

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PUBLIC HEARING
FY 2013 AMENDMENT BUDGET HEARING PROCESS

held on
Monday, November 5, 2012

STENOGRAPHIC REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had in
the above-entitled matter at Walter Payton
College Prep High School, 1035 North Wells
Street, Chicago, Illinois, commencing at
6 o'clock p.m.

PRESENT:

MS. GINGER OSTRO, Presenter
MS. DANA BRINK, Budget Manager
MS. MELANIE RODRIGUEZ, Timekeeper

Reported By: Karen Fatigato, CSR

License No.: 084-004072

1 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Good evening and
2 welcome to the FY 2013 Amended Budget Hearing
3 Process at Walter Payton College Prep High
4 School. My name is Melanie Rodriguez, and I'm a
5 compliance analyst with the Budget and Grants
6 Office. This evening we have Ginger Ostro,
7 Budget and Grants Officer, and Dana Brink,
8 Budget Manager.

9 At this time I will read through the
10 budget hearing process.

11 Budget hearing will begin promptly at
12 6 p.m. and end promptly at 8 p.m. or when the
13 last speaker has concluded, whichever is
14 earlier.

15 All who sign up to speak will be given
16 an opportunity to ask a question or make a
17 statement until the meeting is adjourned.

18 All those wishing to speak are asked to
19 please sign in from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on the
20 speaker sign-in sheet at the entrance
21 registration table and each speaker will be
22 given a number.

23 Please note that no one will be able to
24 sign up to speak after 6:30 p.m.

1 Speakers will be limited to addressing
2 topics related to the budget.

3 Speakers are asked to limit their
4 comments to two minutes so that everyone that
5 would like to speak will have an opportunity to
6 do so.

7 When multiple speakers from the same
8 organization or school are listed, only one
9 member per organization or school will be
10 allowed to speak regarding the same issue.

11 If the speaker has a follow-up question
12 we ask that you please speak to CPS staff
13 members who will be on site to help you fill out
14 a follow-up card.

15 The public hearing is scheduled to
16 conclude at 8 p.m. or after the last speaker,
17 whichever is earlier.

18 At this time we will watch a
19 presentation by Ginger Ostro.

20 Ginger.

21 MS. OSTRO: Hi, thank you very much.

22 I'm Ginger Ostro, I'm the Budget and
23 Grants Officer.

24 We have just a very short presentation

1 for you this evening that explains a little bit
2 about the amended FY 13 budget and why we're
3 here this evening.

4 So our focus here is really just to
5 answer two basic questions: Why are we
6 presenting an amended FY 13 budget? And what
7 does the amended budget do?

8 So let's just answer the first question
9 of why we amended the budget that was adopted by
10 the Board on August 24th. That budget when it
11 was adopted by the Board included funds for all
12 union agreements that we had concluded or
13 reached agreement on at the time. Subsequently
14 we approved an agreement with the Chicago
15 Teachers Union and funding for that agreement
16 was not included in the budget. The new
17 agreement with the Chicago Teachers Union adds
18 about \$103 million to the cost of the budget for
19 fiscal 2013. Because this is an increase in
20 expenditures for the year and adjusts our
21 revenues, we're required by law to do an amended
22 budget and that's what we're presenting to you
23 this evening.

24 Throughout this process we'll take down

1 your feedback and present the information that
2 you've shared this evening, as well as the
3 specific transcript from tonight with the Board
4 prior to their acting on this budget at the
5 November 14th meeting.

6 Let's just talk a little bit about the
7 changes that are in the budget. First of all,
8 the added expense, the \$103 million that I
9 mentioned, is primarily for compensation for
10 teachers. \$59 million covers the cost of the 3
11 percent cost of living increase. We included
12 \$33 million for step increases, and these are
13 adjustments that reflect additional years of
14 experience. We included \$5 million for lane
15 increases, which is as teachers get more
16 educational experience they get adjustments.
17 And then finally there's \$6 million included in
18 here for non-teachers that are part of the
19 Chicago Teachers Union. This would include
20 staff like teacher's aides, clerks and others.
21 In total that's \$103 million.

22 So how are we going to cover these new
23 costs in the budget? Well, essentially it's
24 \$70 million of additional revenue that you'll

1 see and \$33 million in cuts or savings. So
2 where are those coming from? So the first area
3 that you see is in Operations, about \$21
4 million. Here we'll see about \$11 million of
5 savings from improved food service revenue. We
6 get reimbursement from the Federal Government
7 when we serve meals, as well as reductions and
8 expenses there.

