

BOARD OF EDUCATION
CITY OF CHICAGO
FY 2013 BUDGET HEARING

held on
July 11, 2012

STENOGRAPHIC REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had in
the above-entitled matter at Kennedy-King College,
740 West 63rd Street, Chicago, Illinois, commencing
at the time of 6:08 p.m. and concluding at 7:48 p.m.

PANEL BOARD MEMBERS:

MS. JADINE CHOU
MS. GRETCHEN BRUMLEY
MR. SEAN MURPHY
MS. GINGER OSTRO

ALSO PRESENT:

MS. CRYSTAL COOPER, Time Keeper
MR. DAVID VITALE
MR. ADRIAN WILLIAMS
MS. ANNETTE GURLEY
MR. HARRISON PETERSON
MR. JOSEPH DAVIS

Reported by: Carrie C. Cristiano, C.S.R.
License No.: 084-003153

1 MS. COOPER: Welcome and thank you for coming
2 to the CPS FY 13 budget hearing. My name is
3 Crystal Cooper and I'm a budget analyst in the
4 budget department at CPS.

5 I'd like to take a moment to have the
6 panel introduce themselves.

7 MS. CHOU: Hi. Good evening, everybody. My
8 name is Jadine Chou and I am the chief safety and
9 security officer for Chicago Public Schools.

10 MS. BRUMLEY: Good evening. I'm Gretchen
11 Brumley and I am the Deputy Chief of the Office of
12 Special Education.

13 MR. MURPHY: Good evening. My name is Sean
14 Murphy. I'm the Program Director for the Capital
15 Improvement Program.

16 MS. OSTRO: And I'm Ginger Ostro for the budget
17 also.

18 MS. COOPER: I would also like to introduce
19 David Vitale, our Board president, Adrian Williams,
20 the Englewood/Gresham chief and I'd like to thank
21 you for having our cabinets from our communications
22 team here, we have people from safety and security
23 and from governmental affairs and our budget
24 department. Thank you for helping with

1 registration.

2 Before we begin the process, I want to
3 read about the process and how it's going to go.
4 The budget hearing will begin at 6:00 p.m. and end
5 promptly at 8:00 p.m.

6 All who signed up to speak will be given
7 an opportunity to ask a question or two. The
8 meeting is adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

9 Those wishing to ask questions must sign
10 in from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. on the speaker's sign-in
11 sheet labeled operating budget or capital budget at
12 the registration table. Please note that no one
13 will be able to sign up to speak after 6:30 p.m.

14 CPS speakers will be limited to address
15 topics relating to the budget. Speakers are asked
16 to limit their questions to two minutes so that
17 everyone that would like to speak would have an
18 opportunity to do so.

19 If multiple speakers from the same
20 organization or school are listed, only one member
21 per organization or school will be allowed to speak
22 regarding the same issue.

23 If the speaker has a follow-up question,
24 we ask that you please speak to the CPS staff to

1 help you fill out a follow-up card. And we also
2 would like to acknowledge that we have a -- CPS has
3 a website where we can show you our thoughts on the
4 budget. So now I'd like to turn it over to Ginger
5 Ostro for the presentation.

6 MS. OSTRO: Thank you.

7 Again, as I mentioned, my name is Ginger
8 Ostro. And what we'd like to do is take about 20
9 minutes to share with you some information about
10 the CPS budget that we are presenting tonight.

11 So let me start by letting you know that
12 we're going to present two budgets to you today.
13 We're going to present information to you about our
14 operating budget which would pay for the day-to-day
15 expenses of the school district like teachers'
16 salaries or paying for utilities, paying for school
17 lunches, those kind of things.

18 And we're also going to present to you our
19 capital budget which pays for renovations of school
20 buildings, roofs, repairing chimneys, things like
21 that as well as investing in the classroom for labs
22 such as for career and high school education
23 programs.

24 Both budgets reflect our key priorities

4

1 which is investing our resources in areas that lead
2 to improved student outcomes and doing it in a way
3 that focuses on how we can best use those
4 resources. And our focus is on making sure that
5 every student graduates college and is career
6 ready.

7 Let me focus on the operating budget,
8 those day-to-day expenses. We have three core
9 goals that we're trying to achieve in this
10 budget.

11 First, to empower principals or school
12 leaders. Secondly, to expand high-quality school
13 options for parents, families and students and to
14 engage families and communities in our work.

15 We recognize that we do this in a time of
16 very tight financial constraints with our revenues
17 declining and I'll share with you some details
18 about that.

19 We have over the last two years made
20 significant cuts outside the classroom. We've
21 reduced \$400,000,000 of expenses in administration
22 and operating costs in the last fiscal year and
23 this budget proposes an additional \$144,000,000 of
24 cuts for the year beginning July 1.

1 We have used every tool available to us
2 including increasing our revenues and our resources
3 by taxing the property cap to protect that
4 investment in the kids, yet we still have a
5 significant deficit which we'll talk about in a
6 moment and so we have to draw down our reserves,
7 money that built up over time, in order to balance
8 this budget.

9 We recognize that this poses further
10 challenges for next year, but as soon as we manage
11 this budget through the process, we will focus on
12 the future challenges ahead.

13 Let's talk about some of the key goals in
14 this budget. First, investing and protecting in
15 student growth. We fund through this budget a
16 high-quality school day which gives students the
17 time they need to learn.

18 We focus on implementing the common core
19 state standards, the new curriculum to help
20 achieve higher outcomes and to allow time for the
21 new instructional framework to better support
22 teachers.

23 We protect early childhood development, we
24 maintain class size and we maintain other important

1 investments in education and, as I mentioned
2 earlier, we do expand high-quality school
3 choices.

4 Let me take you through some of that
5 detail and how we achieved each of those goals.
6 First, as I mentioned, our main focus is on
7 empowering principals and school leaders.

8 We have added \$130,000,000 of new
9 funding that principals can spend at their
10 discretion on student learning. This includes
11 \$70,000,000 in a new fund called the College Ready
12 Fund which was nonexistent before and a way to
13 identify what is the best way to spend their
14 educational dollars.

15 In addition, as part of this College Ready
16 Fund, we took money that had been restricted that
17 had been given out previously to say you have to
18 spend this much on textbooks, this much on supplies
19 and we said principals are in a better position to
20 make those decisions than the budget office, put
21 all that together in a College Ready Fund and
22 created an entire pool of \$100,000,000 of principal
23 discretion. That's our first component of
24 empowering principals.

1 Secondly, we were able to increase the
2 amount of state and federal discretionary money
3 that we made available to schools by moving
4 programs that were managed centrally out --
5 eliminating that central control and giving the
6 dollars instead to the schools.

7 We shared these budgets with the school
8 principals in May and we had positive feedback from
9 this new flexibility. And we know that as part of
10 this, just the College Ready Fund, that one piece,
11 principals added 276 new teaching positions through
12 the College Ready Fund and over 200 positions using
13 the additional state and federal discretionary
14 dollars that were provided to them.

15 Let's talk about the second area of
16 investment in this budget. Increasing assets to
17 high-quality school options. We've added over
18 6,500 new seats for parents to choose from. That
19 includes almost 1850 seats in that selective
20 enrollment and STEM programs.

21 We've also added over 4600 new seats in
22 charter schools including nine new charter schools
23 that will open this fall as well as 1900 additional
24 seats in existing charters that as they grow they

1 add to grade levels until they reach their full
2 enrollment.

3 This represents together additional
4 charter seats and the support for charters amounts
5 to \$76,000,000 that we provided in additional
6 support.

7 The third key component is protecting
8 investments that boost student learning and here in
9 particular we focus on what we've done in terms of
10 investment in early childhood education.

11 What we faced in this year was significant
12 cuts in state and federal funding and we felt that
13 was not something that we could pass on and hurt
14 children by making them absorb those cuts.

15 So instead, we maintain programs for early
16 childhood, for children from birth through 5,
17 maintain programs and didn't pass on nearly
18 19,000,000 in cuts from the state level.

19 Similarly, at the federal level, we lost
20 \$19,000,000 of federal and jobs money that expired
21 at the end of fiscal 12 on June 30 but yet, 17,000
22 children benefitted from full-day kindergarten as a
23 result of those investments and so we made up those
24 dollars so that we could maintain for all those

1 children in full-day kindergarten.

2 And finally, we've added about \$4.7
3 million for an early childhood evaluation team to
4 ensure that some children with special needs are
5 identified early.

6 The next thing we've done in this budget
7 is provide more transparency than ever before.
8 Detailed information about the school's budget is
9 available to you on the website and you can see the
10 address up there.

11 In fact, if you have a moment at the end,
12 I'll give you a sneak peek of what that looks like.
13 We can go to it unless -- Gerald, do you have that
14 up now? So we'll do that at the end because I'd
15 like you to get a chance to see what it looks like
16 and how you might navigate through that.

