investing in on-the-job training where doctors work
6 with mentors in real life situations to get the
7 skills they need before they practice on their own.
8 And there are many small residency programs, some in
9 New York City and some elsewhere in the country, and
10 they're based on the idea that if a person has a full
11 year to practice and work with a master teacher while
12 they're studying, then they're going to be much, much
13 better prepared and much more able to serve their
14 children's needs than if they jumped right into the
15 classroom with six weeks of student teaching, which
16 is very common for many of our new teachers. And so
17 the goal of a residency program is to start to build
18 really high-quality experience into the teacher
19 preparation process, but it is more expensive, and it
20 involves paying teachers who are learning a stipend
21 or a salary to work in the school during that year
22 while they're being trained. And so we have examples
23 of that in New York City, but they've always been
24 small because the cost of paying for those positions
25 has not been something the City's chosen to fund up

1
2 until now. We started a project almost two years ago
3 at Bank Street to try and figure out this problem,
4 not just for New York City but for the whole country.
5 If this is the best way to train teachers and you see
6 retention rates in these programs often close to 90
7 percent five years later, so much higher than
8 anything else, what would it take to shift our
9 funding priorities to allow for this much higher
10 quality form of teacher training? And I want to
11 introduce Karen DeMoss who's leading our project on
12 this and has some slides to share, and then we'll
13 circle back to the question of immigrants and English
14 language learners.

15 KAREN DEMOSS: Thank you, Chairman Dromm,
16 for everybody for inviting us here today. I'm very
17 excited to share some of this work that we've been
18 doing, both through conversations we've had with the
19 New York City DOE. They've been very helpful in
20 helping us think about what does it look like to try
21 to scale this kind of residency program and also with
22 programs all across the country. So, we've learned a
23 lot about where this kind of work is working and are
24 happy to be able to share some high level pictures of
25 it. So, this is an example of what might happen if

1 we were to reduce that first year turnover in the New
2 York City public schools. So, if New York City needs
3 to hire 6,000 people a year, it turns out that about
4 400 of those leave after the first year. Percentage
5 wise, actually New York City does much better than
6 the rest of the country. So, kudos to the New York
7 City DOE and the efforts that they have put forward,
8 but still as Amy was testifying, there is more that
9 we could do. So what would it look like? It turns
10 out that the national average for the re-recruiting
11 and re-hiring, the cost in urban centers for doing
12 that for each candidate is about 20,000 dollars a
13 year. You referenced the 2.2 billion. That, by the
14 way, was 2007 dollars. So, it's gone up in terms of
15 the real dollars, right? So, that's a lot of money.
16 It turns out it's about 20,000 dollars per candidate.
17 So if we take the New York City good number in terms
18 of national averages and multiply that by the 400
19 people times 20,000, we get eight million dollars
20 every year that's in this kind of churn, and that's
21 not an investment. Some of it is a cost that will
22 happen because people do make those personal
23 decisions, but it is those people who don't have
24 strong preparation who are two to three times more
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1
2 likely to leave and who probably didn't do as good a
3 job in that first year in the first instance. So,
4 those are the folks that we really want to think
5 about. How can we flip some of these dollars to
6 helping prepare people who thought they actually
7 wanted to be teachers? It turns out that when our
8 residency programs are sustainably funded and high-
9 quality, which I'll get to the next slide, it turns
10 out there are some amazing impacts on the entire
11 educational ecosystem. Districts not only have less
12 churn, but they have the incentives to actually
13 attract those candidates who are diverse. That is a
14 really big part of being able to have these stipends.
15 Aspiring teachers go into their chosen profession.
16 It turns out that they're seen as second, third and
17 fourth-year teachers in terms of their capacity. So
18 they enter the profession with a confidence and a
19 competence; they like what they do because they're
20 successful at it. Teacher preparation provides, when
21 you have this connection, this seamless connection
22 with the districts, with your schools, they find that
23 they're able to use their expertise in partnership
24 with the expertise of those veteran teachers in the
25 schools. They feel like they're part of the

1
2 improvement of education in the system, and they're
3 able to attract full cohorts. I know as a former
4 person who ran programs, I would sometimes have a
5 class that had three people in it because I couldn't
6 attract enough people into my program, but with that
7 stipend incentive you can bring full cohorts in.
8 Suddenly you have a financial viable program that
9 will allow you also to give scholarships back to your
10 candidates because you have enough people in the
11 program. Schools, the teacher leadership development
12 inside school buildings is amazing. It turns out
13 that the student achievement inside the schools that
14 have residents, those classes with residents because
15 you have as the Council has so often commented reduce
16 the class size effectively by half. Those students
17 do better, but even more important those teachers
18 feel themselves to really be growing in their
19 leadership skills. So you do get that kind of
20 nurturing of the existing teacher's reflective
21 practice and real connection to the future of the
22 profession. students, families, they have much need
23 for summer school, need for tutoring which also
24 happens to be a savings of cost for the districts and
25 the schools, and they feel better about their local

1 schools. And finally, when you have a series of
2 these high-quality teachers over time the entire
3 community benefits because every person who graduates
4 from high school, who otherwise would not have most
5 likely because he or she did not have quality
6 teachers, saves tax payers a quarter of a million
7 dollars, every individual. This is an investment
8 that's really worth making, but not all teacher
9 preparation programs are high-quality or sustainably
10 funded. Some are high-quality and not sustainably
11 funded, and some vice versa, and some are maybe
12 neither. These are the principles that research
13 shows matter in a high-quality program. You need to
14 be sure that the candidates coming in aren't just
15 thinking, "Oh, maybe I'll try teaching." They're
16 going to be really dedicated candidates for the
17 district. So New York City needs to know these
18 people want to teach in and for New York City, which
19 the recruitment side of the DOE I think does really
20 beautifully, as somebody who used to work with them.
21 The second is that the programs themselves have to be
22 sure that they have content, pedagogy and human--
23 how-- human development, how people learn. All three
24 of those things are important, and that pedagogic
25

1
2 part includes things like culturally responsive
3 pedagogy and content specific pedagogy. Those things
4 people pretty much agree on. The other two pieces
5 are the pieces that systemically we don't have going
6 between all of our teacher preparation programs and
7 all districts across this country. The first is this
8 concept of the clinically-rich practice over the
9 course of a full year, and it is the full year that
10 changes the picture. If I'm a district or a school
11 and you give me three people over the course of a
12 full year so I have another body in the class, I have
13 a helper. But you give me one person who begins the
14 beginning of the school year with me who meets my
15 students with me, those people if they're with me all
16 year long, suddenly I have a partner in my teaching,
17 and that changes the dynamic. So that's what's
18 really critical about the year-long. And the fourth
19 principle is it's in deep partnership with the
20 district, so the DOE would be really important in
21 this work. The sustainable funding means that they
22 have to have the money so that everybody can-- I'm
23 sorry, the money needs to be secure so it's not just
24 a grant-funded. You don't have to apply for it all
25 the time, and finally, it's enough for people. In

1
2 New York City enough money might be more than in a
3 rural area in terms of what the candidate might need.
4 We work across the nation in supporting district and
5 teacher preparation providers to think about creative
6 ways to reallocate existing dollars towards this sort
7 of effort. And here's an example using the kinds of
8 things we're doing of an average-sized district,
9 which we certainly know New York City is not.
10 Average sized district might have 190 teachers. In
11 that 190 teachers, about seven percent of the
12 district's instructional budget is spent on
13 substitutes. That's a big chunk. Another 11 percent
14 is spent on para-professionals. Somewhere between
15 6,000 and 18,000 dollars a year per teacher is spent
16 on professional development, and about 600 dollars a
17 week is spent on things like summer school and
18 afterschool programs. Those are dollars you can take
19 proportions of and structure the preparation program
20 in ways that those dollars can help support the
21 residency. So, that's the kind of work that we're
22 doing across the country in helping figure out the
23 financial models behind this so that it actually can
24 be sustainably funded. And I'll turn it back over to
25 Shael.