9 Secondly, we achieved some success in
10 reducing our cost for procurement and so we have
11 a more aggressive target in savings from
12 procurement of an additional \$10 million.

13 The second major category is
14 administration where we expect to save about
15 \$12 million. A large part of this comes from
16 delaying or cancelling filling of vacant
17 non-teaching positions. And then we'll make
18 reductions in other non-staff positions, other
19 non-personnel items to save about an additional
20 \$4 million.

21 And finally we'll see about \$70 million
22 of changes on the financial side through things
23 we're doing with sale and surplus property as
24 well as adjustments in our bond portfolio.

1 So first let me walk you through those.
2 First, we issued bonds back in August, and while
3 we had anticipated issuing those bonds we
4 budgeted about \$13 million to pay the interest
5 cost during this fiscal year. Instead, we did
6 what's called capitalizing interest or borrowed
7 a little bit of extra money to pay the cost of
8 bonds in this fiscal year which freed up the
9 \$13 million that we had otherwise budgeted. So
10 that becomes money that's available to us to pay
11 the cost.

12 Secondly, we anticipate selling about
13 \$15 million worth of surplus property. These
14 are empty buildings that are already on the
15 market, and we expect to receive about
16 \$15 million this year from those proceeds.

17 And finally, we will either later this
18 year or early next year be refinancing bonds
19 that are maturing this year that will provide
20 about \$42 million of additional savings for us.
21 So again this will provide money that will pay
22 for some of the costs of the contract.

23 With these changes and going through
24 this hearing process we anticipate bringing this

1 budget before the Board in November for them to
2 act on, and once we do that then we can go ahead
3 and execute all of the changes that are
4 reflected here.

5 So that just concludes a brief
6 presentation that we had for you. And just to
7 reiterate the guidelines for the rest of the
8 hearing. Each speaker who signed up will have
9 two minutes to ask a question or make a comment,
10 we'll do our best to respond, but we will get
11 back to you if we can't address everything
12 today. And then after everyone who has had a
13 chance to speak, everyone who has signed up has
14 spoken, we will go ahead and adjourn the
15 hearing. So let me turn it back over to Melanie
16 to begin the public comment part of our hearing.

17 MS. RODRIGUEZ: At this time I would
18 like to call up the first speaker. The speakers
19 can come up to the podium and give their number
20 to the security officer. Once you begin
21 speaking you will have exactly two minutes.

22 So may I please ask speaker one to
23 please approach the microphone. You can look at
24 your sticker.

1 Speaker two, please approach the
2 microphone.

3 MS. DELGADO: Hello, I'm Brenda
4 Delgado, I'm a parent across the street, Ruben
5 Salazar, and I'm concerned for the budget. You
6 say that there's selling surplus properties, I
7 have a question and I have a comment.

8 You're going to be selling some surplus
9 properties that are already in the market so are
10 those not the schools that would be impacted by
11 the draft closing guidelines for next school
12 year, not the ones that would be on that
13 tentative list, which won't be announced till
14 March I believe? So that's my question.

15 And my comment is for those types of
16 schools who may be impacted just to keep in mind
17 for my own personal concern is we have a public
18 school across the street, Ruben Salazar, who is
19 options for knowledge with great scores but
20 accepts children from all over Chicago and does
21 not have boundaries. So every single child who
22 is there is by choice, and we still have about
23 82 percent poverty in our schools. So I think
24 we do a great job in using our resources and

1 getting great results. What concerns me is for
2 schools that may find themselves on this list
3 for the school actions, closure or co-location,
4 and they're going to see an options for
5 knowledge school right next door and think that
6 that's a great option or possibly for
7 co-location. We have two schools who I'm very
8 concerned about that are close to us and we have
9 a need for maintaining the integrity of the
10 school, the leadership of the school, the safety
11 of the school and just to consider that that is
12 some of the things that are not attributable
13 just to data, it is really some subjective terms
14 that need to be considered.

15 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Your time has expired.

16 MS. DELGADO: Thank you.

17 MS. OSTRO: Let me just respond to your
18 question, which is, you're correct, none of the
19 buildings that we referred to that will generate
20 the \$15 million savings relate at all to any of
21 the announcements that have been made. These
22 are all properties that have been vacant for a
23 long period of time and are already on the
24 market. So none of this relates to any of the

1 discussion around school actions for anything
2 going forward. And thank you for your other
3 comments, we appreciate it.

4 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Speaker two -- three,
5 please approach the microphone.