17 We do all this and we made all these
18 investments recognizing we face daunting financial
19 challenges. Over the years, revenue and expenses
20 increased and with the economic downturn they
21 started to diverge. Our revenue started to
22 decline, the money that we received started to
23 decline, yet our expenses continued to grow.

24 In recent years, one-time fixes like

1 federal stimulus money, some bond restructuring we
2 were able to do helped us get through the budget,
3 get through those difficult years but still masked
4 the depth of the problems we were facing.

5 And last year, we took steps to help
6 manage that budget including \$400,000,000 of cuts
7 outside the classroom which made it better this
8 fiscal year but still have to make further cuts as
9 well as use reserves in order to balance this
10 budget.

11 What this chart shows you is that year
12 over year we're getting less money. This isn't
13 showing how much new money we're getting. This is
14 an actual decline.

15 So you can see in fiscal 2011, which is
16 back in 2011, we had \$5.1 billion of money coming
17 in. Last year, the year that just ended on June
18 30, we have just over \$4.7 billion and this year
19 we're projecting to have only 4.73. So, again, an
20 absolute decline of \$30,000,000 less to spend this
21 year than we had last year. Every year it's been
22 going down.

23 And why is that happening? It's
24 particularly because of cuts at the state level

1 where we've seen both our general state aides and
2 our support for general education declining as well
3 as at the federal level we've seen those cuts.

4 So what does this mean in the end? That
5 when we look at fiscal 2013, we have a
6 \$665,000,000 deficit. You might recall back in
7 March we talked about a deficit between 600 and
8 \$700,000,000. When we were able to make that
9 concrete and look at what our projections were, it
10 was \$665,000,000. So that was the gap that we had
11 to close.

12 We did that by increasing the resources
13 available to us, by making some spending cuts and
14 then, as I mentioned, using our reserves. Let me
15 take you through the detail of each of those.

16 First, we have done all that we can to
17 increase revenue. There's very little on our
18 side that we actually control, but what we do
19 control we've taken steps to manage and provide
20 increases.

21 First, as you're aware, we have increased
22 our property taxes to the legal limit which is
23 about a \$28 impact per household for an average
24 homeowner, but it generates \$62,000,000 for us in

1 revenue for the next fiscal year.

2 We have seen the city provide us some
3 support through the TIF, this year about
4 \$30,000,000 total which is an increase of about
5 \$14,000,000 and then various other adjustments
6 provided by the additional 12. So that gives us
7 the \$4.7 million dollars of total revenue that I
8 mentioned.

9 Let's talk for a second about what the
10 reductions have been. It's about \$144,000,000,
11 \$95,000,000 of that is coming through operations.
12 That includes efficiencies in areas like
13 facilities, in procurement, how we purchase goods
14 and services to be more efficient and streamlining
15 our IT department or information technology
16 services.

17 I want to pause here for a second. If
18 anyone does want to speak, you have about 10
19 minutes left to sign up. So please if you do want
20 to speak, we will have to shut that off at 6:30 so
21 please go ahead and sign up, but back to the
22 presentation.

23 So you can see the kinds of cuts that we
24 have made on the operation side. On the education

1 side, we had to focus on eliminating outdated or
2 less effective programs, making reductions in
3 central office and rationalizing some of the other
4 programs we offer. In total, about \$49,000,000 of
5 savings there. So in combination, \$144,000,000 in
6 cuts.

7 So where does that leave us. If you look
8 at the resources that we're getting the revenue,
9 that \$4.7 million dollars, you look at what our
10 total costs are, it's about \$5.16 billion dollars,
11 which leaves us with a gap of \$432,000,000. That's
12 what our shortfall was.

13 So our choices were we can go back and
14 make more cuts and impact the classroom and move
15 away from the priorities that I set out at the
16 beginning or we could say that we built up reserves
17 over the year and now is the time to use them, now
18 is the time to use that rainy day fund to help
19 balance this budget and that's the choice that we
20 made.

21 We've used \$432,000,000 to help support
22 the investments that we're making in this budget
23 rather than making cuts to schools that could
24 impact educational outcomes.

1 So let me turn now to the other budget
2 that we want to present to you tonight which is the
3 capital budget.

4 So everything that I shared with you as
5 you can see focuses on investing in educational
6 services, how we run the school district
7 day-to-day.

8 The capital budget helps us long term, how
9 do we maintain the buildings and the facilities
10 that our children learn in to make sure that
11 they're safe and up-to-date.

12 Legislation in the past and Springfield
13 required us to release the draft capital plan on
14 May 2nd which we did and then to have an
15 opportunity for you to comment on the capital
16 budget through a process like community hearings
17 that we're having now.

18 We recognize that given the financial
19 pressures that we're facing as we talked about with
20 the operating budget and the amount of debt, the
21 amount that we already borrowed to pay for projects
22 in the past, that we had to limit the size of our
23 capital investment.

24 So this year we're proposing about

1 \$100,000,000 of projects in the current year, but
2 that's not to say that we don't have a lot of work
3 that's underway right now. In fact, we have over
4 200 projects in schools going on that were approved
5 in capital budgets through 2008 to 2012.

6 But what you can see is that the scope of
7 this plan is much smaller than what we've done in
8 the past and this chart shows you what the dollar
9 values have been, that we've invested about 500 to
10 \$600,000,000 each year in the infrastructure
11 projects but we know we can't afford to do that,
12 can't afford to continue what we paid in the
13 past.

14 And so this plan which is for next year as
15 well as the following four years, so it's a
16 five-year plan, you can see it's between 100 and
17 \$200,000,000 a year, a much more modest capital
18 investment program.

19 But we're still investing in priorities
20 in the money that we're spending in the
21 \$110,000,000 that we're proposing and this is very
22 consistent with the goals that I laid out at the
23 beginning.

24 We're investing in kids and classroom

1 programs. We're investing in STEM, science,
2 technology, engineering and math programs so that's
3 building new labs within schools, other
4 opportunities for career and technical education,
5 restructuring classrooms for a program called Teach
6 to One. It gives a more open space in the
7 classroom.

8 We're investing \$3.6 million dollars in
9 playgrounds this year, the first phase of a
10 five-year plan to support recess. This is
11 obviously a key component to the full school day.

12 And we're adding \$13,000,000 in
13 information technology upgrades to ensure that
14 students have access to the highest and most
15 available technology.

16 Next we obviously are investing in our
17 buildings to ensure safety of the schools as well
18 as to save money. So, for example, we have
19 \$5,000,000 to replace chimneys that are in
20 disrepair, \$11,000,000 to address roofs,
21 windows, masonry, mechanical and ADA repairs in
22 schools.

23 And then we have about \$40,000,000 that
24 will help us save money by installing energy

1 efficient light bulbs and being able to track our
2 energy data much more quickly so we know where
3 we're wasting and that will be largely funded by
4 the City's energy infrastructure trust.

5 So how do we decide what projects we're
6 going to use. We use a filtering process that
7 takes us through several steps before we actually
8 identify those projects.

9 It starts with assessing the building
10 condition, something that we do every year to
11 identify what are the priority projects. So if we
12 have chimneys where there's holes or buildings
13 where there's bricks that are falling down or that
14 they have to be netted, those are the kinds of
15 things that we're going to look at, as well as the
16 more comprehensive evaluation.

17 We look at our priorities from a
18 perspective of the STEM programs that I mentioned,
19 how do the projects fit in with that. We have a
20 10-year educational facility master plan that's
21 being drafted right now and we look to see how
22 these projects are consistent with that long-term
23 plan.

24 And so we go through this filtering

1 process in order to identify ultimately the
2 projects that are going to be included and that's
3 what's presented to you in the multiyear capital
4 plan.

5 Similar to the operating budget, we
6 provided much more detailed information on the
7 capital budget on our website. In fact, we've
8 listed for you every project that is currently
9 underway and we'll show you this.

10 There's a summary of information including
11 photos of what's happening at each school for every
12 project that's underway and every project that's
13 proposed in this budget. So we encourage you to
14 take a look at the website so that you can get more
15 detailed information about each of the projects
16 that I shared with you today.

17 Here, for example, is what you'll see on
18 the interactive map. You can go on the map and you
19 can see all the little pins and you can pick where
20 you want to look and click on that and it will tell
21 you what projects are happening in that school and
22 then it will open up to a full detailed description
23 of those projects.

24 So we hope that that's something that

1 helps you understand some of the key components of
2 what we're including here.

3 Let me just take you then really to the
4 bottom line, which is in everything that we've done
5 in this budget we refuse to put at-risk programs
6 that impacts students because of the financial
7 crises that we're facing.