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2 SHAEL SURANSKY: I'm conscious of our
3 time. Do you want us to pause here and wait--

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Why
5 don't you go on with the immigrant piece of it. I'm
6 very interested in that.

7 SHAEL SURANSKY: Okay.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I do want to follow up
9 with questions, and then we'll go to the rest of the
10 members of the panel as well.

11 SHAEL SURANSKY: Okay. So, on the next
12 slide I note two programs that have existed in New
13 York City, one that's still going and one that ended
14 a few years ago that were really good examples of
15 residency programs. One was a partnership with Hunter
16 and New Visions. The other one was a partnership
17 with Long Island University and the International
18 Network of Schools. Both of those were small. Both
19 of them got federal funding in addition to some
20 district funding, but they were great examples of
21 these year-long residencies, and I think building on
22 models like that is a powerful avenue for the City to
23 explore, and I think-- I note the second one because
24 that one was dedicated to training teachers of
25 immigrant students. And if you look on the next

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2 slide, we know that 14.5 percent of our students are
3 English language learners. We also know that almost
4 22 percent of our English language learners have been
5 classified as having a disability, which is a sign
6 that there's something wrong, because we know that
7 the incidents of learning disabilities in our
8 population never rises to that level. And so many
9 children are getting that classification because
10 there aren't the right supports for them as they're
11 coming into school, and teachers haven't been given
12 the support and training they need to serve kids who
13 are English language learners. That results in
14 graduation rates that are dramatically lower. We see
15 in New York City roughly 40 percent. Around the
16 state it's even lower. We have an obligation to
17 think about how do we support the educators to
18 support the students. And so on the next slide you
19 can see that there-- this is not a simple thing to
20 do. Working with diverse language communities
21 requires skills. It requires skills both on an
22 academic level and learning about language
23 development, but also skills in working with families
24 and working with young people around their identity
25 development and supporting them as they navigate

1
2 complex changes in their lives. And so if we want
3 our teachers to be in a position to actually provide
4 that support for kids, we actually need to create
5 much, much stronger training programs, and right now
6 our schools across the City are struggling to comply
7 with part 154 which is a state regulation supporting
8 the language development of our students. So there's
9 a real dramatic need out there that principals are
10 feeling, and it's not just a New York City problem,
11 but New York City has almost two-thirds of all the
12 English language learners in New York State. And
13 then finally I would just note that in that broad
14 group of English language learners, 75 percent of
15 them are in ESL programs. The rest are in bilingual
16 programs. Both of those are powerful avenues, and we
17 have shortage areas both for our bilingual teachers,
18 for our ESL teachers and bilingual special ed. as
19 well. And so there's work that we need to invest in
20 around this population of students, and I think at
21 this moment in history there's a real opportunity for
22 New York City to make a statement and say that we're
23 investing in our immigrant students and the teacher
24 is there to support them, and I think connecting
25 these two ideas would be very, very powerful. If

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2 we're going to train a new cohort of teachers to work
3 with our immigrant students, let's train them right.
4 Let's give them the resources they really need. Let's
5 train them in great schools with great mentor
6 teachers, partnering those schools with teacher
7 preparation providers, giving them that residency,
8 and yes, it will be more expensive, but it's money
9 worth spending and it's an investment that we should
10 seriously consider.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, thank you, and
12 actually for me it's the first time I'm hearing this
13 idea being hatched out. I mean, maybe some
14 variations of it, but not as fully as you've been
15 able to explain here for me today, and also with the
16 testimony that was given by the UFT earlier. So, you
17 spoke about the power of teacher residencies, and
18 what I'm hearing in your testimony was that something
19 I experienced as a teacher myself which is that often
20 times we get very intelligent people who could come
21 into the system or who really lacked any idea what it
22 actually meant to be in front of 32, 33, 34 kids
23 whatever it may be, and a lot of that had to do with
24 a whole bunch of issues, and I'll talk a little bit
25 more about that as well. Just very basically,

1
2 though, I think currently you have to have student
3 teaching credits, and I think that's done probably on
4 the undergrad level in anticipation of a master's
5 degree. Would residencies be able to replace--

6 KAREN DEMOSS: [interposing] Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: student teaching
8 credits and/or credits toward the master's Degree
9 requirement?

10 KAREN DEMOSS: At both the undergraduate
11 and the graduate level, the student teaching credit
12 hours are assigned by the higher ed. institution as
13 sort of a validation of those hours, and it's a
14 question of the hours and support, both of which
15 happen in the residency. The answer would be yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, the residency--

17 SHAEL SURANSKY: [interposing] Yeah, and
18 just one other point. There's different standards
19 for how much student teaching a teacher gets.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Right.

21 SHAEL SURANSKY: So, if you're in one of
22 our fast track programs where we're dealing with
23 shortages, you might get six weeks of student
24 teaching. If you're going to a regular sort of CUNY
25 program, you may get up to four months. It's very,

1
2 very rare that you get a full year. That's the thing
3 that's often missing, and so that six weeks which
4 happens in summer school usually or that four months
5 which is actually not really a full semester even
6 means that the teacher never really-- the student
7 teacher never gets fully integrated into the life of
8 the school, and they can't be depended on in the same
9 way as teacher resident can be.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, teacher residency
11 seems to me to be more of an emersion into the
12 overall teaching day rather than somebody's who's
13 looking for six credits--

14 KAREN DEMOSS: [interposing] Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I think is the
16 minimum, and part of that time is spent actually in
17 the classroom. The other part of that time is spent
18 in a college situation talking about their
19 experiences in the classroom.

20 KAREN DEMOSS: Yes, in the-- very often
21 when programs move to residencies, some of the
22 coursework that might have been on the say higher ed.
23 institutions campus may be moved to a school site if
24 the school site becomes a residency partner site. You
25 might do some of your pedagogy courses at the school

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2 site after classes at the school, and the hours in
3 contact with-- especially at the graduate level, the
4 hours in contact with the faculty member in the
5 course may be reduced because there's hours in
6 contact with the students and the cooperating
7 teacher, and very often the faculty member inside the
8 classroom as part of the learning experience.

9 SHAEL SURANSKY: And one of the great
10 things that happens in some of these programs is you
11 get really strong veteran teachers who are-- who
12 become adjunct faculty members and actually are both
13 mentoring the teacher in the school and helping to
14 teach some of the courses. And if you think about
15 this question of retention of our senior teachers,
16 folks who've mastered the craft, don't want to become
17 administrators that want to learn to do something
18 else, this is a great part of a career ladder where
19 they can take on a new kind of responsibility of
20 training new teachers which frankly, if you think
21 about where is the talent in New York city to train
22 new teachers, it's not in the-- anywhere outside of
23 our schools, you know? There's great expertise in
24 all of our teacher training programs, but the people
25 who know how to train teachers are in our schools. I

1
2 mean, we need to take advantage of connecting those
3 experts, those master teachers with the faculty
4 members, the teacher training programs, partnering
5 them together to create a seamless experience for new
6 teachers. And I think if you do that, then the depth
7 of learning that happens during the training
8 experience totally changes what the new teacher then
9 brings to the table when they become the teacher of
10 record, and the kind of turnover that we see even
11 though it's better than our cities around the
12 country, we can drop it way down, and that'll save us
13 a lot of money that we can reinvest into classrooms.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, I would guess
15 that a lot of the reason for teacher turnover is
16 classroom management issues more than it is anything
17 else, from my own experiences. This program would
18 work with teachers on those types of issues? I was,
19 as I mentioned earlier, I don't know if you were here
20 Mr. Suransky, but I was a mentor in the Teaching
21 Fellows Program. Very bright guy, he was a cook book
22 editor [sic], and he came in very well-intended, and
23 but classroom management was a big problem. So this
24 program would work on those skills?