6 MS. KATTEN: Good evening, my name is
7 Wendy Katten, I'm a parent with the parent group
8 called Raise Your Hand, and I wasn't able to go
9 to the previous budget hearing so I just have
10 some general comments.

11 One is just that our group really
12 doesn't understand the line item for \$76,361,054
13 in new school development just based on the fact
14 that we have a one billion projected deficit
15 over the next three years and CPS is planning to
16 drain the reserves this year. It just seems --
17 our group -- parents are e-mailing us with a lot
18 of questions in terms of why would CPS be
19 choosing to expand at this time. It's sort of
20 like if I can't pay my bills at home, I would
21 never go do an addition on my home. So many
22 parents -- we have around like 6,000 parents now
23 in our group and many feel that it's kind of
24 irresponsible to be doing such a thing at this

11

1 time.

2 And then the other issue is around
3 assessments. The Office of Assessment has over
4 \$13 million, but I'm trying to find out other
5 funds under like the network offices and school
6 budgets. I'm having a hard time when I look
7 online to just figure out what the total cost of
8 assessments is for the district. So I'm
9 wondering if someone from the department could
10 work with our group and give us information on
11 the total cost of assessment. We're just trying
12 to have like a real dialogue with parents in
13 terms of understanding what those 22 assessments
14 are on the CPS website and how they're impacting
15 the budget and also instructional time and loss
16 of good quality teaching. So I'm hoping someone
17 can follow up with me and help me figure out
18 those numbers. Thank you.

19 MS. OSTRO: Actually, if you give your
20 contact information to one of our folks at the
21 registration table we'll have somebody follow up
22 with you.

23 MS. KATTEN: Thank you.

24 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Speaker four.

1 MR. MESSLER: Good evening, my name is
2 Jerry Messler, I work for the SEIU, Service
3 Employees International Union, Local 1. We're
4 the people that represent the outsourced
5 janitors and custodians that work within CPS.
6 And our workload has really been increasing,
7 it's very, very difficult for us to get all the
8 work done. There's even a rumor we might have
9 to start also cleaning up the snow, which has
10 always been done by others. So we're asking
11 that you hold the line in cutting anything
12 further for our members because we're working as
13 hard as we can and we really don't think we can
14 do any more.

15 I have a basic question for you. Are
16 you planning to do any additional cuts or
17 increases of workload for the custodians in the
18 schools?

19 MS. OSTRO: This budget really just
20 focuses on the changes that I mentioned so
21 anything that's underway was already part of the
22 budget that passed. So any of the changes that
23 are planned, I'm not trying to not answer your
24 question, I'm just saying specifically this

1 budget does not make any further changes to any
2 of the SEIU-related activities, what we're
3 presenting tonight. Anything that was presented
4 previously and already adopted in the budget
5 obviously is already underway.

6 MR. MESSLER: Okay. Thank you very
7 much.

8 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Speaker five, please
9 approach the podium -- microphone.

10 MS. HAINDS: Hi, I'm Sarah Hains from
11 the Chicago Teachers Union. I am concerned
12 about the organization of the Office of
13 Demographics and Planning. I'm a little curious
14 about why Jim Dispensa has been moved out of
15 there after he's been there for 11 years and now
16 he's doing some weird privatization-type role as
17 senior manager of business operations. You
18 know, the facility master plan is due in two
19 months, I'm on the facilities task force and
20 whenever CPS comes to the meetings it admits it
21 has gotten like none of the work done to get
22 ready for this plan which is required by law to
23 be comprehensive at the community level, which
24 is a huge deficit of CPS especially with concept

14

1 changes in administration.

2 You're basing your new school action
3 policy primarily on school utilization rates,
4 which are in and of themselves faulty, they're
5 not accurate at the school level. They don't
6 take into consideration when schools co-chair
7 with important programs like the Boys and Girls
8 Club that provides really much needed services
9 because CPS has cut, you know, after school and
10 has cut supportive services so it needs to
11 partner with communities. Then you build really
12 expensive additions in gentrifying communities
13 that then lose enrollment because gentrifiers
14 don't have kids or don't have them now or they
15 go to private schools, then you lease them for a
16 \$1 to a charter school because they're empty. I
17 mean, it's like -- it's complete chaos. And now
18 you're eliminating a department right when like
19 an enormously important document is due.

20 So I was just wondering if you can say
21 anything about where it went. It supposedly
22 went into C Cat's (sic) office and it says click
23 here and then there's nothing. There's a link
24 called planning that doesn't go anywhere. And

1 the line item is zero for the budget.