8 We do have to make difficult choices, but
9 we know that we need to use the resources that we
10 have now in order to protect the classroom. We
11 know that we're going to need continued input and
12 support from parents, community leaders,
13 legislatures and others in order to help address
14 the financial challenges that we're facing this
15 year and the next.

16 But the bottom line has to be that we're
17 maintaining critical investments that support
18 student learning.

19 So where do we go from here. As Crystal
20 mentioned next, we'll take questions and comments
21 from you. We'd like to focus on the capital budget
22 first and then we'll take questions on the
23 operating budget.

24 If you do have additional questions or

1 there's things that we don't have time to get to,
2 we have folks around the room that have cards that
3 you can write down any questions.

4 We're also going to have a tele-town hall
5 next meeting where we'll continue to follow up to
6 the questions that have been presented here as well
7 and then again on our website we'll post answers to
8 any questions that were raised that we couldn't
9 address here or questions that you give us on the
10 cards.

11 So I'm going to turn it back over to
12 Crystal to take us through the process and
13 obviously we have our panel here to address any of
14 your questions. Thank you very much.

15 MS. COOPER: We will now take speakers on the
16 capital budget. And I just want to remind you that
17 the time is limited to two minutes per speaker.
18 That's just to give everyone a chance to speak.

19 Each speaker will have an opportunity to
20 ask one question. Your name will be called based
21 on the registration. Someone will come around to
22 you and give you the mic.

23 When there's 30 seconds remaining, I will
24 put this up and when there's zero seconds

1 remaining, I will put this us and we ask that you
2 just please adhere to these rules.

3 The first speaker is Anita Orlocoff on the
4 capital budget. This is No. 1.

5 MS. ORLOCOFF: I'm glad many of you came out
6 today. I'm a product of the Chicago Public School
7 system and I'm a former Chicago Public School
8 teacher and I was elected as a community
9 representative within the very first local school
10 council. The local school councils are elected,
11 unlike the local school Board.

12 What's happening in our schools these days
13 is an injustice and a shame. 160 schools in the
14 city lack libraries. Almost all of them are at the
15 south and west sides.

16 42 percent of elementary schools don't
17 have funding for full-time music or art teachers
18 and those programs have been proven to be very
19 influential in all respects.

20 Charter schools get funding while public
21 schools are slashed. You tell us that there's a
22 deficit of \$700,000,000, but we can't pay teachers
23 and our kids will be subjected to a longer school
24 day.

1 But Illinois is not broke. \$250,000,000
2 of TIF money is taken out of our schools each year
3 to fund the projects of the wealthy, plus the
4 \$5,000,000 Penny Pritzker got to build another
5 hotel which we don't need.

6 Corporate America doesn't pay its fair
7 share and our teachers pay with their jobs. The
8 Board of Education has shown time and time again
9 that their primary concern is not the children and
10 the teachers but the pocketbooks of the rich.

11 Here's your chance to do what's right.
12 Support our teachers and stand up for quality
13 public education. The bottom line is that
14 millionaires and billionaires on the Board don't
15 care about working families or our schools.

16 We stand in solidarity with the Chicago
17 Teachers Union because we are parents, we are
18 students and we are the community and we will never
19 back down (inaudible due to applause). This is
20 disgusting.

21 MS. COOPER: The next speaker is Craig Aldrich.

22 MR. ALDRICH: All right. My name is Craig
23 Aldrich and I live here in Englewood. I'm a
24 product of Michigan's public school system as well

1 as my mother was a public school teacher.

2 Getting back to budgets, I understand
3 \$500,000,000 is going to charter school operators,
4 you know, privatized operators, AUSL which I
5 believe one of these AUSL people is on the CPS
6 Board.

7 Now, I think that's a conflict of
8 interest. Somebody should alert the Illinois
9 Ethics Board on that.

10 Meanwhile, you all seem like friendly
11 individuals up on the panel and, you know, I might
12 not mind living next to you, if you even live
13 anywhere near these nice neighborhoods around
14 here, but I have a feeling you don't and I have a
15 feeling that you don't even send your kids to
16 public schools.

17 I have a feeling that your kids go to
18 private schools and you, meanwhile, doctor numbers
19 much like, you know, in the corporate firms, Arthur
20 Anderson, one of the paper shredder firms for
21 Enron. You know, you write, nice displays here,
22 but do these numbers translate to reality? I don't
23 think so.

24 The reality is the schools are crumbling,

24

1 the reality is there's no gym classes I hear in a
2 lot of schools, there's no art programs. I had art
3 programs in public schools and that's a shame and I
4 had gym, we complained about it, but it was still
5 good. So there is no justification for any of your
6 assertions.

7 MS. COOPER: 3, David Orlocoff from the Chicago
8 Teachers Solidarity Campaign.

9 MR. ORLOCOFF: Hello. Yes, I'm from the
10 Chicago Teachers Solidarity Campaign. The first
11 speaker is my mother and she is also with the
12 Chicago Teachers Solidarity Campaign.

13 This budget did not come from the
14 community. This is a very dangerous budget and
15 only an unelected Board with bankers and
16 billionaires could have done something like
17 this.

18 And the reason they can do this is because
19 they don't understand the value of public
20 education. They got their credit downgraded.
21 Their credit was downgraded. These are bankers on
22 the Board.

23 The one thing that they should be able to
24 do they fail because Moody's Credit Agency

1 downgraded the Chicago Public Schools because of
2 how bad this budget is and the reason they did that
3 is because they're spending 100 percent of reserves
4 this year.

5 The reserves are \$490,000,000. This year
6 they're spending \$500,000,000 on charter schools.
7 That means next year they're going to be in a
8 deficit of a million dollars and what are they
9 going to say?

10 They're going to be back here next year
11 and say we don't have any money so what do we have
12 to do? We have to close 50 schools on the south
13 side. And what else is going to be going on? The
14 Red Line is going to be shut down for five months.

15 You have an unelected school Board. It's
16 not a Board. It's just the mayor and the mayor
17 isn't aware of the south side (inaudible due to
18 applause.)

19 What I am prepared to talk about is the
20 presentation. I saw a couple of numbers. There is
21 not a dime going to this longer school day, not one
22 dime.

23 They claim that \$130,000,000 is going to
24 the longer school day. That's a lie. They put up

1 the numbers, \$70,000,000 was already earmarked,
2 60,000,000 was for the principals to use at their
3 discretion.

4 \$60,000,000 to 276 teachers, that's less
5 than 5 percent of the teachers in the CTU. Less
6 than half a percent of teachers are hired. With
7 \$60,000,000, you could have paid them all a salary
8 of 200,000 at that rate. 60,000,000 divided by 276
9 is 200,000. Yet you're not paying that. You're
10 paying 400,000. Where is the rest of the money
11 going?

12 It goes to grants, it goes to AUSL for
13 testing, it goes to charter schools and everything
14 we don't need. The Board of Education has declared
15 war on students, on teachers and on the community.

16 They're essentially sabotaging this budget
17 so they can come back next year and say it's a
18 crisis and throw their hands up and, you know, I'm
19 sorry, I'm sorry that I can't do this for you, but
20 it's a crisis and it's a crisis they're making
21 right now today.

22 MS. COOPER: CA4, Charlotte Sanders.

23 MS. SANDERS: Good evening. I am a grandmother
24 of a 10-year-old in the Chicago Public Schools. He

1 recently two years ago came from the suburbs.

2 The first thing he told me when he came to
3 his new school was why is there so many kids in
4 there? And I said, baby, I don't know.

5 The thing is that there was 36 kids in a
6 third grade room. He said ma, they're up
7 everywhere, what do we do?

8 I went up and talked to the teacher. She
9 said I don't have any help. I got children with
10 special needs, they have not been seen and I'm here
11 all day and I have no resources.

12 We expect them to teach our children but
13 we don't give them any tools to use. You go to
14 school, you get your degree and then you're going
15 to be the greatest. That's what we've been
16 told.

17 But when we have 36 kids in one room for
18 six hours, it's not a game. Every day they miss
19 learning something if there are children in there
20 who really need help.

21 When I was in school, you went from 8:00
22 to 3:15, you had a recess but you also had teacher
23 assistance in the classroom. You had community
24 reps that was working with the parents and the

1 community. We don't have any support right now.
2 We have so many parents that don't know how to be
3 parents but we don't have a school Board to back us
4 up.

5 What we are asking for is not 36 kids in a
6 classroom because they deserve better, okay. I
7 believe that they deserve better.

8 When my grandson was in the suburban
9 school, there was 24 kids in their class and they
10 had gym, art, music, all of these things that we're
11 trying to give them.

12 The Board can do better. If they can find
13 money for the charter schools that I see going up,
14 then they can find money for my grandson's school
15 brick by brick. Thank you.