1
2 SHAEL SURANSKY: Yeah. I mean, and great
3 teacher training programs recognize that for teachers
4 to connect with young people, particularly young
5 people who may be challenging, you need to master
6 your own emotional intelligence, and so you need to
7 work through issues of how do I use authority. How
8 do I speak in ways that convince the young people I'm
9 working with that I'm fair and that I mean what I
10 say, and that I'm going to set limits and stick with
11 them, and that's a skill that is not easy to learn,
12 particularly for folks who have never worked with
13 children before who are young themselves, and so you
14 need to see it happen over and over again in
15 different versions and have folks who have been doing
16 this mentor you through that process, and you also
17 need a space to reflect. You need to be able to step
18 away from the classroom, go back to the seminar or
19 your class and think through, "What did I learn from
20 that? How does that connect to what I'm learning
21 about child development? How does that connect to
22 what I'm learning about culturally responsive
23 practice? How can I now shift my behavior and try
24 something different next time?" When you combine
25 that practical experience with that reflection I

1
2 think you're going to see folks go much faster in
3 mastering those basics of running a classroom.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I smile because when
5 I hear you say, "I mean what I say," I remember
6 principals telling me, you know, "If you threaten to
7 do something, you better be prepared to be able to do
8 it." So that fits right in with that. You mentioned
9 also in your testimony about tracking diversity. I
10 think-- how do you go about that, and just elaborate
11 further on that for me.

12 KAREN DEMOSS: So, we do know that many
13 of the quality alternative programs-- the Teaching
14 Fellows is one of them-- they are able to track
15 diverse candidates. That is driven in large part
16 because the candidates have a means to survive as
17 they're doing their program. That's the key in terms
18 of getting diversity and through our entire pipeline
19 is that people can afford to be teachers, to train to
20 do their preparation. We know of programs where
21 people really want to be teachers and they're going
22 through the regular system and they're working three
23 jobs while they're doing their student teaching. You
24 can't really focus in that kind of situation. We
25 know of programs that don't provide a stipend for the

1
2 resident, and the resident is sleeping in the car at
3 night. So that's just not going to provide a good
4 pipeline, a really solid approach, to providing
5 everybody the kind of quality preparation they need,
6 so they've got to have a stipend in order for them to
7 be able to live, and if you give that stipend, you
8 can attract a diverse set of people into the
9 beautiful field of teaching.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. And we've
11 gone on a little bit here, but I do also just want to
12 say that I believe that getting people to understand
13 cultural differences in the classroom also is really
14 important, and I heard you mention that in your
15 testimony also. So thank you very much for that.

16 KAREN DEMOSS: Thank you.

17 SHAEL SURANSKY: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I just want to go to
19 our next panelist as well and give them the
20 opportunity to speak, so.

21 KELLY PARKES: Great. Thank you for the
22 opportunity to speak today. I'm Kelly Parkes, an
23 Associate Professor involved in teacher preparation
24 in the arts and humanities at Teachers College.
25 We're the first and largest graduate school of

1
2 education in the country. We have approximately 30
3 teacher preparation programs, and our roots are in
4 supporting education to the highest level possible.
5 We prepare teachers in all of the content areas, as
6 well as early childhood, elementary, bi-lingual
7 teachers, and specialists. Our Teaching Residents at
8 Teaches College Program, which is called TR@TC, where
9 we prepare teachers specifically to work in high-
10 needs schools in New York is now in its seventh year,
11 and we are seeing a retention rate of 94 percent of
12 teachers in their schools. We're deeply invested in
13 preparing teachers practically for the demands of
14 their profession. Today I want to acknowledge the
15 initiative of the Education Department and offer some
16 insight and some feedback to the Council. The first
17 is the plan of the Board of Regents to remove the
18 exam requirement for certified out of state teachers.
19 For recruitment, this is an excellent initiative.
20 However, as an improved teacher preparation school,
21 all of our graduating students still have this exam
22 requirement, that is the ALST, the EAS, a CST exam,
23 and the edTPA, a cumulative cost of approximately 800
24 dollars for each graduating student. These costs are
25 prohibitive, and we're suggesting some

1
2 reconsideration of the requirement for student
3 teachers is now needed. There is research evidence
4 to suggest that not one of these tests have strong
5 predicted validity for teaching effectiveness or
6 quality. So, a thorough review of the requirement of
7 these exams for initially certified teachers is now
8 essential. If this requirement is not reconsidered,
9 then perhaps teacher preparation programs could
10 receive additional support from the state for our
11 student teachers to access these exams. Secondly, I
12 wanted to underscore that we actively support and
13 encourage the continuation of state and city funding
14 of initiatives such as the Teacher Opportunity Corps.
15 Our faculty working within the My Brother's Keeper
16 program helped many new teachers of color find and
17 keep teaching positions in New York City schools. My
18 third point I'd like to share that the use of the GRE
19 as an admission requirement for teacher preparation
20 programs is problematic. The GRE requirement does
21 not actually raise the quality of teachers applying
22 to programs. It essentially prevents many potential
23 teachers, especially those of color, from even
24 applying. We really want to diversify our student
25 body which will also increase our teaching workforce

1
2 diversity; however, the GRE does not accurately
3 assess a teacher's full potential for university-
4 level achievement, let alone teaching, and it limits
5 access to graduate schools for many individuals,
6 especially women, students of color and other
7 minority group applicants. My fourth and final point
8 acknowledges the initiatives around teacher
9 evaluation. These are promising with test scores of
10 students being less prominent in the evaluation of
11 teachers. The concept of multiple measures in
12 teacher evaluation is strongly supported in research,
13 and we highly recommend that more contextual
14 formative and relative paths of teacher evaluation be
15 explored and implemented in order to promote
16 professional development and their full retention in
17 the workforce. In summary, we would like you to
18 consider private colleges like ours alongside CUNY
19 and SUNY as key partners in valuable assets in the
20 preparation of teachers to be recruited and retained
21 to teach in New York City schools. The partnership
22 and dialogue will ensure that our teachers are ready
23 and successful. So thank you again for your time
24 today.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Mr.
3 Bloomfield?

4 DAVID BLOOMFIELD: Thank you very much.
5 I want to make sure that everybody understands that
6 I'm speaking as an individual and certainly not
7 representing the CUNY position on teacher
8 certification, recruitment and retention. My remarks
9 will be short, supplemented by published materials
10 appended to my written testimony. Also I will
11 confine my testimony to just a small part of the
12 complex problems addressed here about teacher
13 recruitment and retention, but I want to specifically
14 talk about the choke point of certification. I know
15 that certification is not the responsibility of the
16 Council or the DOE, but certification defines the
17 pool of applicants available for City Department of
18 Education recruitment and thus retention, and if only
19 there were some rational relationship between who
20 gets certified, then recruited, then retained. But
21 as I observed in my recent opinion column for Gotham
22 Gazette, the system of certification and retention is
23 a sieve that screens more for those who persevere
24 through the procedural maze, than for talented
25 educators. So, as you labor to recommend changes to

1
2 the system of recruitment and retention, I urge you
3 to filter out the political expedient calls for
4 evermore continuous and specific standards, credits,
5 tests, and alike. Rather, think how a reasonably
6 able and committed person might prosper throughout a
7 career without being dissuaded by needless procedural
8 BS and conditions of employment. What hurdles might
9 be removed rather than what new obstacles placed in
10 their path? Children need teachers of compassion,
11 learning and experience, not dogged box-checkers, in
12 nerd [sic] to bureaucracy so often favored by the
13 present system. Thank you for your kind attention.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much,
15 and I actually read your column this morning before
16 coming to the hearing. So that was great, and I do
17 agree with you that, you know, a test and other
18 standards, etcetera, don't necessarily make for a
19 good teacher, and I think that your point is well-
20 received on that. And I'm glad to see that the trend
21 is now going away from a lot of that, and I do
22 believe that in Professor Kelly Parkes' testimony as
23 well, you spoke about that trend in terms of using
24 multiple measures in teacher evaluations. To be
25 honest with you, I think in some ways, you know, the

1 stress and the unfairness of the way in which certain
2 teachers had test scores used to evaluate them was
3 really unfair. I mean, if you're a gym teacher and
4 you have to share the teaching-- the test scores for
5 somebody that's a third grade teacher when you've not
6 really had the opportunity to teach reading in gym is
7 unfair, and I think that that system is just not the
8 right way to go about evaluating teachers, and I
9 think it prevents people from coming into the
10 profession. Why do you believe, Professor Parkes,
11 about the GRE as an obstacle to teacher recruitment?