2 MS. OSTRO: So we'll look into -- the
3 Office of Planning and Demographics may have a
4 different name, but it is part of Portfolio and
5 it still does exist and the function still
6 remains the same. So we'll check on the website
7 and find out why the link isn't going anywhere
8 or why that isn't working, but it is very much
9 part of the Portfolio Office.

10 MS. HANES: But why would it have zero
11 only because it got moved?

12 MS. OSTRO: It may just be an error.
13 So we'll just have to look into it for you. It
14 is an existing department with the staff.

15 MS. HANES: But different staff because
16 Mr. Dispensa is no longer in that office.

17 MS. OSTRO: Yeah, I really can't speak
18 to specific personnel, but I can tell you that
19 the department is there and funded and providing
20 the same function that it has provided. So
21 we'll check on the link and why it may be
22 showing up as zero.

23 MS. HANES: Okay. Can I follow up with
24 someone to get an answer?

1 MS. OSTRO: Yeah, we will, if you just
2 check with Marguerite or Mike in the back we'll
3 make sure we follow up with you.

4 MS. HANES: Okay.

5 MS. OSTRO: Thank you.

6 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Speaker six.

7 MR. SCHMIDT: Hello, my name is George
8 Schmidt, I'm here both as a reporter and as an
9 analyst who has been at these hearings and
10 covering these budgets for 32 years. I'm also
11 the parent of two students who are currently in
12 Chicago schools and one who has very
13 successfully finished at Whitney Young class of
14 2007 and is now working in the computer industry
15 in Berkley, California.

16 In 2006 at these hearings, which were
17 not attended by any Board of Ed members, as is
18 true tonight, not one of the people here from
19 the CPS budget office was working for CPS. The
20 destruction of the internal infrastructure, the
21 human infrastructure of CPS is dramatic, and by
22 my analysis, which I'll be publishing and
23 submitting to the Board at greater length, not
24 only dramatic but calculated.

1 The fact that in six years there is no
2 one in the budget office who has experience with
3 the budget, there is no remaining institutional
4 memory, it is the scandal that leads to those
5 silly numbers we had to look at tonight. The
6 budget numbers, as you know, Ginger, were
7 already budgeted for the raises, there is no
8 additional 103 million that comes out of the CTU
9 raises. That's a simple fact of math that
10 anyone can check.

11 But more importantly that middle line
12 to cut 14 million more from administration when
13 CPS has already gutted anyone who had the
14 knowledge of the system itself indicates that
15 the actual program of this Board of Education is
16 to destroy the public schools of Chicago. If
17 you get rid of every person who knows the system
18 and replace them by people who are going to be
19 in New Orleans in two years -- thank you for the
20 ten seconds. By the way --

21 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Your time is expired.

22 MR. SCHMIDT: I know my time is
23 expired, but we have two hours for this hearing
24 on a matter that applies to 400,000 children,

1 and I think we each deserve the respect that
2 says we get more time for our questions and our
3 statements. So I'm asking the budget officer
4 that all of us who want to get more time, that's
5 not up to you, ma'am. Ginger?

6 MS. OSTRO: She's our moderator.

7 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you for your
8 comments.

9 MR. SCHMIDT: Ginger, you're the
10 officer, you're saying that everybody here gets
11 two minutes and we're going to be out of here
12 before 7 o'clock because two minutes is all that
13 any member of the public gets to have to make a
14 statement.

15 MS. RODRIGUEZ: That's correct, we have
16 to make time for everyone.

17 MS. OSTRO: Can we let you finish up
18 this statement and then come back after the
19 speakers who signed up after you?

20 MR. SCHMIDT: And I would ask you then
21 to come back to anyone else who wants to add
22 amongst the parents that have spoken here, thank
23 you, that's fine with me.

24 MS. JUAREZ: Good evening, my name is

1 Trish Juarez, I am a parent of a CPS student,
2 two of them. I very much so appreciate the
3 quality education that they're getting, but I'm
4 terrified by the direction and the pursuit that
5 it seems that CPS is focusing on without any
6 sort of interest and focus in success around
7 neighborhood schools.