16 MS. COOPER: CA5, Drew Isman from Team
17 Englewood.

18 MR. ISMAN: Hi. My name is Drew Isman. I
19 teach at Englewood, I am also a Chicago Public
20 School parent and of course a taxpayer.

21 And what I want to talk about is what's
22 become sort of what looks like priority. A budget
23 is a list of priorities. It's a political
24 document, even though we'll throw the numbers

1 around and make it look like this is what has to
2 happen.

3 It's a political document. It's a list of
4 priorities, what's important, what's not. When
5 money gets tight, then you don't worry about your
6 experience, you don't worry about a wish list. You
7 start taking care of the things you absolutely have
8 to have.

9 What's clear to me anyway and I think to a
10 lot of people here is that Chicago Public Schools
11 is creating and has been creating for some time a
12 policy of putting together a multi-tier education
13 system.

14 I believe that I have heard people talk
15 about educational partite in this city and it looks
16 that way these days.

17 So what we have are selected enrollment
18 magnate schools. That's where if you want to go to
19 public school and you got the money or connections,
20 that's where you send your kid.

21 The next tier down is your charter schools
22 and they're paying not only more money now but they
23 also get money from their private donors. So
24 they're getting as much as our public schools do,

1 plus the extra money from whatever donors they
2 got.

3 So, for example, I started working with
4 Team Englewood. We shared the old high school
5 building with Urban Prep. So now they're going to
6 get more money (inaudible).

7 Urban Prep is a good school. They have
8 their PR team. They have got some great PR agents,
9 but their results are almost exactly the same as
10 ours that is represented by the CTU. We get the
11 same ACT scores, we get the same going to college
12 scores, we do the same things, we just don't get
13 the same PR.

14 And what I'm seeing also is the third tier
15 and this is what really upsets me. I used to work
16 at a big neighborhood school up in Oak Park and
17 so I know what's going to happen to like Paul
18 Robeson.

19 You got Robeson and Englewood High
20 Schools. They used to be the pillars of this
21 community. That's what neighborhood high
22 schools are. You build your community around your
23 school.

24 MS. COOPER: Speaker, please conclude.

1 MR. ISMAN: So the panel has experimented and
2 now we got two middle schools in there and Paul
3 Robeson, they're treated like dummy grounds. They
4 don't give them any money. They give them way too
5 many kids for the classes. It's insane what they
6 have going on there.

7 That's where you need to cut the capital
8 improvement, stop playing around and experimenting
9 like charter schools and have them include anything
10 better than (inaudible due to applause) a regular
11 school.

12 MS. COOPER: CA6, Valerie Collins.

13 MS. COLLINS: My name is Valerie Collins. I'm
14 a Chicago Public School teacher. All three of my
15 children went to Chicago Public Schools and
16 graduated. One has graduated from college, one
17 goes to University of Illinois and the other one is
18 at Rutgers University.

19 Now, I want to talk because this is the
20 capital improvement so my questions are directed to
21 Sean Murphy. My son went to Jones Academic Magnet.
22 That was the name of the school before it became
23 Jones College Prep.

24 That year they were making improvements to

1 the school and they were moved to the near north
2 building and they stayed there for a year. After
3 that year, they moved back into the Jones building
4 on State Street.

5 And they said the reason why they had to
6 move back, even though all their improvements
7 haven't been made, was because they were selling
8 the property.

9 Now, this is when my son was 14. He'll be
10 25 on August 10th. So we're talking 10 years and
11 you're still sitting on this land.

12 Now, at the time if you're talking
13 2002/2003, you could have sold that land for so
14 much money and have leased it or done something to
15 it, but that building is still empty, the baseball
16 field is still there and nothing is happening with
17 that property.

18 So if you have capital improvements,
19 aren't you supposed to look at your assets and use
20 some of those assets to help capital improvements?
21 That was my first point.

22 My second point is about the capital
23 improvements that you said that you were making and
24 one of them was using the crumbling roofs and that

1 sounds very interesting to me because we had a very
2 mild winter so it wasn't that the roofs started
3 crumbling just this year. So this is something
4 that has happened over a long time. So that means
5 that there was neglect, okay.

6 And then at that point, what about the
7 air-conditioning? When they went to the year-round
8 schools, you assume that they would pick schools
9 that had air-conditioning before they made them
10 trapped heat, but instead they didn't and they made
11 the school day.

12 They didn't have air-conditioning and I
13 did not see that on the list as one of the capital
14 improvements in making some of these schools that
15 have trapped heat or -- it can get hot in
16 September, but my gosh if they're going to
17 school in August, shouldn't they have
18 air-conditioning?

19 I'm thinking that capital improvements,
20 you all just threw some stuff together.

21 UNKNOWN PERSON: Answer the question! Answer
22 the question! She made two points. Answer the
23 question!

24 MR. MURPHY: She did make several points, one

1 about Jones and obviously that work is still going
2 on at Jones.

3 They're currently building a new facility
4 for Jones and there's been no decision at this
5 moment as to what's going to happen with the old
6 building.

7 As to the roofs, the reality is that the
8 Board has about 65,000,000 square feet of building
9 space. We have somewhere around 900 plus
10 buildings. A roof itself will generally last, if
11 it's well maintained, between 17 and 20 years. So
12 every year we have to continue to replace roofs
13 across the system and we continue to try and do
14 that.

15 And finally as it relates to the
16 air-conditioning, we have run some numbers on
17 what it might cost to provide air-conditioning for
18 the entire district and those numbers are very
19 high.

20 And obviously with the budget constraints
21 that we have, it's just not something that the
22 Board can afford to do at this time. And the Board
23 no longer owns near north.

24 MS. COOPER: So we're done with the capital

1 speakers. We'll now move to the operating budget.
2 But before we do that, I want to introduce to
3 you Annette Gurley, Joseph Davis and Harrison
4 Peterson.

5 OP1, Anita Orlocoff? No. OP2, Philip
6 O-L-O-B-A from the CTU.

7 MR. OLOBA: Hi. My name is Phil Oloba. Good
8 afternoon.

9 My questions are revolving around the
10 arts. I am a product of the Chicago Public
11 Schools. I went to a program there where they
12 didn't have any music, but when I got to
13 high school, I knew right away, I was one of these
14 weird guys, and I wanted to teach music. That's
15 what I wanted to do and that's what I pursued.
16 That's what my father did and helped me to pursue
17 it.

18 My question is revolving around these
19 schools. What are your plans? I don't see any
20 money being allocated to the arts. I'm not just
21 talking about music. I'm talking about art, I'm
22 talking about library. What is your plan for
23 that?

24 So that, you know, maybe a kid that is

1 going through elementary, maybe he might decide he
2 wants to learn how to play the guitar or something,
3 might want to learn to play something. What is the
4 plan for that kid to help him move along the
5 system?

6 Not everywhere is going to be like me and
7 figure it out in high school. Maybe somebody else
8 is going to want that kind of career. What is your
9 plan?

10 MS. OSTRO: Thank you.

11 I think the best way to think about that
12 is what we're trying to do is give principals more
13 discretion, more autonomy about the choices that
14 they make and the programs that they offer in
15 their schools so they know what best their kids
16 need.

17 And so that's the point of giving
18 additional dollars to the principals to make those
19 decisions to be able to invest in art and music and
20 other things that they think enhance the curriculum
21 and interests just like you when you were in high
22 school.

23 MR. OLOBA: I saw the numbers but still I don't
24 think that number is just not enough, I mean for

1 every single school.

2 I'm not just talking about my program at
3 my school. I'm talking about what about my feeder
4 schools. You know, we have this huge auditorium in
5 Pilsen right now that was built at Benito Juarez
6 where the CSO comes in and plays for free whenever
7 they can.

8 We want our kids to perform there. I want
9 my kids to perform there. I want them to go to
10 Benito Juarez, I want them to have a full
11 respect of music throughout their experience with
12 CPS.

13 On another level, I think we can also use
14 a lot more money that is being wasted on ads on the
15 radio to criticize (inaudible by applause).

16 MS. COOPER: OP3, Jack Blue? No.

17 OP4, Matthew Leskin.

18 MR. LESKIN: Hi, good afternoon. My name is
19 Matthew Leskin. I'm a proud parent of two CPS
20 students and LaSalle Language Academy where my
21 wife went before that and her sister and her
22 brother and her brother was a teacher. It's a
23 school my family has had a long history at and
24 we're very proud.

1 I'm not a teacher. I did leave my career
2 about a year and a half ago to join the Teachers
3 Union as an organizer and help bring the teachers
4 and parents together around these kinds of school
5 issues that have been a growing concern for even my
6 family.

7 First of all, I want to acknowledge all
8 the folks that are here, CPS employees, community
9 output who have dropped everything to be here.
10 It's unfortunate there aren't more of you here.