12
13 KELLY PARKES: For us it--

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Can you
15 hit that mic?

16 KELLY PARKES: There it is, yes. As
17 they're coming into the teacher preparation programs
18 not only in colleges like ours, but across the state,
19 it's-- a, it's an expensive test. B, it
20 discriminates against students that have had limited
21 education. They might have great potential for
22 teaching, but limited access to a good education
23 through the very system they're trying to now enter
24 as a teacher. So, like all standardized tests, if you
25 haven't had the opportunity for a quality education,

1 then it's a difficult test to pass, and there's no--
2 and even if you-- I can send you and follow up with
3 the documentation from the ETS, they even acknowledge
4 that this test doesn't predict the ability to teach.
5 Very slimly predicts their ability to be successful
6 in graduate school. So, as a require-- as an
7 impediment for recruiting for teaching, it simply
8 doesn't tell us anything about how a candidate can
9 teach. So why we're requiring it for every single
10 student to enter a preparation seems a waste of mind-
11 - waste of time, and it doesn't help us recruit
12 better teachers.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, similar to what
15 Professor Bloomfield was saying in terms of the use
16 of tests as well.

17 KELLY PARKES: Uh-hm.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Alright, well
19 thank you very much for coming in. I appreciate your
20 testimony, and thank you to all the panelists.

21 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

22 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.

24 Okay, is Maryanne Kiley [sp?], Educators for
25 Excellence, here? No. Lesley Guggenheim from the

1
2 New Teachers Project? Yeah. Charissa Fernandez from
3 Teach for America, I know she's here. So let me also
4 ask Maria Gill [sp?], is she still here?

5 MARIA GILL: [off mic] Yeah.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yeah, okay. Come on
7 up, please, Maria, Coalition for Educational Justice,
8 and Leonie Haimson from Class Size Matters. And then
9 we have one panel. If there's anybody else who has
10 not yet signed up and wants to speak, make sure you
11 get oen of these papers form the Sergeant at Arms
12 over here, and then we'll let you give testimony.
13 Okay, can I ask you if you'd raise your right hand,
14 and do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the
15 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and
16 to answer Council Member questions honestly? Okay.
17 Alright, who'd like to start and where?

18 LESLEY GUGGENHEIM: Good afternoon. My
19 name is Lesley Guggenheim, and I'm a Vice President
20 at TNTP overseeing our teacher pipeline and
21 recruitment work. For those of you who aren't
22 already familiar with my organization, TNTP is a
23 national nonprofit founded by teachers. Over the
24 last 20 years we've partnered with more than 200
25 school systems across the country to help put great

1 teachers and school leaders in front of the kids who
2 need them the most. Along the way we've recruited
3 and trained more than 50,000 teachers, including over
4 20,000 here in New York City through our New York
5 City Teaching Fellows program. I'm pleased to be
6 here today to give you a national perspective on
7 teacher shortages many school districts have
8 struggled with over the last few years. We've helped
9 several districts pinpoint the root causes of their
10 recruitment and retention challenges, and what we
11 found is that the conventional wisdom on teacher
12 shortages suffers from four big misconceptions.
13 First, we often talk about teacher shortages in terms
14 of an overall shortage of applicants, but the truth
15 is that districts usually face a more nuanced,
16 mismatch between supply and demand. They don't just
17 need a particular number of teachers, they need
18 specific number of teachers in specific subjects and
19 specialties. For example, many districts struggling
20 to fill all of their teaching vacancies have more
21 than enough applicants for elementary school
22 positions, but not enough in subjects like math,
23 science and special education. In 2016 more than 40
24 states experienced teacher shortages in these kinds
25

1 of critical subject areas. It's a trend that's
2 plagued schools for decades and it's a serious
3 problem, but it doesn't necessarily reflect an
4 overall failure of teacher recruitment or a lack of
5 interest in the teaching profession. Second, we
6 often frame teacher shortages as recruitment
7 problems, but as we've heard some of today, the truth
8 is that retention matters just as much. Our own
9 research has shown that districts across the country
10 lose thousands of great teachers every year that they
11 should have been able to teach, teachers we call
12 irreplaceable, because it's nearly impossible for a
13 school to hire someone as effective when they leave.
14 The more great teachers schools can retain, the fewer
15 vacancies they need to fill each year, the less
16 likely they are to face shortages. The third
17 misconception is that we can solve teacher shortages
18 with short-term incentives for new teachers or other
19 quick fixes without addressing larger systemic
20 challenges. These ideas can help on the margins, but
21 do nothing to address the barriers keeping huge
22 numbers of talented people from even considering
23 teaching. I'll give you just oen example. We're in an
24 era where teachers, especially those in science, math
25

1
2 and engineering need to know their subjects more
3 deeply than ever before to prepare students for the
4 challenges of college and a 21st century career.

5 Yet, certification requirements and the structure of
6 the teaching profession itself effectively exclude a
7 huge number of people who fit that bill, experts in
8 other professions who have deep content knowledge and
9 an interest in teaching. That's because most states
10 require teachers to complete a university-based
11 certification program before they can be considered
12 for a permanent teaching license, often requiring
13 year's long commitment and tens of thousands of
14 dollars in tuition that's too burdensome for most
15 people with established careers and financial
16 obligations. Consider this from the point of view of
17 someone working in an accounting department at a big
18 insurance company who's always wanted to pursue
19 teaching. The neighborhood high school is desperate
20 for math teachers, the subject she majored in, but
21 her only path to the classroom would be to give up
22 her job, enroll in a preparation program and
23 ultimately teach fulltime. She can't afford to do
24 that. She's lost a chance to pursue a passion, and
25 students have lost the opportunity to learn math from

1 someone who knows and loves the subject. It's likely
2 those students will instead end up with a substitute
3 or out-of-license teacher or perhaps lose the
4 opportunity to take an advanced math course, and all
5 because nobody was available to teach the course.
6 Hopefully, that example gives you a sense of the
7 serious consequences that flow from these
8 misunderstandings. When districts fail to diagnose
9 the real causes of teacher shortages, they can't fix
10 them. The result is persistent vacancies in critical
11 subject areas, too few teachers able to teach modern
12 college and career-ready standards and a troubling
13 lack of diversity within the teacher workforce.
14 We've talked about diversity today, but it doesn't
15 get enough attention in my view. We know that
16 students perform better in schools when they have
17 teachers who reflect their background and life
18 experience. Yet, most students of color are unlikely
19 to have that experience. While 17 percent of the
20 students in K-12 public schools are black, black
21 teachers make up just eight percent of the teaching
22 force. Too few black college students are even
23 considering going into teaching today, a problem
24 that's only exacerbated by the unnecessary barriers
25

