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

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

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

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

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

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

MS. COOPER: I would also like to introduce David Vitale, our Board president, Adrian Williams, the Englewood/Gresham chief and I'd like to thank you for having our cabinets from our communications team here, we have people from safety and security and from governmental affairs and our budget department. Thank you for helping with
Before we begin the process, I want to read about the process and how it's going to go. The budget hearing will begin at 6:00 p.m. and end promptly at 8:00 p.m.

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

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

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

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

If the speaker has a follow-up question, we ask that you please speak to the CPS staff to
help you fill out a follow-up card. And we also
would like to acknowledge that we have a -- CPS has
a website where we can show you our thoughts on the
budget. So now I'd like to turn it over to Ginger
Ostro for the presentation.

MS. OSTRO: Thank you.

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

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

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

Both budgets reflect our key priorities
which is investing our resources in areas that lead
to improved student outcomes and doing it in a way
that focuses on how we can best use those
resources. And our focus is on making sure that
every student graduates college and is career
ready.

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

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

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

We have over the last two years made
significant cuts outside the classroom. We've
reduced $400,000,000 of expenses in administration
and operating costs in the last fiscal year and
this budget proposes an additional $144,000,000 of
cuts for the year beginning July 1.
We have used every tool available to us including increasing our revenues and our resources by taxing the property cap to protect that investment in the kids, yet we still have a significant deficit which we'll talk about in a moment and so we have to draw down our reserves, money that built up over time, in order to balance this budget.

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

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

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

We protect early childhood development, we maintain class size and we maintain other important...
investments in education and, as I mentioned earlier, we do expand high-quality school choices.

Let me take you through some of that detail and how we achieved each of those goals. First, as I mentioned, our main focus is on empowering principals and school leaders. We have added $130,000,000 of new funding that principals can spend at their discretion on student learning. This includes $70,000,000 in a new fund called the College Ready Fund which was nonexistent before and a way to identify what is the best way to spend their educational dollars.

In addition, as part of this College Ready Fund, we took money that had been restricted that had been given out previously to say you have to spend this much on textbooks, this much on supplies and we said principals are in a better position to make those decisions than the budget office, put all that together in a College Ready Fund and created an entire pool of $100,000,000 of principal discretion. That's our first component of empowering principals.
Secondly, we were able to increase the amount of state and federal discretionary money that we made available to schools by moving programs that were managed centrally out -- eliminating that central control and giving the dollars instead to the schools.

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

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

We've also added over 4600 new seats in charter schools including nine new charter schools that will open this fall as well as 1900 additional seats in existing charters that as they grow they
add to grade levels until they reach their full enrollment.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In recent years, one-time fixes like
federal stimulus money, some bond restructuring we were able to do helped us get through the budget, get through those difficult years but still masked the depth of the problems we were facing.

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

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

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

And why is that happening? It's particularly because of cuts at the state level
where we've seen both our general state aides and
our support for general education declining as well
as at the federal level we've seen those cuts.

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

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

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

First, as you're aware, we have increased
our property taxes to the legal limit which is
about a $28 impact per household for an average
homeowner, but it generates $62,000,000 for us in
revenue for the next fiscal year.

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

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

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

So you can see the kinds of cuts that we have made on the operation side. On the education
side, we had to focus on eliminating outdated or
less effective programs, making reductions in
central office and rationalizing some of the other
programs we offer. In total, about $49,000,000 of
savings there. So in combination, $144,000,000 in
cuts.

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

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

We've used $432,000,000 to help support
the investments that we're making in this budget
rather than making cuts to schools that could
impact educational outcomes.
So let me turn now to the other budget that we want to present to you tonight which is the capital budget.

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

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

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

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

So this year we're proposing about
$100,000,000 of projects in the current year, but that's not to say that we don't have a lot of work that's underway right now. In fact, we have over 200 projects in schools going on that were approved in capital budgets through 2008 to 2012.