11 You said you need continued input from
12 parents and community amongst those Board and when
13 you give less than one week notice over a holiday
14 for a community forum to talk to you, it does not
15 sit well that you give a damn about any of my
16 input.

17 I'm not terribly convinced that you didn't
18 want my input. I'm fairly convinced you didn't
19 want what I learned as an organizer.

20 You said, here's my question, you said
21 raising revenue and I find that perplexing. I know
22 that you've raised revenue by increasing property
23 taxes on all of us and I know that you've cut
24 expenses by going after the pay of the teachers and

1 paraprofessionals.

2 And I know as a parent that I'm going to
3 have to be okay without getting additional funding
4 for art and music and smaller classes.

5 What I haven't seen is, you know, we
6 thanked the city for this presentation, we thanked
7 the city for providing some TIF money, but that was
8 money that came from the budget in the first
9 place.

10 I'm not a math teacher, but 80,000,000
11 coming back in the schools versus 250,000,000 a
12 year coming out of the schools, we're coming out
13 behind on that one. So if they break our leg, we
14 say thank you and they offer us crutches? It's
15 that kind of situation.

16 So I would like you to explain what has
17 the Board and what has CPS administrators done to
18 demand that less money come out of the CPS budget
19 in the first place in this TIF funds?

20 I know that the Board doesn't control
21 those TIF funds, but I would like to know have you
22 used every tool available?

23 What has the Board and CPS
24 administrators done when the new TIF agreement was

1 just proposed gives tens of millions to develop a
2 new downtown skyscraper? What did you do to oppose
3 this or protest it to lobby against? Please tell
4 us.

5 MS. OSTRO: One of the things that I didn't
6 highlight when I went through the capital
7 presentation is part of the support that we get
8 to pay for investments in our buildings is
9 through TIF and so the TIF gives support to CPS in
10 two ways.

11 I highlighted how we get TIF surplus from
12 the city that helps our operating budget, it helps
13 with the day-to-day expenses. But we also get
14 support from TIF to help invest in our buildings
15 and we've been able to build and renovate a number
16 of buildings because the TIF exists and we do get
17 support that way.

18 So I think if we look at the TIF
19 structure, we have to look at all pieces of how
20 this supports CPS.

21 MR. LESKIN: How much has it brought in versus
22 how much has come out?

23 MS. OSTRO: I need to get -- I don't have that
24 on -- I need to get that. We get extensive support

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1 through the TIF because it does support our ability
2 to borrow money to build new buildings.

3 MR. LESKIN: More than 250,000,000 a year?

4 MS. OSTRO: I don't have the numbers in front
5 of me. We can certainly get back to you with those
6 numbers.

7 MS. COOPER: OP5, Sharon Bonds.

8 MS. BONDS: Hello everyone. My name is Sharon
9 Bonds. I'm a janitor at George Pullman Elementary
10 School.

11 I'm here today to talk about these cuts.
12 So far each year we have lost over 200 school
13 custodians. That is 10 percent of our workforce.
14 And now you are cutting again?

15 Do you understand what the cuts are doing
16 to our workload and the overall cleaning of our
17 schools? The efforts of these cuts is clear.

18 When there aren't enough janitors, the
19 school is not going to get cleaned properly and the
20 doors is open for growth and germs to make their
21 way into our kids learning environment. Many of us
22 have provided our own cleaning supplies in order to
23 keep the whole school clean.

24 I would like to say just, for example,

1 this is my grandson. He goes to school, Chicago
2 Public School. He has asthma. And in 2008, we had
3 the swine flu so our job is just as important as
4 teachers.

5 We have to work all day long in order to
6 keep the school clean, but with the cuts that you
7 all have done to us with the 200 custodians, I'm
8 just asking you today on the table, could you
9 please stop the cuts. They said they was going
10 to be some more layoffs. Can you please answer
11 that question for me. Is there going to be a
12 cut? Can I get an answer please?

13 MS. OSTR0: Yes, you can get an answer.

14 We're working obviously on preventing a
15 lot of changes and a lot of things in order to
16 balance this budget.

17 You heard me talk about how we have less
18 money to spend this year than last year and that's
19 going to impact all of us as we move through this
20 budget.

21 I can't speak specifically to additional
22 layoffs because I don't know the answer to that
23 question, but I can tell you that we do have
24 significant challenges ahead of us and that's what

1 we tried to outline for you today.

2 MS. BONDS: 30 schools have been cut with
3 custodians. And if they keep on taking custodians
4 out of the school, what we are doing is having a
5 lot of accidents. They're giving double loads
6 to me. I just need an answer. Can we get an
7 answer?

8 MS. OSTRO: I gave you the best information
9 that I have. The next Board meeting --

10 UNKNOWN PERSON: Can we get an answer? When
11 schools are dirty, kids get sick. When schools are
12 dirty, teachers get sick. When schools are dirty,
13 kids can't learn.

14 MS. COOPER: OP6.

15 SPEAKER OP6: Hello, everyone.

16 I am a Chicago Public School teacher. My
17 question is on the school closing. I have
18 colleagues whose schools have been closed down.
19 There are students displaced, relocated to other
20 schools, they got signed out to these new
21 buildings.

22 My question is, what are we doing to make
23 sure that these students will get adequate
24 education when school opens in September? Because

1 some schools are still turning their back.

2 My next question is on the teachers that
3 are being displaced. What do we have planned for
4 these teachers? We are told to go to school. Some
5 of us have so many degrees. Some of us have so
6 much that they still are being displaced or out of
7 a job. How do you afford to bring all of them
8 back?

9 Some of my colleagues have double BS
10 degrees, master's degrees and some of them are
11 going back to school for their Ph.D. When they
12 come out, they don't have anyplace to go or the
13 level they have is taken away from them.

14 I would like some answers from the Board,
15 the panel this evening to know what's being done to
16 some of the displaced colleagues of mine. Some of
17 that 76,000,000 that is being approved for the
18 charter schools needs to be given to some of the
19 schools for their own improvements.

20 What they need is -- they need them to
21 improve their test scores. They need books, they
22 need a library, they need pens and pencils. As a
23 teacher, I provide pens and pencils. I have to pay
24 for that. Thank you. I would love to hear some

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1 response from the panel. Thank you.

2 MS. OSTRO: On the particular question that you
3 asked about the school closing and the students
4 getting enrolled, it's not a question that
5 generates a generic answer, a general answer.

6 I think if you would reach out to one of
7 the folks with cards and help us understand what
8 schools you're specifically looking at, I want to
9 ensure that -- (inaudible). It sounded like she
10 was referring to something specific.

11 Thank you very much.

12 MS. COOPER: OP8, Kim --

13 SPEAKER OP7: What is being planned for the
14 teachers, planned for them, the teachers out of
15 jobs?

16 MS. OSTRO: I believe our talent office is
17 working with those that are going through that
18 process now.

19 MS. COOPER: OP8.

20 MS. WALLS: Hi. My name is Julie Walls and I'm
21 a middle school science teacher and my daughter is
22 also a CPS student.

23 I did hear you talk a lot about STEM and I
24 have a concern as a middle school science teacher

1 in regard to our science labs.

2 Now, it bothers me that you choose to give
3 money to a charter school but you don't choose to
4 give me an adequate science lab. A science lab is
5 not a classroom. Our science lab is needed to be
6 college ready.

7 I do believe, I'm agreeing with the longer
8 school day. I'll agree that my 6th, 7th, 8th grade
9 class has 90 minutes to be in a science lab. What
10 I have a problem with is you're giving my money to
11 the charter schools and then giving no money for my
12 science lab.

13 So how do you expect, that's my question,
14 to equip my students and I with an adequate science
15 lab so we can meet the standards of the National
16 Science Teachers Association because they have on
17 their website what an adequate science lab should
18 look like. STEM should be in every CPS school, not
19 selected schools.

20 And my daughter -- I'm sure every one of
21 you did the same thing, you looked at every school
22 to make sure that school was adequate for your
23 child. And as a CPS teacher, I did the same thing
24 for my daughter. My daughter goes to South Shore

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1 Fine Arts Academy which is on the south side but
2 they have the adequate resources.

3 Our schools don't have the adequate
4 resources. And Mr. Woods then, just imagine how
5 far he would have went had we had a science lab,
6 lab tables. I have to scavenge for the
7 materials.

8 I was just trying it figure out how far my
9 kids can go if we had the equipment and how we want
10 to evaluate the need when teaching my kids if you
11 don't give me the resources that I need.

12 It's the same if you ask the engineers,
13 you give them a blueprint for a car and then they
14 tell their workers to build a car, but they didn't
15 give them an engine, they didn't give them a hood,
16 they didn't give them a seat.