1 of entry that I discussed, as the previous panelists
2 as they talked about certification exams and other
3 barriers. I promise you four misconceptions about
4 teacher shortages, and the good news is that the last
5 one provides some hope. We often think of teacher
6 shortages like droughts, forces of nature that school
7 systems can neither predict nor control. In fact,
8 there's a lot that school systems can do to improve
9 the quality of their teacher pipeline year in and
10 year out and address the underlying problems that
11 lead to teacher shortages. It was exciting to hear
12 the work that Amy Way discussed. I think a lot of
13 these are happening here in New York City. Districts
14 should focus on forecasting their teaching vacancies
15 earlier and more accurately, being sure to take in
16 account long-term demographic trends, and coordinate
17 with local teacher preparation programs. In one
18 district we studied, rising enrollment was likely to
19 require more than 100 new pre-k teachers within a
20 next few years, and at the same time the number of
21 English language learners in the district is expected
22 to grow steadily for the next decade. These trends
23 will require major adjustments to the district, to
24 that district's recruitment strategy, but because
25

1 that district had enough year time, multi-year time
2 to plan for that, they can start that work
3 immediately. Districts can also take common sense,
4 low-cost steps to retain more of their top teachers.
5 Sometimes simply encouraging principals to ask their
6 best teachers to stay is enough to make a big
7 difference in retention rates. Districts can also
8 invest in innovative approaches to teacher
9 certification that creates opportunities for para-
10 professionals and content experts who are working in
11 other fields by lowering barriers to entering the
12 profession. While holding a high-performance
13 standard for earning certification, districts could
14 create reliable new sources of teachers who can meet
15 the demands of today's teaching profession in the
16 highest needs subjects. None of these ideas are
17 theoretical. Many schools systems across the country
18 are adopting them, and teachers and students are
19 already benefitting. Thank you again for inviting me
20 today.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Next?

23 CHARISSA FERNANDEZ: Good afternoon,
24 Chairman Dromm and other guests. My name is Charissa
25 Fernandez, and I'm the Executive Director of Teach

1
2 for America here in New York City. Thank you for
3 holding this hearing today on this important topic
4 and allowing me to present my testimony, identifying,
5 attracting and retaining diverse talent for our New
6 York City schools is urgent. And I support many of
7 the strategies that have been proposed by my
8 colleagues here today. However, until we can figure
9 out how to scale a number of these initiatives, Teach
10 for America has been working with New York City to
11 meet immediate needs for the past 26 years. Teach
12 for America's mission is to enlist, develop and
13 support our nation's most promising future leaders to
14 strengthen the movement for educational equity. Our
15 core members commit to teach for at least two years
16 and specifically in low-income, high-need urban and
17 rural communities in 53 regions around the country.
18 New York City was one of the charter regions of Teach
19 for America, and we've been working with the New York
20 City Department of Education to find teachers for
21 some of the hardest to staff schools in our cities--
22 in our city. Six years ago we also began providing
23 teachers for early childhood education in community-
24 based organizations. Today there are 2,400 Teach for
25 America educators working in New York City public

1 schools. Our teacher force in New York City includes
2 400 first and second-year teachers who we call our
3 core members and 1,700 alumni teachers who completed
4 their two-year commitment and continue to teach
5 today. Collectively, Teach for America teachers
6 serve more than 95,000 students in New York City
7 annually. We also have approximately 300 alumni who
8 are now working as school leaders, as principals and
9 assistant principals, and as we have discussed today,
10 the leadership of the school is very critical to
11 retaining talent. Our first and second-year teachers
12 are working in 173 schools in the Bronx, Brooklyn and
13 Manhattan, and we focus our partnership in working
14 with the schools that have at least 80 percent of
15 students who qualify for free and reduced price
16 lunch. We estimate that 83 percent of our students
17 in schools are living in poverty and that 93 percent
18 of our students are black and Latino. So our
19 teachers are meeting a critical need for our city
20 schools. They're concentrated in high-poverty
21 neighborhoods such as East Harlem, Washington
22 Heights, Highbridge, Hunts Point, Sound View, Bedford
23 Stuyvesant, Brownsville, and Crown Heights, and
24 critically they teach in the licensed area where the
25

1 demand far outpaces supply. Forty-five percent of
2 our current core members are licensed in special
3 education. Fourteen percent are licensed in STEM,
4 and 10 percent in early childhood. Nationally, we
5 have more than 140 recruiters working on hundreds of
6 college campuses across the country and our
7 recruiters seek candidates who have demonstrated
8 academic and leadership skills and have experience
9 working in low-income communities. Importantly, we
10 seek people who might not otherwise have considered
11 careers in education. Teach for America has a
12 rigorous selection process. Last year we accepted
13 just 14 percent of 37,000 applicants, and the average
14 GPA of our new teachers is 3.4. Once we find these
15 people, we help to reduce the barriers to entering
16 the profession by helping to cover some of the cost
17 while they are training before they're earning
18 paychecks, and we also enroll them as Americore
19 members which helps to support the cost of earning
20 their Master's Degree which is required in the first
21 two years. Locally, we've invested in a Director of
22 Recruitment Partnerships who is dedicated to creating
23 sustainable talent pipelines by collaborating with
24 other nonprofit organizations, our current core
25

1
2 members and alumni and colleges where our national
3 recruitment team does not have a presence. So we
4 work closely with New York City Men Teach, and we're
5 also working with Jump Start, Breakthrough, Peer
6 Health Exchange, and Practice Makes Perfect to name a
7 few. Teach for America has prioritized teacher
8 diversity, and today we're the most diverse teacher
9 pipeline in the nation. Nationally, more than half
10 of our incoming teachers identify as teachers of
11 color. One in two come from low-income backgrounds,
12 and one in three are the first in their family to
13 graduate from college. And of critical importance at
14 this moment in our country, more than 50 of our
15 accepted applicants this year have deferred action
16 for childhood arrival status, which is at risk right
17 now. Here in New York City our diversity is even
18 more pronounced. Among our 2016 cohort of teachers,
19 62 percent identify as people of color. Fifty-three
20 percent come from low-income backgrounds. Forty-
21 three percent are native New Yorkers, and 43 percent
22 are first generation college students, 20 percent of
23 whom are graduates of CUNY, SUNY and NYU. And eight
24 percent of our core identify as LGBT. We understand
25 the value of teacher retention and encourage our core

1 members to stay beyond their two-year commitment. We
2 also know that we can't do this work alone, and so in
3 October we partnered with TNTP to put into practice
4 some of the recommendations that they've made in
5 their Irreplaceables report, collaborating with our
6 coaches and the principals of our partner schools to
7 help retain teachers, not only our second-year core
8 members, but all of their teachers. Because our core
9 members spend the majority of time in the schools
10 where they work, teachers like-- where they work is
11 essential, and teachers like all professionals need
12 to feel successful, supported and valued. They also
13 want opportunities to develop professionally and to
14 build their leadership. As such, we paid special
15 attention to the schools that we partner with to
16 ensure that our teachers will be both challenged and
17 supported in those setting. We also have been
18 working to place our teachers in schools where they
19 have a connection to the community, because we
20 believe that will support retention. Teach for
21 America also provides core members with ongoing
22 support in addition to the mentor that all new
23 teachers receive in their school. We provide them
24 with coaching and we offer fellowship programs as
25

1 well as affinity groups. In our most recent report
2 on third-year teacher retention indicates that 78
3 percent of our teachers remained in the classroom for
4 a third year. Teach for America is committed to
5 building on these successes and hopes that the City
6 Council will consider investing in helping many
7 organizations to bring more diverse teacher talent to
8 New York City schools that need it most. We're eager
9 to bring in more teachers who reflect the backgrounds
10 of our students and to fill some of the highest need
11 licensed areas in New York City including STEM, early
12 childhood and special education. Thank you for the
13 opportunity to share these experiences.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And just before we go
16 to Maria Gill, in relation to the testimony from both
17 you and Ms. Guggenheim, you know, we are aware of the
18 issues with licensing on the state level, and we also
19 have brought those questions up on numerous occasions
20 to the DOE, to the UFT, etcetera, so forth and so on,
21 and we agree that there needs to be a path to
22 certification for those who are coming in from-- and
23 they're experts in the other professions, in their
24 own professions, to be able to come to the classroom.
25 So we hope to make some progress on that. It's a

1
2 state issue, but I'm glad that you brought it up as
3 an obstacle to certification. And also, Ms.
4 Fernandez, I visited, I think, one of your schools up
5 in Highbridge, and I was quite impressed with what
6 was going on. I think the principal as well was a
7 Teach for America alumni, and then many of the
8 teachers if not all the teachers were also Teach for
9 America in the school. You know, that being said I
10 want to congratulate you also on the recruitment
11 efforts for men of color and teachers of color in
12 general, as well. I do have one question. In your
13 chart, which I don't know that everybody can see, but
14 you mentioned in here in your testimony that the core
15 members first and second-year teachers, 51 percent of
16 your members are in district schools, but then you're
17 alumni, it drops down to 36 percent in district
18 schools. So what is going on in the district schools
19 that those teachers want to get out?