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

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

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

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

We're investing $3.6 million dollars in playgrounds this year, the first phase of a five-year plan to support recess. This is obviously a key component to the full school day. And we're adding $13,000,000 in information technology upgrades to ensure that students have access to the highest and most available technology.

Next we obviously are investing in our buildings to ensure safety of the schools as well as to save money. So, for example, we have $5,000,000 to replace chimneys that are in disrepair, $11,000,000 to address roofs, windows, masonry, mechanical and ADA repairs in schools. And then we have about $40,000,000 that will help us save money by installing energy
efficient light bulbs and being able to track our energy data much more quickly so we know where we're wasting and that will be largely funded by the City's energy infrastructure trust.

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

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

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

And so we go through this filtering
process in order to identify ultimately the
projects that are going to be included and that's
what's presented to you in the multiyear capital
plan.

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

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

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

So we hope that that's something that
helps you understand some of the key components of what we're including here.

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

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

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

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

If you do have additional questions or
there's things that we don't have time to get to, we have folks around the room that have cards that you can write down any questions.

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

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

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

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

When there's 30 seconds remaining, I will put this up and when there's zero seconds
remaining, I will put this us and we ask that you just please adhere to these rules.

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

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

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

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

Charter schools get funding while public schools are slashed. You tell us that there's a deficit of $700,000,000, but we can't pay teachers and our kids will be subjected to a longer school day.
But Illinois is not broke. $250,000,000 of TIF money is taken out of our schools each year to fund the projects of the wealthy, plus the $5,000,000 Penny Pritzker got to build another hotel which we don't need.

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

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

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

MS. COOPER: The next speaker is Craig Aldrich.

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

Getting back to budgets, I understand

$500,000,000 is going to charter school operators,
you know, privatized operators, AUSL which I
believe one of these AUSL people is on the CPS
Board.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The one thing that they should be able to do they fail because Moody's Credit Agency
downgraded the Chicago Public Schools because of how bad this budget is and the reason they did that is because they're spending 100 percent of reserves this year.

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

They're going to be back here next year and say we don't have any money so what do we have to do? We have to close 50 schools on the south side. And what else is going to be going on? The Red Line is going to be shut down for five months. You have an unelected school Board. It's not a Board. It's just the mayor and the mayor isn't aware of the south side (inaudible due to applause.)

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

They claim that $130,000,000 is going to the longer school day. That's a lie. They put up
the numbers, $70,000,000 was already earmarked, $60,000,000 to 276 teachers, that's less than 5 percent of the teachers in the CTU. Less than half a percent of teachers are hired. With $60,000,000, you could have paid them all a salary of 200,000 at that rate. 60,000,000 divided by 276 is 200,000. Yet you're not paying that. You're paying 400,000. Where is the rest of the money going?

It goes to grants, it goes to AUSL for testing, it goes to charter schools and everything we don't need. The Board of Education has declared war on students, on teachers and on the community. They're essentially sabotaging this budget so they can come back next year and say it's a crisis and throw their hands up and, you know, I'm sorry, I'm sorry that I can't do this for you, but it's a crisis and it's a crisis they're making right now today.

MS. COOPER:  CA4, Charlotte Sanders.

MS. SANDERS:  Good evening. I am a grandmother of a 10-year-old in the Chicago Public Schools. He...
recently two years ago came from the suburbs.

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

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

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

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

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

When I was in school, you went from 8:00 to 3:15, you had a recess but you also had teacher assistance in the classroom. You had community reps that was working with the parents and the
community. We don't have any support right now. We have so many parents that don't know how to be parents but we don't have a school Board to back us up.

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

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

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

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

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

And what I want to talk about is what's become sort of what looks like priority. A budget is a list of priorities. It's a political document, even though we'll throw the numbers...
around and make it look like this is what has to happen.

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

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

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

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

The next tier down is your charter schools and they're paying not only more money now but they also get money from their private donors. So they're getting as much as our public schools do,
plus the extra money from whatever donors they
got.