17 So my question is how are you deciding to
18 give charter schools funding when the charter
19 schools was originally here they were told they can
20 have it, then they find out they can't have it, so
21 they beg you for my money and then you tell me I
22 can't support this because you didn't give me money
23 back.

24 MR. MURPHY: The budget that's in the FY 13

1 program, the STEM program, it's not for charter
2 schools. It's a relatively new curriculum that's
3 being implemented at several of the CPS schools and
4 the five schools that are targeted for FY 13 are
5 actually CPS high schools.

6 MS. WALLS: Every school should have a STEM
7 program, every school should have a science lab.
8 You choose to give money to charter schools. You
9 should give your 1900 classrooms a science lab.

10 MS. COOPER: OP9, David Steamer.

11 MR. STEAMER: Good evening everyone. I'm a CPS
12 teacher. I work right down the street at
13 Englewood. I've been there -- this will be the 6th
14 year coming up. I'm also a father and my child
15 will be attending a CPS school.

16 A couple of things. So this morning I saw
17 in the news that there's a new CPS budget
18 allocating game that you can play. You can go
19 on-line for allocating a budget and they will show
20 you how difficult allocating a budget really is.

21 Excuse me, but these people should know
22 how to allocate a budget. I shouldn't have to move
23 this bar back and forth between the schools,
24 charter schools, whatever, that's an insult.

1 Second point. Our school is one of the
2 fortunate schools that actually has a library.
3 However, our school has one counselor. Let's think
4 about this number.

5 Since Memorial Day, 115 people have been
6 shot and killed in Chicago. It's July. When the
7 CPS schools starts back up, our school has one
8 counselor. I teach in Englewood. How many kids
9 have been killed in the south side communities, the
10 west side communities that has one counselor?
11 Where is that in the budget? How are we going to
12 have their emotional needs met?

13 Second, as the woman in front of me just
14 mentioned, in this budget \$100,000,000 for charter
15 schools and AUSL-backed program. That's
16 \$100,000,000 taken from all the CPS public schools,
17 teachers, students, parents who only give money
18 through public funds, not private corporate
19 entities.

20 So my question that you have to answer is
21 how can you justify \$100,000,000 to programs that
22 have been proven through research to not be
23 effective than a regular public school?

24 MS. OSTR0: Charter schools are public schools

1 and families choose -- (inaudible due to
2 hollering).

3 MS. COOPER: OP10, Kathleen Stevens.

4 MS. OSTR0: Charter schools are public schools.
5 They serve public school students.

6 UNKNOWN PERSON: He didn't ask if they're
7 public or private. He asked why are you giving
8 money to an ineffective institution?

9 MS. OSTR0: As I started to say, charter
10 schools are public schools and families choose to
11 send their children there and we support the
12 families that have choices for high-quality charter
13 schools.

14 MS. COOPER: Speaker, please proceed with your
15 question.

16 MS. STEVENS: I think this budget is
17 outrageous. I think for the Board to pretend in
18 the name of the children and to blame our teachers
19 with the resources that they need is an outrage.

20 To see our teachers and students in a
21 classroom for an extra hour and a half a day
22 without compensation or supplies is a travesty.

23 Teachers in this city work an average of
24 56 hours a week. To add 20 percent more to their

1 workload without pay or resources is not good for
2 our kids or our teachers.

3 While hundreds of schools in this city
4 lack libraries, almost a half of elementary schools
5 lack funding for full-time music or art teachers,
6 the Board is allocating \$2.3 million dollars to its
7 community budget this year and almost half a
8 billion to charter schools.

9 Penny Pritzker who sits on the Board gets
10 \$5,000,000 to build a new Hyatt hotel. If she
11 cares about kids, she should give that money back
12 to our schools.

13 She has gotten millions of dollars in tax
14 cuts. That money belongs to our schools too. It's
15 clear to me that the Board doesn't care about us or
16 our kids or our teachers.

17 So my question to the Board, every speaker
18 here so far has spoken against the priorities that
19 this budget represents. So I want to know what
20 you're going to do about it.

21 MS. OSTRO: The next step after this, and
22 obviously we appreciate everybody's comments and
23 feedback, are to take this information -- as you
24 see, we have a court reporter here who is taking

1 down all the comments, so a full transcript will be
2 made available.

3 Obviously we encourage additional feedback
4 on our website and we will share your comments with
5 the Board members as they move forward and make
6 decisions about this budget.

7 MS. COOPER: The next speaker OP11, Andrea
8 Parker.

9 MS. PARKER: Good evening everyone.

10 I just want to add a couple of concerns.
11 Why are we constantly calling charter schools
12 higher-quality school options for children? I
13 don't understand. Before I'm done, I need you all
14 to answer that question, why charter schools are
15 called high-quality schools.

16 I personally know teachers who teach at
17 charter schools who are not certified by the State
18 of Illinois, who never passed a state test. So I
19 don't understand why they're called quality schools
20 and why there's so much advertisement on buses
21 and radios manipulating parents to have kids go
22 there.

23 Why can't every neighborhood school be
24 high quality? It's like we're going back to an era

1 where I don't want my child to be bused to school,
2 I want my child to walk to school. I want a
3 high-quality school in my neighborhood (inaudible
4 due to applause).

5 You know why unemployment is because you
6 don't invest in the school, you don't put the
7 energy in, you don't invest in the teachers, you
8 don't invest in the community. They go out and
9 they see dirt instead of grass in their
10 neighborhood.

11 You're not investing in the parents. You
12 got these liquor stores open during school hours.
13 You got drug addicts walking around and you don't
14 care.

15 So how are we going to teach them when
16 they walk out the door that you're not trying to
17 take care of them and you're not trying to with a 2
18 percent raise.

19 Do you know how much we do in a regular
20 school day? Do you know how long it takes to grade
21 papers? I teach writing. One paragraph (inaudible
22 due to applause) how long it takes to call parents
23 every day to tell them what that child is doing?
24 Do you know how long it takes to write a referral

1 for a special needs child, how long it takes a
2 lesson plan on a Sunday night, how long it takes to
3 analyze, how long it takes to have a meeting with
4 other teachers, a grade level meeting, how long it
5 takes to plan out my own budget?

6 MS. COOPER: Please conclude.

7 MS. STEVENS: How long do you think that takes?
8 And you want to insult me with a 2 percent raise?
9 A longer school day, a longer school year and you
10 want to insult me with a 2 percent raise? But you
11 want me to be high-quality? I got two masters.

12 MS. COOPER: The next speaker is OP12.

13 SPEAKER OP12: Okay. Hard to follow that
14 one.

15 I would just like to say that I have been
16 a student as well as a teacher of the Chicago
17 Public School system all my life, all my children.

18 And ever since I can remember, and I'm
19 thinking when I was 5 years old, parents and
20 teachers in African-America and Latino
21 communities have been asked to make bricks without
22 straw.

23 My concern has been as a high school
24 teacher the decisions and the thought processes

1 that go into the decisions to turn-around schools
2 and to fire every adult in the building.

3 I ran into a former student of mine at
4 Walgreen's and he was very happy to see me and we
5 started talking and he started asking me about the
6 different teachers he had, where is Mr. Smith,
7 where's Mrs. Brown, where is this person, where is
8 that person?

9 And then he talked about the connections
10 that he made with these people and how he wasn't --
11 some of the people he was asking me about, he
12 didn't know what he would have done, he didn't
13 know what he would have gone on to become the
14 good man that he did become or whether he would
15 have joined some of the statistics that we hear
16 about now.

17 There is so much more that goes into
18 teaching than bricks and mortar, so much more than
19 that and, unfortunately, I don't think your budget
20 reflects everything that goes into teaching.

21 I don't doubt that maybe some of the
22 people there try to do the very best that they
23 could do with this budget, but until we have an
24 elected school Board and true community input, the

1 best will never be good enough. Thank you.

2 MS. COOPER: OP13, Sherry Parker.

3 MS. PARKER: Hello. Good afternoon.

4 I'm a displaced parent from the now closed
5 Guggenheim Elementary School right here in
6 Englewood. Guggenheim for the last two years, we
7 struggled. We had no gym teacher for two years, we
8 had overcrowded classrooms. Our kindergarten had
9 32 with no aid. Our third grade class had 33.

10 We had a third of our students in the SCLS
11 homeless program who were transferred out. We had
12 no school supplies available, not even for the SCLS
13 school. We didn't have enough paraprofessionals.
14 There was myself and the clerk. We had no soap or
15 tissues in the bathrooms, literally none.

16 Everyone, when we came to school, the
17 students came to school and put on gloves that we
18 cleaned with bleach before breakfast from the
19 rodents that were dead the night before.

20 We had special need kids that never
21 had those needs met and we had teachers tenured
22 who were forced and harassed out, two were type
23 75s.