20 CHARISSA FERNANDEZ: Well, I'm not sure
21 that-- I'm not sure the extent to which it is their
22 wanting to get out of the district schools as much as
23 there are-- there's a lot of competition for teachers
24 and there is very heavy recruitment that goes on, and
25 I do think that what the schools can do and I think

1
2 are doing increasingly a lot of the initiatives we
3 heard described today really helped to create an
4 environment that makes it more welcoming for teachers
5 to stay in the schools where they're initially--
6 where they start their teaching, and we also are
7 thinking much more being much more strategic in terms
8 of where we are placing teachers initially as well so
9 that there's a better matching and that people are
10 more inclined to stay there. That I think is-- we've
11 talked today also about how critical relationships
12 are, and we really would like to see not only people
13 staying the profession, but to see them staying in
14 the schools where they start, where they've
15 established relationships both with students and
16 families and with their colleagues.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, also in the same
18 chart it says that first and second-year teachers, 39
19 percent are charter school teachers, and the alumni
20 at 59 percent. So a 20 percent difference there.
21 That's got to be something, though, to the structure,
22 no? In terms of how teachers are feeling about
23 staying in the schools that they're initially
24 assigned to.

25

1
2 CHARISSA FERNANDEZ: Well, I think there
3 could be two things going on there. One is just
4 there has been-- there was a time when 95 percent or
5 100 percent of our teachers taught in district
6 schools, and it wasn't-- there was a period in the
7 late 2000's when there were no teacher openings and
8 the DOE wasn't hiring, and so a lot more of our
9 teachers were going into district schools. So many
10 of the-- so there was just a period of time even when
11 I arrived three years ago, 65 percent of our teachers
12 were being placed in charter schools. So part of it
13 is that there was a period when more of them were
14 starting there and some of them-- and so they may
15 have stayed there. But we do see trends of teachers
16 moving after they've completed their two-year
17 commitment to charter schools, but that seems to have
18 slowed in the last two years.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you very
20 much. That's very interesting numbers there, yeah.
21 Okay. Maria Hill [sic]?

22 MARIA GILL: Yeah, good afternoon. My
23 name is Maria Gill, and I am a public school parent
24 and mother of six beautiful girls and a member of
25 Make the Road New York and the Coalition for

1 Educational Justice. I am here to testify because
2 teacher recruitment and retention are very important
3 to me as a mother, and to the organization that I
4 belong to. In particular, we are concerned about the
5 fact that while 85 percent of New York City public
6 school student are black or Latino, only 34 percent
7 of public school teacher are black or Latino. Our
8 children need qualified teachers in their classroom
9 who can be role models, teachers who look like them,
10 who come from a similar background and can relate to
11 their experience. It is not healthy for our children
12 to go through day [sic] inside [sic] education and
13 never have a teacher who they can look and say, "That
14 could be me." This creates a cycle where children of
15 color don't have teachers who look like them and so
16 they don't think that teaching is for them, and then
17 they don't teaching as a career. It's also not
18 healthy for white [sic] children to go through their
19 whole education and not see teachers of color or have
20 them as role models. One thing the DOE could do to
21 address that is to create a "Grow Your Own" program
22 to recruit parents, para-professionals and school
23 aids to become teachers while helping to pay for the
24 education and training. This has been done separately
25

1
2 in their cities-- in other cities. One part of the
3 problem is that when teachers of color come into our
4 public school they don't stay long. They feel alone.
5 They face racism in schools, and they don't have the
6 support the need. The DOE needs to create a system
7 of support especially for teachers of color so that
8 they will stay in teaching. The DOE should also help
9 make schools in more positive places for teachers of
10 color by requiring all teachers, principals and other
11 school staff to participate in regular anti-bias
12 training where they look at [sic] their [sic] own--
13 at their own bias and how it's effected their
14 teaching. This will help to create a safer
15 environment for teachers of color in schools and
16 encourage them to stay. Another part of the problem
17 is that there are not enough black and Latino
18 principals and assistant principals to be role models
19 for teaching and mentor them. The DOE needs to
20 create a recruitment program especially for teachers
21 of color to become principals so they can help make
22 schools a safe space for other teachers of color to
23 grow. There are so many things that the DOE could do
24 to address this problem. We believe that any
25 solution that DOE comes up with has to focus on the

1
2 increasing diversity among teachers. Without that,
3 we will never have the schools that our children need
4 [inaudible].

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much,
6 Maria Gill, and thank you for your testimony. As you
7 know, when we met it's an issue of major importance
8 to me as well, and it's something that I want to
9 continue to work with you on especially in light of
10 the recent presidential election and how it impacts
11 our students. I don't know if I've said this story
12 here at this hearing before, but you know, in last
13 April I went to visit a school, PS 222 in Queens, and
14 when I got there the principal said to me, "Oh,
15 you're not going to believe what happened." I said,
16 "What?" She said, "Well, I was on the loud speaker
17 this morning, and I announced that you were coming to
18 the school, and I said Council Member Dromm will be
19 visiting our class, and a little girl in second grade
20 was very terrified because she heard it as Donald
21 Trump." And she was afraid that she was going to be
22 deported. And you know, this whole issue of racism,
23 xenophobia, issues that affect our immigrant
24 communities are of major importance to me, because I
25 know that this is an issue that our students are

1
2 dealing with on a daily basis. So, I really
3 appreciate you coming and we look forward to
4 continuing to work with you on these issues.

5 MARIA GILL: Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Leonie?

7 LEONIE HAIMSON: Yes, thank you, Chair
8 Dromm. Thank you for mentioning class size and
9 thanks to the other City Council Members who are not
10 here now who also did. I'm going to just briefly go
11 over some points in my testimony because it's getting
12 late, but I wanted to point out that 2004 City
13 Council survey of public school teachers nearly a
14 third of them with one to five years of experience
15 said they would-- it was unlikely that they would be
16 teaching in New York City schools in the next three
17 years, and the three causes of making them think that
18 they would leave were teacher pay, class size, and
19 student behavior problems. Now, we know that in the
20 last 10, 15 years teacher salaries have been
21 considerably raised, and yet at the same time class
22 sizes have gone up. And so I don't consider that a
23 fundamental improvement. In addition, I think it's
24 not as frequently pointed out as it should be how
25 class size plays into student discipline problems,

1
2 and there's a lot of talk about the need for
3 restorative justice, but I think one of the
4 fundamental problems we have is when we have classes
5 of 30 or more students do not feel engaged in
6 learning, they do not feel that they get enough
7 feedback from their teachers, and that's one of the
8 reasons that they act out. So, if we had smaller
9 classes, I think it would address both the need for a
10 more ongoing interaction with teachers for better
11 learning and better behavior from students as well.
12 A review of 11 separate class size studies showed the
13 positive impact of smaller classes with student
14 behavior. And then I'd like to just quickly describe
15 a study I did in the year 2000 when I worked for
16 Educational Priorities Panel. I actually went into
17 schools and interviewed principals and teachers in
18 the first year of the state early grade class size
19 reduction program which has now disappeared but was
20 very influential in bringing down class sizes very
21 quickly in many schools throughout the City in grades
22 K-3. One principal in a Harlem elementary school
23 spoke about how suspensions at her school had fallen
24 60 percent overnight because of the class size
25 reduction. Another principal observed management is