8 It seems when I look at the Portfolio
9 Office budget when you look at an FY 12 budget
10 line item of \$23 million but in FY 13 it's \$104
11 million. There's a footnote there that says
12 that money has been transferred but there's no
13 documentation around where that money is coming
14 from. I want transparency. I want to
15 understand is that going to Uno, to Noble, to
16 AUSL, to all of those charter organizations that
17 are taking all of the quality taxpayer dollars
18 that we contribute out of our hard-working
19 checking accounts, savings accounts and are
20 going to these organizations that are not
21 supporting the needs of neighborhood schools.
22 It's an important aspect. You see all over
23 society in Chicago right now the community is up
24 in arms when you do not have a strong tethered

1 neighborhood school that brings families,
2 parents and students together.

3 This is not just a choice and a
4 decision related to me and my children, this is
5 a choice and a decision related to the
6 civilization of Chicago. And I beg you guys to
7 think about the decision that you're making as
8 it relates to the Portfolio Office and the
9 dollars that it appears that are going towards
10 these privatization organizations and taking
11 dollars away from these important neighborhood
12 schools. And that's all I have to say.

13 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Next
14 speaker.

15 MR. HILGENDORF: My name is Kurt
16 Hilgendorf, I'm with the Chicago Teachers Union.
17 And I hold up this chart because this was the
18 chart that was presented on March 28th at the
19 budget hearing that said that the Chicago Public
20 Schools faced a massive deficit not only this
21 year but also going forward and that this is
22 based on in red a major increase in expenditures
23 and in green a flattening of revenues. And the
24 result is a breathtaking deficit of almost

1 \$1.5 billion by FY 2014 -- 2015, excuse me.
2 Except this is a false projection. Sure, there
3 are increased pension costs that may be driving
4 some of this, however, if you look at the
5 revenue line, that green line, that is a choice,
6 that the mayor has made a choice to make rosy
7 revenue projections to balance the city budget.
8 The Board tonight makes rosy revenue projections
9 with regard to bond refinancing and other
10 operational savings that might be generated from
11 cuts at Central Office. This is a choice, and
12 any budget is a policy document, not necessarily
13 a statement of fact. And it's a question of
14 priorities, let's be clear about that.

15 Since 2004 the district's annual
16 expenses on charter schools, annual expenditures
17 has increased 625 percent. Average -- excuse
18 me, annual increases in debt service have
19 increased 50 percent a year. Increase and
20 testing in contractual services associated with
21 testing have expanded and exploded as well.
22 Look at any testing calendar. Parents, you have
23 22 days at least laid out for testing. The
24 Board pushed these policies hard in Springfield

1 for an elimination of the charter cap, for
2 pension reform. Why no equivalent push for more
3 revenue? We could have a TIF freeze. We could
4 have a tax levy for pensions just like there was
5 before 1995. We could have a local income tax
6 just like in Iowa and Indiana. 600 districts in
7 Iowa, every county in Indiana, a 1 percent
8 income tax in Chicago would raise \$600 million
9 in revenue. That would be a legitimate fix to
10 this crisis, not more smoking mirrors. Thank
11 you.

12 MS. OSTRO: Thank you for your comment.
13 We are very concerned as you point out in that
14 chart by what's facing us in FY 14. We do see
15 dramatic increases in expenses and we do see
16 little help coming from outside in terms of
17 revenue. So we appreciate you pointing that out
18 and reiterating that because we do think the
19 challenges for fiscal 14 are going to be very
20 significant. So thank you for your comment.

21 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Speaker nine.

22 MS. OSTRO: Is there a number nine on
23 the list?

24 George, did you want to come back and

1 finish your comment?

2 MS. JUAREZ: Can I give you my card too
3 because I do want to get the details?

4 MS. OSTRO: Sure. Anyone that wants to
5 give cards to our folks in the back we're happy
6 to follow up on a detailed issue.

7 I think you need to come up so the
8 court reporter can hear the comments.

9 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Please say your name
10 again.

11 MS. KATTEN: Wendy Katten with Raise
12 Your Hand. I just want to add that my group has
13 been in Springfield like twice a year for the
14 last three years on education funding, and I
15 don't know what CPS has been doing on that. I
16 mean, I know you were down there on SB 7 and
17 that was all the lobbying time but, I mean, the
18 halls are empty and it's very frustrating. You
19 know, we hear about this dire crisis, but I
20 don't know if you are doing any work to lobby on
21 the funding issue.

22 I met with the Board President who
23 said, oh, there's no will. Well, I mean, I know
24 you're a certain level there but, I mean, we

1 need answers in terms of what CPS is doing for
2 revenue. And our group is working on a
3 graduated income tax and I get the politics of
4 all this, but you have to do something on the
5 revenue side for our kids and hopefully
6 something that we can become aware of soon
7 because it's been quite frustrating to see the
8 reforms that you've been working on that don't
9 come with any money. Thanks.