24 My question to you with this new 2012/2013

1 budget, have you made allowances for these things
2 not to continue to happen to our black and brown
3 children in our Englewood area or south side area?
4 Or what do you plan to do with the budget as far as
5 these issues are concerned? And I would like you
6 to answer that question.

7 MS. OSTRO: I think, as I tried to highlight in
8 my presentation, what we have tried to do is direct
9 our resources to invest in the classrooms and give
10 you those kinds of important supports that you
11 mentioned and that's why we didn't make any cuts in
12 the classroom while we've made our reductions in
13 places in other areas so that we can maintain that
14 investment.

15 MS. COOPER: OP14, Kimberly Volsky.

16 MS. VOLSKY: I'm an employee of the Chicago
17 Public Schools, a member of the Chicago Teachers
18 Union, a member of the Caucuses of Training
19 Educators (inaudible due to applause).

20 I don't remember a time in history when
21 the CPS had a balanced budget or wasn't in the red.
22 So I don't know what the urgency is now except to
23 agree with the person who said that this budget is
24 a political document and it's the politics that are

1 shocking and the disaster of capitalism that
2 Mr. Orlocoff was referring to.

3 And I can't wait to hear what the news is
4 going to be in the school year 2013/2014. I think
5 that every parent needs to take this to every
6 place, every corner, every church, everywhere.

7 I want to talk about the discretionary
8 funding that's given to principals. It's not that
9 I'm advocating for principals, but principals are
10 under a great deal of pressure.

11 They have no union and so they are scared
12 to death and they figure that if they're to use it
13 in a way that they're told to use it, then these
14 principals are going to use this discretionary
15 funding for test prep.

16 Test prep is not learning and they're
17 going to take up teachers' time and students' time
18 wasting it teaching them how to hold a mouse.
19 That's not an effective use of your longer school
20 day.

21 The second thing is that in addition to
22 that test prep, some principals are going to misuse
23 the money. I used to teach at Anderson Community
24 Academy where the principal, as smart as she was,

1 used discretionary funds to build herself a
2 bathroom so she wouldn't have to deal with
3 employees.

4 So to that end, I would like to know, I'd
5 like to know how the discretionary funding will be
6 revealed to the public. I would like to know how
7 principals will account to the public for those
8 discretionary funds.

9 I know what discretionary means. It means
10 that they can decide what they want, but that's my
11 money, 28 more dollars is going to go to that so I
12 would like to know --

13 MS. COOPER: Please conclude.

14 MS. VOLSKY: -- how the use of the funds will
15 be monitored. How will you monitor abuses of
16 discretionary funding?

17 I would also like to know how the
18 expenditures will be published. If all this is
19 published on-line, then all of us should have
20 access to how discretionary funding was spent.

21 I'm going to conclude by saying that not
22 only is this budget a political document for human
23 capital management theory which doesn't work but
24 also it's an immoral document. The budget is an

1 immoral document.

2 MS. OSTRO: I would like to make one comment
3 and I'm going to ask some of our school chiefs that
4 work on this if they want to add to my comment
5 which is on the discretionary funding.

6 I appreciate you recognize the way that we
7 did go out of our way to emphasis what is
8 available, how was it allocated, how long the
9 principals have made the choices in conjunction
10 with the LSCs so we did want that to be
11 transparent. We did want to make that available to
12 everyone and provide that information.

13 I don't know if any of the chiefs want to
14 comment on how --

15 MS. VOLSKY: Right after it's spent, after
16 it's spent, we would like it redeveloped per
17 school.

18 MS. OSTRO: I appreciate that comment.

19 UNKNOWN FEMALE: We do have a fiscal compliance
20 unit and we do go after schools to monitor the
21 discretionary spending to ensure that schools are,
22 you know, following the rules and regulations. So
23 we do that every year.

24 So we sample roughly 300 schools and then

1 also -- because there's over 600 public schools so
2 we don't have enough staff to target every school.
3 So we randomly select around 250, 300 schools each
4 year and we go out to ensure that they are
5 following the rules and regulations.

6 UNKNOWN PERSON: The principals don't have to
7 report back how they're going to --

8 UNKNOWN FEMALE: It's monitored through when
9 you go to school council meetings.

10 MS. OSTRO: Thank you very much.

11 MS. COOPER: 0P15, Phinola Burrell.

12 MS. BURRELL: Good evening. I'm a product of
13 Chicago Public Schools. My mother was also a
14 product of Chicago Public Schools and my son.

15 And I am speaking not only on behalf of
16 the teachers, I'm speaking on the children that you
17 said that you're going to invest to improve student
18 outcome.

19 I was sitting there taking -- I'm a
20 special ed teacher. I was taking notes and I heard
21 more special ed cuts, more paperwork, but more
22 cuts. I was thinking, I was like how is that
23 investing to improve student outcome?

24 You also mentioned we cannot penalize

1 cutting risk programs that affect students, but
2 they cut gym, library, computer, drama,
3 fine arts, no art. You know, this is what's going
4 on. But how are we to invest to improve student
5 outcome?

6 Class is overcrowded. Teachers are
7 considered -- we went to school, we do the
8 five-year program that they have now, highly
9 qualified by the state, but we're no good.

10 But, you know, the charter schools, they
11 don't have to do all the things we have to do, but
12 they are invested to improve student outcomes. I
13 didn't see anything in the budget that is
14 reflecting that.

15 Teachers are being laid off, put in the
16 reassignment pool, put labels on saying do not hire
17 (inaudible due to applause), national board
18 certified teachers, regular teachers, but we're
19 investing to improve student outcome.

20 We want a high-quality school day. It
21 said 276 teachers (inaudible) for what. You know,
22 I never heard of it but for what. Funds invested
23 in the charter schools, 76,000,000.

24 Why not invest it in the public schools?

1 We work with everything, whatever comes in that
2 door. I work with whoever come in the door.
3 Johnny didn't have a meal the night before. He
4 didn't have shoes to walk to school, but he had the
5 best place he had. You know, when you don't have
6 that option --

7 MS. COOPER: Please conclude.

8 MS. BURRELL: I heard you.

9 When you look at this budget, I don't see
10 anything there. The bottom line is you are
11 penalizing the student and you are putting them
12 at risk and there is nothing in that budget
13 that is investing to improve student outcome.
14 Thank you.

15 MS. COOPER: OP16, Nicholas Mann.

16 MR. MANN: My name is Nicholas Mann. I'm a
17 student at Chicago State University and I want to
18 be a teacher.

19 I'm going to make this quick statement
20 because you guys can't seem to answer a question.
21 So I'm reading over this budget from your
22 presentation and I got to say that's the dumbest
23 thing I've ever seen in my life and I'm not a
24 fan.

1 You know, you're cutting the school budget
2 but yet you expect high quality out of students.
3 That's got to be dumbest thing I've ever heard.

4 So I'm sitting here thinking about it and
5 for the longest time I figured, okay, it's either
6 going to be one of two things. Either you got to
7 be the dumbest people in the world, which I'm kind
8 of thinking like no because Rahm Emanuel hired you
9 and Dave Vitale is up there and we have the
10 president of the Chicago Board of Trade and so you
11 guys are not that dumb and you can clearly
12 spell.

13 So it went the other way, which is kind of
14 pretty much the answer that you've given and some
15 of the ways you're treating the teachers and mainly
16 the students because it's all about the students,
17 is that you guys are racist.

18 You know, schools on the north side, are
19 you asking the teachers up there? No. Are you
20 closing the charter schools, are they getting cuts,
21 experimenting on kids? And you guys don't care how
22 they come up with in the end, oh, well, we'll just
23 try something else because they're lab rats in
24 their maze.

1 And teachers, kids and staff, kids are not
2 monkeys. These are human beings.

3 MS. COOPER: Speaker, please conclude.

4 MR. MANN: Oh, I'm concluding.

5 These kids are human beings. What you are
6 doing to them and doing to these teachers,
7 predominantly African-American who pretty much make
8 up the majority of this room who taught me, so that
9 tells me you're all racist.

10 MS. COOPER: OP17, Barbara Baker.

11 MS. BAKER: Good evening. You all have said
12 what I wanted to say, but I've got to say some
13 more.

14 I am Barbara Baker and I have taught in
15 the elementary public schools right here in Chicago
16 and I'm retired and I was a union delegate when I
17 was in school and I was a union delegate in
18 retirement. I'm also still active on the committee
19 at the Chicago Teachers Union called the Human
20 Rights Committee.

21 And guess what? You all are breaking all
22 of these students and teachers human rights. It's
23 really a shame.

24 I want to ask you to include the lab

1 equipment in the elementary schools. When I taught
2 kindergarten, first grade, second grade, my
3 students won first and second place prizes.