1
2 earlier, there are fewer discipline problems because
3 student needs are being met in the classroom for the
4 first time. We have time to invest in the whole
5 child and relate to the child at all levels. A
6 Brooklyn teacher explained, "If you have a child with
7 a disciplinary problem, you can get on top of it much
8 faster." And then there are other quotes that I have
9 in my testimony. And that many principals
10 independently predicted without me even asking that
11 the improvement in teacher morale would lead to much
12 less staff turnover in their schools. One teacher I
13 interviewed said that if classes' class sizes were
14 increased again she would leave New York City public
15 school because for the first time she knew what it
16 was really like to be able to teach rather than be a
17 policeman in the classroom, and no matter how much
18 money she was offered it wouldn't be worth it to stay
19 teaching in that school. One of the arguments
20 frequently made against class size reduction is the
21 need for recruitment of teachers. However, one of
22 the principals that I interviewed of a Harlem public
23 school said for the first time she had plenty of
24 candidates who wanted to teach in her school,
25 including ones who had experience levels because they

1 wanted to teach, to have the chance to teach in a
2 smaller class. And then I go into a study in
3 California that concluded that large classes
4 significantly increased teacher attrition levels.
5 Another study that analyzed data from New York
6 districts outside New York City concluded that
7 reducing class size is significantly lower teacher
8 attrition. And then in a recent UFT survey, 99
9 percent of teachers said reducing class size would be
10 the most effective reform to improve student
11 outcomes, far out-stripping any policy, including
12 implementing socioemotional learning, expanding pre-
13 k, community schools, or higher standards. Thus,
14 reducing class size would likely improve the
15 retention of qualified, experienced teachers, and
16 that would create in itself a synergistic effect,
17 further improving student outcomes. And one
18 principal described the impact of smaller classes on
19 her staff this way when I interviewed her, "With my
20 teachers I was always concerned about burnout. I was
21 a teacher myself and knew how difficult it was having
22 25 to 30 students. In this school, the staff turnover
23 used to be tremendous. It was in part because they
24 had so many kids they were doomed to failure, and no
25

1
2 one wants to fail. Now my teachers are happy. They
3 are enjoying the art of teaching again. Sometimes I
4 felt like we were all on an assembly line. Now we
5 can feel satisfaction because we have results and can
6 accomplish our goals." I'm very sad to say that in
7 many of these schools class sizes now are much higher
8 than they were in 200 when I did this report. So, we
9 have really fallen backwards. The UFT contract, the
10 class size limits have not changed in 50 years. Can
11 you imagine if salaries hadn't gone up in 50 years
12 what the outcry would be? I think there needs to be
13 much more focused attention on this, and I think that
14 if you reduce class sizes it would really address
15 many of the other problems that were mentioned today
16 including ELL students, special needs students and
17 many of the other problems in our schools. So, thank
18 you very much.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, thank you very
20 much, and you know that I'm in full agreement with
21 everything that you've said here. It's very
22 interesting to note that private schools when they
23 advertise in the newspapers, one of the very first
24 things they always say is "small class sizes" right?
25 And small class size is 12 to 15, maybe 18 kids.

1 We're talking double that in the City. And the years
2 when I had 38 kids in my class, you know, I loved my
3 class, don't get me wrong, and I love city kids as
4 well, but I figured I could go out to the island and
5 make, you know, 50 percent more than what I was
6 making in the City with 50 percent less the kids in
7 my class. So, you know, 38 kids, correcting 38
8 papers all the time, looking at 38 writing samples,
9 walking around the room in my classroom just
10 physically was hard to-- to move around the room. I
11 could hardly fit those kids into the classroom. So,
12 I don't understand any arguments about reducing class
13 size or what the resistance is to it. It's quite
14 obvious to me that when you have a smaller class size
15 that the effects will be very positive on the ability
16 to be able to educate the children in your class.
17 So, it's a continuing battle. I look forward to
18 continuing that fight with you, and we shall move
19 forward. Thank you.

20
21 LEONIE HAIMSON: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you everybody.

23 And our last panel, last but not least is Josephine
24 Ofili from Parent Action Committee CEC9, and DeJohn
25 Jung [sp?]

1 UNIDENTIFIED: Jones.

2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Jones, I'm sorry. IS
3 12 Townsend, okay, Parent Action Committee.

4 JOSEPHINE OFILI: Good evening City
5 Council Chair--

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] Let me
7 just swear you in because I do that for everybody
8 that comes into the committee, okay? Just bear with
9 me a minute. Okay, if I could ask you just to raise
10 your right hand? Do you solemnly swear or affirm to
11 tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
12 truth and to answer Council Member questions
13 honestly?

14 JOSEPHINE OFILI: Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, would you like
16 to start.

17 JOSEPHINE OFILI: Good evening City
18 Council Chairperson Mr. Daniel Dromm. My name-- and
19 guest. My name is Josephine Ofili. I'm the Bronx
20 Borough President Appointee for CEC9. I'm also the
21 parent leader of Parent Action Committee, PAC, a
22 multicultural group of parents and community members
23 whose goal is to improve the quality of education in
24 all schools in New York City. For so many years,
25

1 schools in District Nine were underperforming. In
2 terms of state's tests scores, we were in the second
3 to last place. New teachers coming into our district
4 would leave within five years. So PAC went into the
5 schools to find out why. We talked to parents,
6 teachers, students, principals, and other school
7 staff and found that new teachers were mostly
8 assigned to the highest needs schools and given few
9 resources and little professional support. They were
10 inadequately prepared for our schools. Most ended up
11 leaving feeling frustrated. Some even left the field
12 altogether disillusioned. Other issues included lack
13 of classroom management skills, lack of
14 socioemotional support for students, lack of parental
15 engagement, language and cultural barriers, and
16 limited knowledge of the school community and the
17 neighborhood. In 2013 PAC released a report entitled
18 Persistent Educational Failure that detailed the
19 problems our district was facing. District Nine was
20 in dire need of a different approach. Our plight
21 soon came to the attention of Ms. Brandy Center
22 [sp?], the Director of the New Teacher Center. With
23 her help and also our partnership with the Department
24 of Education and District Nine Superintendent, Mr.
25

1
2 Tichel Lozario [sp?], a plan of action was put in
3 place, develop instructional mentors, coaches and
4 school leaders to provide the support that teachers
5 need, and thereby reduced the high teacher turnover
6 in District Nine. Today, the New Teacher Center is
7 in eight of the highest needs and hardest to staff
8 school districts in New York City, District Seven,
9 Nine, 11 and 12 through Department of Education
10 funding, and District Five, Eight, 10 and 19 through
11 the Federal I3 Scale-up [sic] plan [sic]. Teachers
12 are getting on-the-job mentoring from experienced and
13 dedicated teacher peers to help improve classroom
14 instruction and student learning in order to be
15 effective in the classroom and invest in their
16 students in the community. Since the New Teacher
17 Center program went into effect in 2014/2015 school
18 year, new teachers, that's year one to three, have
19 seen an improvement in student performance in ELA and
20 math. To support this work, PAC designed a training
21 manual for teachers and school staff on effective
22 parent engagement that also addressed the challenges
23 that teachers face working with diverse school
24 communities and cultures. It's entitled Building
25 Family School Alliances for Effective Parent

1
2 Engagement. The manual includes information of
3 student-led parent/teacher conferences, cultural
4 sensitivity, and building relationships across
5 language barriers. It'll be available soon. We also
6 created a video of different role plays to support
7 the manual. City and state policies must focus more
8 attention to providing support for teachers. More
9 funding is needed to keep this initiative going. For
10 instance, offer more elite teaching and master
11 teacher positions, offer financial incentives such as
12 annual bonuses, housing and transportation subsidies,
13 and free parking for teachers. In closing, hiring
14 new teachers to replace those that leave will not
15 solve the problem if teachers do not get the needed
16 resources and support. The solution must be to
17 retain good effective teachers already in our schools
18 so as to ensure that our children get an excellent
19 education. Our children deserve the best. Thank
20 you.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much,
22 and that New Teacher Center, that was with the UFT?