10 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

11 MS. JUAREZ: Can I make a statement? I
12 have a background in public policy even though I
13 don't do this right now and this is what just
14 frustrates me more than anything.

15 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Can you say your name
16 again?

17 MS. JUAREZ: My name is Trish Juarez.
18 You do have an agenda, and it's so obvious that
19 you don't want the taxpayers to pick up the
20 bill, you want it to be infiltrated with the
21 private sector and those supposed non-profits
22 that feel like they're delivering some sort of
23 charitable contribution to the education of our
24 children. But we all know Juan Rangel makes,

1 what, \$260,000 a year? We all know that these
2 online learning organizations, you know, they're
3 ex Goldman Sachs executives.

4 The fact that people are not marching
5 through the streets with pitchforks with the
6 fact that you guys have this \$5.1 billion budget
7 that people outside of the City of Chicago are
8 grabbing and getting their hands on it is so
9 frustrating. And I don't get why you don't
10 see -- and maybe people aren't being vocal
11 enough, maybe people need to be here more to
12 have you understand this has got to stop. We
13 have so much waste. We have so much private
14 access to our public dollars it has to stop.
15 It's not the answer.

16 If you want me to work four days a week
17 and spend one day a week going to my kids'
18 school, I will do that. But do not tell me that
19 Juan Rangel deserves to make the kind of money
20 that he's making to support, what, he's got 15
21 schools right now, is that it? 12, 12 schools,
22 and he's making more than our Chief Executive
23 Officer in CPS. There's something wrong. You
24 can't give them money anymore. There has to be

1 some sort of accountability and transparency
2 where these dollars are going.

3 So I do agree with Wendy, it would be
4 nice to have some more support from the State,
5 but the fact that you guys have opened the door
6 and it's probably the back door, not the front
7 door, it's the back door, and you've let these
8 organizations come in and it's completely taking
9 all the resources away from what our children
10 need. That's what I wanted to add.

11 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

12 MR. SCHMIDT: I was much more --

13 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Can you state your
14 name?

15 MR. SCHMIDT: My name is George
16 Schmidt, I'm a parent and analytical reporter,
17 retired teacher, delegate to the Chicago
18 Teachers Union House of Delegates. I guess you
19 might add a public policy analyst, especially on
20 matters of the budget.

21 I want to address three things on the
22 expenses side and put them in context. Since
23 four years ago when Barack Obama was elected
24 president of the United States and announced a

1 month later that Arne Duncan, our CEO, was going
2 to Washington to be the CEO of the U.S.
3 Department of Education, Chicago Public Schools
4 have had four chief executive officers. Since
5 that time Chicago Public Schools have had five
6 Chief Financial Officers. To maintain that
7 there is any institutional integrity or any
8 concern for the future of the children of this
9 city in that context would be bordering on
10 ludicrous. It would be like the person who
11 murdered his parents and then got up in front of
12 the judge and demanded consideration because he
13 was an orphan. That's how silly this
14 conversation is.

15 There's not one Board of Education
16 member here tonight. There wouldn't be --
17 there's not one top executive except Ms. Ostro
18 who has been here, what, less than two years,
19 Ginger?

20 MS. OSTRO: Yes.

21 MR. SCHMIDT: Thank you. And that's a
22 fact that is an insult to every parent, every
23 child and every taxpayer in this city. The
24 management by musical chairs at the top of the

1 school system has got to end because the
2 destabilization that's taking place is
3 deliberate as a matter of policy and it's
4 designed to destroy the public schools of
5 Chicago in the same way that the same people
6 have destroyed the public schools of Detroit,
7 Philadelphia, New Orleans and elsewhere, and in
8 some cases celebrated that destruction.

9 I want to add a couple other small
10 aspects of that policy that are expensive.
11 Since this Board of Education was appointed by
12 Mayor Rahm Emanuel in May of 2011 and took its
13 first seat in June of 2011, several
14 unprecedented policies have been put into place.
15 The most dramatic of those is that we don't hire
16 from Chicago anymore, we hire out-of-towners.
17 Top executive positions starting with the Chief
18 Executive Officer have gone to people from other
19 towns. Jean-Claude Brizard was from Rochester,
20 New York. Barbara Byrd Bennett, who is a
21 traveling mercenary in my humble opinion, came
22 to us most recently from Detroit, not from
23 Cleveland as widely reported. In each of those
24 two cases the Board established the

1 unprecedented policy of paying what are, quote,
2 relocation expenses to these people, as if no
3 one in Chicago was qualified for these jobs. In
4 each of those cases \$30,000 on top of their
5 quarter of a million dollar salary to those
6 people was paid for relocation expenses.