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

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

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

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

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

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

MS. COOPER: CA6, Valerie Collins.

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

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

That year they were making improvements to
the school and they were moved to the near north building and they stayed there for a year. After that year, they moved back into the Jones building on State Street.

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

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

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

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

My second point is about the capital improvements that you said that you were making and 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
about Jones and obviously that work is still going on at Jones.

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

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

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

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

MS. COOPER: So we're done with the capital
speakers. We'll now move to the operating budget. But before we do that, I want to introduce to you Annette Gurley, Joseph Davis and Harrison Peterson.

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

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

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

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

So that, you know, maybe a kid that is...
going through elementary, maybe he might decide he
wants to learn how to play the guitar or something,
might want to learn to play something. What is the
plan for that kid to help him move along the
system?

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

MS. OSTRO: Thank you.

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

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

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

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

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

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


OP4, Matthew Leskin.

MR. LESKIN: Hi, good afternoon. My name is Matthew Leskin. I'm a proud parent of two CPS students and LaSalle Language Academy where my wife went before that and her sister and her brother and her brother was a teacher. It's a school my family has had a long history at and we're very proud.
I'm not a teacher. I did leave my career about a year and a half ago to join the Teachers Union as an organizer and help bring the teachers and parents together around these kinds of school issues that have been a growing concern for even my family.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What has the Board and CPS administrators done when the new TIF agreement was
just proposed gives tens of millions to develop a
new downtown skyscraper? What did you do to oppose
this or protest it to lobby against? Please tell
us.

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

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

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

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

MS. OSTRO: I need to get -- I don't have that
on -- I need to get that. We get extensive support
through the TIF because it does support our ability to borrow money to build new buildings.

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

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

MS. COOPER: OP5, Sharon Bonds.

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

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

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

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

I would like to say just, for example,
this is my grandson. He goes to school, Chicago Public School. He has asthma. And in 2008, we had the swine flu so our job is just as important as teachers.

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

MS. OSTRO: Yes, you can get an answer. We're working obviously on preventing a lot of changes and a lot of things in order to balance this budget.

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

I can't speak specifically to additional layoffs because I don't know the answer to that question, but I can tell you that we do have significant challenges ahead of us and that's what
we tried to outline for you today.

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

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

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


SPEAKER OP6: Hello, everyone.

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

My question is, what are we doing to make sure that these students will get adequate education when school opens in September? Because
some schools are still turning their back.

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

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

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

What they need is -- they need them to improve their test scores. They need books, they need a library, they need pens and pencils. As a teacher, I provide pens and pencils. I have to pay for that. Thank you. I would love to hear some
response from the panel. Thank you.

MS. OSTRO: On the particular question that you asked about the school closing and the students getting enrolled, it's not a question that generates a generic answer, a general answer. I think if you would reach out to one of the folks with cards and help us understand what schools you're specifically looking at, I want to ensure that -- (inaudible). It sounded like she was referring to something specific.

Thank you very much.

MS. COOPER: OP8, Kim --

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

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

MS. COOPER: OP8.

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

I did hear you talk a lot about STEM and I have a concern as a middle school science teacher...
in regard to our science labs.

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

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

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

And my daughter -- I'm sure every one of you did the same thing, you looked at every school to make sure that school was adequate for your child. And as a CPS teacher, I did the same thing for my daughter. My daughter goes to South Shore
Fine Arts Academy which is on the south side but they have the adequate resources.

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

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

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

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

MR. MURPHY: The budget that's in the FY 13
program, the STEM program, it's not for charter
schools. It's a relatively new curriculum that's
being implemented at several of the CPS schools and
the five schools that are targeted for FY 13 are
actually CPS high schools.

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

MS. COOPER: OP9, David Steamer.

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

A couple of things. So this morning I saw
in the news that there's a new CPS budget
allocating game that you can play. You can go
on-line for allocating a budget and they will show
you how difficult allocating a budget really is.
Excuse me, but these people should know
how to allocate a budget. I shouldn't have to move
this bar back and forth between the schools,
charter schools, whatever, that's an insult.
Second point. Our school is one of the fortunate schools that actually has a library. However, our school has one counselor. Let's think about this number.