23 JOSEPHINE OFILI: Yes--

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [interposing] And so
25 that's one of the programs that they were talking

1
2 about. I don't know if you were here when the UFT
3 gave testimony before.

4 JOSEPHINE OFILI: No, I came later.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: But it was interesting
6 that they have these New Teacher Centers, and that
7 was very helpful.

8 JOSEPHINE OFILI: Yes, it was.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright, and I
10 couldn't agree more with the support for the teachers
11 as well. So, I know as a teacher when I got that
12 support when I knew what to do or where to go, it was
13 very helpful to me. So, thank you.

14 JOSEPHINE OFILI: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. DeJohn?

16 DEJOHN JONES: Yes, good afternoon,
17 honorable Council Members and everyone here. Thank
18 you. As a New York City school parent, thank you for
19 addressing such an important topic. Nothing is more
20 important than our children and our children's
21 future, and without quality teachers their future
22 looks bleak. My name is DeJohn Jones. I'm a--
23 excuse me-- a parent leader with the Parent Action
24 Committee. The Parent Action Committee has worked
25 for decades to help address the problem of teacher

1 retention and mentoring in 2004. The Parent Action
2 Committee as part of the community collaborative to
3 improve District Nine, CC9, reached an agreement with
4 the Bloomberg Administration and the United
5 Federation of Teachers to create a pilot program in
6 10 schools for the Lead Teacher Program. Currently,
7 PAC is collaborating with the New Teacher Center to
8 advocate for teacher mentors and my fellow parent
9 leader Josephine Ofili. I would like to share with
10 you today a personal story. So, first I'm a-- I
11 should have said that in the beginning. I'm a parent
12 of five children, three high school students, high
13 school graduates, a 21-year-old whose birthday, he
14 just made 21 today, another 21-year-old and a 19-
15 year-old. So you could imagine. I have a 16 coming
16 out next year. My daughter was in the third grade
17 when she made a strong connection with her teacher.
18 She felt that her teacher was a mentor, but was both
19 shocked and hurt when she found out at the end of the
20 year that her teacher had left, having found another-
21 - excuse me, another position in another district,
22 excuse me. My daughter was devastated, and the
23 struggle that she faced the next year was very hard
24 as she tried to build trust and confidence with
25

1
2 another teacher. I was very active as I could be in
3 my daughter's school, and I frequently spoke to the
4 principal. When I asked him why the teacher left, he
5 told me that she had completed her Master's program
6 and now was going to teach in a different district.
7 He states that it was the revolving door of teachers
8 staying only to get their Masters and then moving to
9 better schools. This was not the only teacher that
10 left my children's school, but it was the most vivid.
11 I don't think it's fair that the teachers-- excuse
12 me, fair for teachers to build and learn with some
13 students only to go and teach children when they are
14 more experienced-- excuse me, other children when
15 they are more experienced. The children of the Bronx
16 deserve the same quality of teachers as students of
17 any district or borough. We actually need more
18 support because so many students are English language
19 learners, excuse me. We need to provide instances
20 for teachers to teach and stay in more challenging
21 districts in New York City, including Monterey [sp?]
22 or housing stipends. We need to provide trainings to
23 new teachers to adequately prepare them. We need to
24 recruit from the neighborhood and grow our own
25 teachers in New York City. Lastly, Master teachers

1 would be hired in those high-needs schools. We would
2 work in pairs providing both a model classroom for
3 new and struggling teachers as well as following--
4 excuse me-- allowing one of the teachers to support
5 other teachers in the classroom. Parents, teachers
6 and principals work together to hire the lead
7 teachers in each school, and part of the role of the
8 lead teachers were to work with families to develop a
9 family/school partnership. Each of the 10 pilot
10 program schools receive the additional funding
11 necessary.
12

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. I'm sure
14 there are teachers in the schools in District Nine
15 who stay, maybe teachers who have 20 or 25 years. Do
16 you know what makes those teachers stay? Why do they
17 feel differently than the teacher who left the
18 district, for example?

19 DEJOHN JONES: I could only speak from
20 personal experience. I just got involved in this
21 work a little over-- well, understanding what this
22 piece looks like for the past six months to a year,
23 but what I saw as a parent, the eagerness for
24 teaching was-- teachers were very frustrated. And as
25 one of the Councilmen said, you know, they were

1
2 facing issues with parking. I saw for myself traffic
3 cops or police officers targeting teachers whose cars
4 were like parked away from other residential areas.
5 We had our own parking lot and they were still being
6 ticket. So, even though I saw committed teachers, I
7 also saw the frustration in their eyes, and I think
8 it just comes with maybe the lack of resources and
9 the lack of support, and so the more I involved
10 myself in this work, the more I educate myself in
11 this work, I realized our teachers need a lot of
12 support at the end of the day. So, you know, you
13 have such a great incentive. We come to these New
14 York City schools and we get our Masters in two
15 years. I'll stay until the two years is up, but then
16 I'm out. You know? So, we definitely want to change
17 that mindset.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You know, one of the
19 things that was of great support to me as a teacher
20 was parent support.

21 DEJOHN JONES: right.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, when I had the
23 parents behind me and they had my back, I knew I
24 could say and speak and do and, you know, say how I

25

1
2 felt about certain things in the school. So, I think
3 you both said you were parents if I'm not mistaken.

4 DEJOHN JONES: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I think it's really
6 important that you continue to provide that support
7 to the teachers in your schools, and one of the ways
8 that you can do it is obviously through the CEC, but
9 just even on a very individual basis of going to the
10 teachers of your own children and being supportive of
11 them, because I know I found that to be invaluable. I
12 had a principal that told me, "Dromm, if you want to
13 be successful in this profession, get the parents
14 behind you." You know, you will be successful.

15 JOSEPHINE OFILI: And just so you know,
16 the DOE was generous to offer us a Tier One in
17 training and restorative circles, and we are learning
18 about cultural response training, and the DOE is
19 training me and I think 75 other parents for core
20 leadership. And so, you know, I definitely am happy
21 to take part in that and becoming more engaged in my
22 child's education. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, that's so
24 wonderful, because you want to know something?
25 That's something we've been fighting for from the

1
2 Council for a long period of time, so you just made
3 my day.

4 JOSEPHINE OFILI: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It's really good to
6 hear that and that you're involved in that is really
7 beautiful. So, keep informing us of that. Is this
8 your first time down for a hearing?

9 JOSEPHINE OFILI: It's my second, but I
10 always get nervous.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, and-- Okay, very
12 good. So I want to encourage you to keep coming to
13 the hearings, because it's always really important to
14 hear what the parents are saying. So, thank you very
15 much for coming.

16 JOSEPHINE OFILI: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And for waiting to
18 the end. I really appreciate it. Thank you.

19 DEJOHN JONES: Thank you very much.

20 JOSEPHINE OFILI: Have a good evening.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. So we do have
22 testimony from the Council of Supervisors and
23 Administrators which has been put into the record.
24 We have testimony from Lucas Lieu [sp?] from CEC3 and
25 from Educators for Excellence which is also going to

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be put into the written testimony. And I think with that we are about to adjourn. It is now 4:47, and this meeting is adjourned.

[gavel]

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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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 February 6, 2017