7 But those aren't the only people who
8 were drawn to Chicago on that basis. A survey
9 of the Board's action agendas, which is when the
10 expenses on personnel actually becomes visible
11 to the public, would show that more than 20
12 additional hires since June 2011 have received
13 either relocation expenses or in one case
14 because the person was already here but changed
15 his job a thing called a retention bonus. To
16 think that anyone should be coming here from out
17 of town when we have tens of thousands of
18 experienced educators in Chicago and literally
19 hundreds of thousands in Illinois belies belief.
20 It makes a joke out of this process.

21 Just one last thing because as you
22 could see I'd love to go on, but I won't. I've
23 been watching this for 30 years and as late as
24 six years ago when the last independent budget

1 critics were still in business in this town,
2 Diana Nelson, who was with the Cross City
3 Campaign for Urban School Reform, took the floor
4 at a budget hearing like this and said this
5 budget has gone from murky to murkier to
6 murkiest. The budget is no longer made
7 available to the public in print form. The
8 proposed budget was eliminated by a click of the
9 delete key from the Board's website. Nothing
10 that the Board posts on its website has any
11 integrity because it is being modified and
12 deleted sometimes as we speak. Unless we print
13 these things down with a date stamp, we can't
14 hold the Board to any fact because they're
15 playing games with us in cyberspace and not only
16 with virtual education.

17 The Board has a legal obligation and
18 even more so a moral obligation to make
19 available to every citizen of Chicago copies of
20 documents this important that are \$5 billion
21 expenses in the budget. For the past two years
22 the Board has refused to do so. If you go to
23 any of the ward offices or libraries in this
24 city you will find back copies of the budget

1 that was proposed and discussed. You can no
2 longer find them thanks to this Board. That's a
3 scandal that people should be carrying those
4 pitchforks for too because not everybody has a
5 high-powered computer and a rapid printer to
6 print out 2,000 total pages that are actually
7 constituting this complete budget. Not
8 everybody should be required to, they should be
9 allowed to read the portions of it at their
10 library at their leisure in normal form.

11 This scandal would be a joke in any
12 other city. The only reason it's not a bigger
13 scandal here in Chicago is that Chicago has
14 gotten away with an Orwellian corporate version
15 of reality brought to us by some of my brothers
16 and sisters in the corporate media. That too is
17 ending as we saw in the past seven months when
18 tens of thousands of parents and teachers moved
19 through the streets of this city wearing red,
20 not only during the Chicago teachers' strike,
21 during other times.

22 I know this is not on any individual,
23 you all need jobs. But I'm also watching as a
24 person who sat in that seat ring mastering the

1 2006 hearings, goes through the broke fellowship
2 and then winds up in New Orleans. All the other
3 people who once worked in the Budget Office who
4 weren't made of Chicagoans and committed to the
5 people of Chicago come from the same corporate
6 places. That is not acceptable to me as a
7 parent, as a taxpayer or as a long-term activist
8 here.

9 And despite the fact that I'm no longer
10 as agile as I was when I first learned to read
11 these budgets in 1980, I'm going to continue to
12 work with new generations of these people who
13 care about these issues and exposing the
14 hypocrisy of those who really don't.

15 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

16 MS. OSTRO: Thank you for your
17 comments. I just do want to comment on the
18 website which I do think provides additional
19 transparency on the budget because more data is
20 available in searchable and sortable format. I
21 appreciate your comment about it not being in
22 print form, but we do think it makes it
23 available so you can do your own analysis on it
24 rather than just taking data tables that we

1 present to you. So we think that's a movement
2 forward. I understand your concerns on why you
3 prefer it in print.

4 MS. JUAREZ: By law shouldn't it be
5 archived in some capacity?

6 MS. OSTRO: It is archived.

7 MS. JUAREZ: And where is that
8 accessible?

9 MS. OSTRO: There's a PDF in the budget
10 book that's on the website.

11 MS. JUAREZ: I've seen that. That's
12 the only -- there's no -- so it's just an
13 electronic storage of that information. What
14 about some of the historical budgets?

15 MS. OSTRO: The historical budgets
16 aren't on the website. This was -- last year
17 and this year were the first years that we put
18 them on. We can take one more question. We
19 don't have anymore signed up speakers so we'll
20 just take additional comments.