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

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

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

MS. OSTRO: Charter schools are public schools
and families choose -- (inaudible due to hollering).

   MS. COOPER: OP10, Kathleen Stevens.

   MS. OSTRO: Charter schools are public schools. They serve public school students.

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

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

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

   MS. STEVENS: I think this budget is outrageous. I think for the Board to pretend in the name of the children and to blame our teachers with the resources that they need is an outrage. To see our teachers and students in a classroom for an extra hour and a half a day without compensation or supplies is a travesty. Teachers in this city work an average of 56 hours a week. To add 20 percent more to their
workload without pay or resources is not good for our kids or our teachers.

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

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

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

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

MS. OSTRO: The next step after this, and obviously we appreciate everybody's comments and feedback, are to take this information -- as you see, we have a court reporter here who is taking
down all the comments, so a full transcript will be made available.

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

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

MS. PARKER: Good evening everyone.

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

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

Why can't every neighborhood school be high quality? It's like we're going back to an era
where I don't want my child to be bused to school,
I want my child to walk to school. I want a
high-quality school in my neighborhood (inaudible
due to applause).

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

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

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

Do you know how much we do in a regular
school day? Do you know how long it takes to grade
papers? I teach writing. One paragraph (inaudible
due to applause) how long it takes to call parents
every day to tell them what that child is doing?
Do you know how long it takes to write a referral
for a special needs child, how long it takes a
lesson plan on a Sunday night, how long it takes to
analyze, how long it takes to have a meeting with
other teachers, a grade level meeting, how long it
takes to plan out my own budget?

MS. COOPER: Please conclude.

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

MS. COOPER: The next speaker is OP12.

SPEAKER OP12: Okay. Hard to follow that

I would just like to say that I have been
a student as well as a teacher of the Chicago
Public School system all my life, all my children.
And ever since I can remember, and I'm
thinking when I was 5 years old, parents and
teachers in African-America and Latino
communities have been asked to make bricks without
straw.

My concern has been as a high school
teacher the decisions and the thought processes
that go into the decisions to turn-around schools and to fire every adult in the building.

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

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

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

I don't doubt that maybe some of the people there try to do the very best that they could do with this budget, but until we have an elected school Board and true community input, the
best will never be good enough. Thank you.

MS. COOPER: OP13, Sherry Parker.

MS. PARKER: Hello. Good afternoon.

I'm a displaced parent from the now closed Guggenheim Elementary School right here in Englewood. Guggenheim for the last two years, we struggled. We had no gym teacher for two years, we had overcrowded classrooms. Our kindergarten had 32 with no aid. Our third grade class had 33. We had a third of our students in the SCLS homeless program who were transferred out. We had no school supplies available, not even for the SCLS school. We didn't have enough paraprofessionals. There was myself and the clerk. We had no soap or tissues in the bathrooms, literally none. Everyone, when we came to school, the students came to school and put on gloves that we cleaned with bleach before breakfast from the rodents that were dead the night before. We had special need kids that never had those needs met and we had teachers tenured who were forced and harassed out, two were type 75s.

My question to you with this new 2012/2013
budget, have you made allowances for these things
not to continue to happen to our black and brown
children in our Englewood area or south side area?
Or what do you plan to do with the budget as far as
these issues are concerned? And I would like you
to answer that question.

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

MS. COOPER: OP14, Kimberly Volsky.

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

I don't remember a time in history when
the CPS had a balanced budget or wasn't in the red.
So I don't know what the urgency is now except to
agree with the person who said that this budget is
a political document and it's the politics that are
shocking and the disaster of capitalism that Mr. Orlocoff was referring to.