4 We need to instill science at the lower
5 level, not up at high school. I want to say that
6 our schools that are closed during the hot
7 temperature spells, are they going to be included
8 for air-conditioning? I heard you say the budget
9 won't allow it. You got to find a way.

10 Empowering principals as the school
11 leaders is not the best idea. Amen to that. Two
12 heads are better than one. Two heads, you heard
13 that.

14 And you know who else should be on that
15 team for leadership? Teachers, parents, community
16 and even some students. You don't want to include
17 them in that.

18 And the next thing I want to say is that
19 where is my tax money going? I'm looking at my
20 taxes. It says I pay Board of Education school
21 taxes 52.75 percent. I pay Chicago School Building
22 and Improvement Fund, 2.18 percent. Where is my
23 money going?

24 And where is that money that some

1 teachers -- you know, some teachers forget about a
2 check they got and this Board of Education is
3 dirty, y'all. They will not even tell you if you
4 got to cash a check, turn it over to the state
5 (inaudible due to applause). When are you going to
6 add that courtesy in? When are you going to do
7 that? And I got something else to say.

8 MS. COOPER: Please conclude, speaker.

9 OP18.

10 MR. ORLOCOFF: Hello again. I'm David
11 Orlocoff. I forgot to say that the first time
12 around, David Orlocoff, a concerned community
13 member.

14 So the problem is we got here we're
15 splitting into the operating and capital. We're
16 here to talk about the whole budget what we're
17 doing with these kids. We don't care about
18 the mapping and about what you have on this
19 screen. This is about children in the
20 community, the schools, the workers. It's about
21 everything.

22 So the problem is chronically underfunded
23 schools and the extreme economic racial disparity
24 with blacks and it's not hard to see that. You

1 have 40 kids in one classroom on the south side.
2 You have 17 in the classroom on the north side.
3 There's going to be a big difference.

4 So what does this budget do? This budget
5 is spending recklessly on what we don't need. A
6 half a billion dollars is going to charter schools
7 in 2013 in this budget and more money for
8 standardized testing to prepare and do what and
9 that money is going to some people with connections
10 to the Board of Education.

11 They're not-for-profit companies that are
12 making money off of testing these kids so they can
13 say who's failing and lock the teachers away.

14 When you shut down a school, the laws for
15 the public schools, the real public schools, you
16 got teachers from the community working in those
17 schools and then you close them. You might build a
18 charter school later. All those teachers for the
19 charter schools are not in the union. We know that
20 you're not rehiring any of the teachers that you're
21 firing.

22 So the stuff you're spending money on,
23 charter schools and corporate lawyers, these are
24 things not to help, these are things to attack

1 teachers. The largest union in the midwest,
2 the Chicago Teachers Union, 29,000 strong, you
3 chose to attack the union rather than support the
4 union.

5 What we need to do is look back at the
6 revenue. You said you've done all you can, that
7 was the speaker earlier. The TIF funds are
8 property taxes. TIF are property taxes and they
9 should be going to the schools, but instead the
10 money is going to people on the Board.

11 Penny Pritzker is not paying her own
12 taxes. She won't pay her own property taxes, but
13 she'll take 5.5 million dollars as a billionaire
14 from the schools. They're closing schools on the
15 south side and yet she's getting \$5,000,000 to
16 build a hotel.

17 So my question is, you sat up there -- and
18 it would be irresponsible to mask the problem. My
19 question is, don't you feel silly when a board of
20 bankers gets downgraded by the Moody Credit Agency?
21 You got to be failing. Is that a measure of
22 performance for the Board?

23 MS. OSTRO: I think what the downgrade says is
24 that -- and if you read it, they criticized us for

1 using the reserves and we think that was the
2 right choice because the alternative would have
3 been further cuts in the classroom.

4 So we chose to invest and not change class
5 size, to maintain our early childhood education
6 rather than try and please the ratings agency by
7 not using those funds, by sitting on tens of
8 millions of dollars. Instead we choose to invest
9 that in the classroom.

10 MR. ORLOCOFF: The alternative would have been
11 the fight against the CPS opposing the TIF funds
12 instead of supporting them. The alternative would
13 be raising revenues so that we can fund our
14 schools.

15 MS. COOPER: The last speaker OP19, Valerie
16 Collins.

17 MS. COLLINS: Okay. So the last time I was up
18 as a parent. So this time I'm a school teacher. I
19 am a high school math teacher, as a matter of
20 fact.

21 So being a high school math teacher and
22 being in a lot of organizations including my
23 church, they always ask me to do the budget. So I
24 know how to do numbers for the budget.

1 So for that reason, I just want to ask you
2 a couple of questions.

3 Spending, I love spending. So everybody
4 says that, you know, you're going to open up 6600
5 new seats in the magnet schools. Now, we all know
6 that all students don't necessarily have to go
7 to a magnet school or can go to a magnet school,
8 okay. So where are these 6600 students going to
9 come from?

10 Well, I'm thinking that, you know, why
11 can't they come from the Catholic schools, why
12 can't they come from the private schools, why can't
13 they come from other -- outside of the city?

14 My daughter went to Whitney Young and I
15 guarantee you a lot of those students don't live in
16 the Chicago area, okay. They come in on the Metra
17 and they leave out on the Metra, okay. But that's
18 for the magnet schools which have to be racially
19 balanced.

20 Now, one of my questions is, the charter
21 schools, what is the percentage? Are they racially
22 balanced too? Because I'm seeing that the majority
23 of the charter schools are south and west and I
24 think 95 percent black, okay.

1 If this is such a good school, why would
2 you send -- why aren't there any schools on the
3 north side? That's one question.

4 My second question for -- I didn't get her
5 last name. Her name first name is Gretchen, the
6 special ed person. They were talking about the
7 magnet schools, what percentage of those seats, of
8 the 6600 extra seats will be for special ed
9 students, or are they going to get put or dumped
10 into the neighborhood schools without resources and
11 then those teachers are still going to be
12 responsible for passing every test that --

13 MS. COOPER: Please conclude.

14 MS. COLLINS: Okay. So that was my second
15 question.

16 So my concern as a citizen, everybody
17 knows I'm good at numbers, I know how to analyze
18 numbers. I've been a programmer for 18 years in
19 the industry. This is nothing new.

20 The problem with this is that you're
21 dealing with children, you're dealing with people's
22 lives. And I have to say this. I am 53 years old,
23 going to be 53 and I can say this is the most
24 racist stuff I have ever seen in my lifetime and I

1 was born and raised in Chicago.

2 MS. BRUMLEY: Valerie Collins, Gretchen
3 Brumley. Students with disabilities that are in
4 the selected enrollment schools, we work very
5 closely because we make sure that all of our
6 schools are balanced with students with
7 disabilities.

8 We have a person in our office who works
9 closely with that to make sure that not only do we
10 place programs of students with significant
11 disabilities in those schools but students who are
12 eligible actually have the opportunities to take
13 those tests.

14 So the percentages -- I don't have the
15 percentages of the 6600 that we anticipate
16 attending. We can certainly respond to you, but I
17 did want to respond that we do have a relative
18 portion of students with disabilities that work
19 very closely with academic to make sure that that
20 happens.

21 MS. COLLINS: 20 percent?

22 MS. BRUMLEY: The percentages vary by school
23 because, again, depending on what those schools
24 offer and the programs we have in our schools, but

1 we will be working very closely to make sure that's
2 represented and I would be happy to respond to you
3 with that information.

4 UNKNOWN PERSON: What about the -- she asked
5 why is this only 95 percent, why aren't they on the
6 north side? She asked that question.

7 MS. OSTR0: I don't have the statistics on the
8 charter schools so I just have to get back to you
9 on that.

10 MS. COOPER: Thank you. This concludes the
11 question and comment section.

12 We want to thank everyone for their
13 questions and comments. We will address the
14 comments and questions at the tele-town hall
15 meeting on Wednesday, July 18th, from 6:00 to 7:30
16 on the budget to the questions today.

17 We want to thank everyone for coming out
18 with questions and comments.

19 (END OF HEARING)

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1 STATE OF ILLINOIS.)

2) SS:

3 COUNTY OF C O O K)

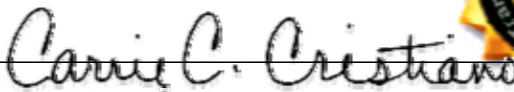
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5 CARRIE C. CRISTIANO, being first duly
6 sworn, on oath says that she is a court reporter
7 doing business in the City of Chicago; and that she
8 reported in shorthand the proceedings of said
9 hearing, and that the foregoing is a true and
10 correct transcript of her shorthand notes so taken
11 as aforesaid, and contains the proceedings given at
12 said hearing.

13

14

15

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carrie C. Cristiano".



16

Carrie C. Cristiano

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License No.: 084-003153

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