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

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

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

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

The second thing is that in addition to that test prep, some principals are going to misuse the money. I used to teach at Anderson Community Academy where the principal, as smart as she was,
used discretionary funds to build herself a
bathroom so she wouldn't have to deal with
employees.

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

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

MS. COOPER: Please conclude.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MS. OSTRO: I appreciate that comment.

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

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

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

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

MS. OSTRO: Thank you very much.


MS. BURRELL: Good evening. I'm a product of Chicago Public Schools. My mother was also a product of Chicago Public Schools and my son. And I am speaking not only on behalf of the teachers, I'm speaking on the children that you said that you're going to invest to improve student outcome.

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

You also mentioned we cannot penalize
cutting risk programs that affect students, but
they cut gym, library, computer, drama, fine arts, no art. You know, this is what's going on. But how are we to invest to improve student outcome?

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

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

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

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

Why not invest it in the public schools?
We work with everything, whatever comes in that door. I work with whoever come in the door. Johnny didn't have a meal the night before. He didn't have shoes to walk to school, but he had the best place he had. You know, when you don't have that option --

MS. COOPER: Please conclude.

MS. BURRELL: I heard you.

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

MS. COOPER: OP16, Nicholas Mann.

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

I'm going to make this quick statement because you guys can't seem to answer a question. So I'm reading over this budget from your presentation and I got to say that's the dumbest thing I've ever seen in my life and I'm not a fan.
You know, you're cutting the school budget but yet you expect high quality out of students. That's got to be dumbest thing I've ever heard.

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

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

You know, schools on the north side, are you asking the teachers up there? No. Are you closing the charter schools, are they getting cuts, experimenting on kids? And you guys don't care how they come up with in the end, oh, well, we'll just try something else because they're lab rats in their maze.
And teachers, kids and staff, kids are not monkeys. These are human beings.

MS. COOPER: Speaker, please conclude.

MR. MANN: Oh, I'm concluding.

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

MS. COOPER: OP17, Barbara Baker.

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

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

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

I want to ask you to include the lab
equipment in the elementary schools. When I taught kindergarten, first grade, second grade, my students won first and second place prizes.

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

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

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

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

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

MS. COOPER: Please conclude, speaker.

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

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

So the problem is chronically underfunded schools and the extreme economic racial disparity with blacks and it's not hard to see that. You
I have 40 kids in one classroom on the south side.
You have 17 in the classroom on the north side.
There's going to be a big difference.

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

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

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

So the stuff you're spending money on, charter schools and corporate lawyers, these are things not to help, these are things to attack.
teachers. The largest union in the midwest, the Chicago Teachers Union, 29,000 strong, you chose to attack the union rather than support the union.

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

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

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

MS. OSTRO: I think what the downgrade says is that -- and if you read it, they criticized us for
using the reserves and we think that was the 
right choice because the alternative would have 
been further cuts in the classroom.

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

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

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

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

So being a high school math teacher and 
being in a lot of organizations including my 
church, they always ask me to do the budget. So I 
know how to do numbers for the budget.
So for that reason, I just want to ask you a couple of questions.

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

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

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

Now, one of my questions is, the charter schools, what is the percentage? Are they racially balanced too? Because I'm seeing that the majority of the charter schools are south and west and I think 95 percent black, okay.
If this is such a good school, why would you send -- why aren't there any schools on the north side? That's one question.

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

MS. COOPER: Please conclude.

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

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

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

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

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

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

MS. COLLINS: 20 percent?

MS. BRUMLEY: The percentages vary by school because, again, depending on what those schools offer and the programs we have in our schools, but
we will be working very closely to make sure that's represented and I would be happy to respond to you with that information.

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

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

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

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

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

(END OF HEARING)
CARRIE C. CRISTIANO, being first duly
sworn, on oath says that she is a court reporter
doing business in the City of Chicago; and that she
reported in shorthand the proceedings of said
hearing, and that the foregoing is a true and
correct transcript of her shorthand notes so taken
as aforesaid, and contains the proceedings given at
said hearing.

Carrie C. Cristiano

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