21 MS. DELGADO: I just want to -- looking
22 around the room --

23 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Could you state your
24 name?

1 MS. DELGADO: I'm sorry, Brenda
2 Delgado. Looking around the room I don't think
3 that we probably are reflective of the majority
4 of Chicago Public School children. I think
5 about 80 percent of them are low income. I
6 think probably everyone in this room makes at
7 least \$30,000 a year. About 15 percent of the
8 student population at Ruben Salazar makes over
9 \$30,000 a year. It's for the kids because
10 their -- I'm the LSC chairperson at Ruben
11 Salazar and we
12 did -- we gave \$40,000 of preschool money to
13 parents who don't make \$40,000 a year. They
14 don't make \$25,000 a year. And when we spoke to
15 some of the parents who were complaining because
16 they live around this area and we are an options
17 for knowledge school they said they make only
18 \$15,000 a year and they're working wage, and how
19 can we get 40 slots of preschool for parents who
20 don't make \$25,000 a year? Because they're all
21 lying on their applications. They're lying on
22 their free and reduced lunch. No one in Chicago
23 could survive on \$25,000 a year. And I said,
24 are you blind? You're not seeing everyone

1 around you. There's children who come to Ruben
2 Salazar who don't have coats because they don't
3 have money to buy a \$20 coat at Burlington Coat
4 Factory. And we're talking about millions of
5 dollars of positions lost and efficiencies and
6 we need to keep in mind that we have great vocal
7 parents.

8 I can't wait to get home and get on the
9 blog of Raise Your Hand because I'm on there
10 every single day, I'm so glad that you're here.
11 But we need to keep in mind 80 percent of CPS is
12 low income. 80 percent of CPS unfortunately
13 looks like me. I don't see that type of people
14 in this room even though I sent announcements
15 out. We should be outraged that we can't
16 provide additional funding for Chicago Public
17 Schools. It's not the gentrification of areas.
18 Those are few areas of Chicago that's afflicted.
19 I live in Bronzeville, I can afford a nice home.
20 I work for the Federal Government. My husband
21 is a health practitioner. But I still remember
22 the days when my mom was spending \$5 on school
23 supplies. And, yes, we have great jobs now, but
24 look around you, look around Chicago, this is

1 what we need to be outraged about. Minimal
2 efficiencies are not going to be enough to meet
3 the needs of CPS. Poverty is a disease, and if
4 we try to look at the priorities for fixing it
5 and thinking that we can't actually fix it by
6 looking at the actual reasons for the poverty
7 and where these children come from, just keep in
8 mind who it is that we are fighting for. And I
9 know it's as comfortable in our air conditioned
10 buildings and when we collect our paychecks, we
11 can't fathom how these people survive in CPS
12 schools, but that is a lifeline for these
13 people.

14 And I'm thinking of the budget cuts, of
15 the school closures, of one less social worker,
16 one less counselor, one less teacher aide. My
17 eighth grade class has 45 kids in Ruben Salazar
18 this year. 45 kids. That is an outrage,
19 outrage. Only because that teacher is Golden
20 Apple Teacher and dedicated to his class and
21 works 12 hours a day are those kids going to
22 succeed. 45 kids in eighth grade. Last year
23 his eighth grade student won the City-Wide
24 Senior Fair Contest at Museum of Science and

1 Industry. That's how great of a teacher he is.
2 I don't know how he's going to do it this year
3 with 45 kids in his classroom. And you know
4 what they told him when he complained about it,
5 keep your mouth shut. Keep your mouth shut.
6 Because he's outraged that he has 45 children in
7 his classroom.

8 Think of who the impact is, it is not
9 the people in this room, that is not reflective
10 of CPS. Unfortunately the people who need to be
11 vocal and screaming about CPS I don't see the
12 majority in this room, but they are still going
13 to be impacted by those same changes
14 nonetheless. Keep them in mind.

15 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

16 MS. OSTRO: And just a general comment
17 overall on the budget that I didn't make
18 earlier, which is again we're focusing here on
19 the changes that we made to implement the
20 agreement, the additional hundred million
21 dollars of cost. And you'll notice in what I
22 presented that we didn't impact classroom in any
23 way, we found reductions in administrative
24 areas, operational areas and through refinancing

1 on our debt side. So we tried really hard not
2 to impact the classroom for many of the reasons
3 that you just raised.

4 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Okay, that will
5 conclude the budget hearing for this evening.
6 Thank you for all of your comments and
7 questions. The meeting is adjourned.

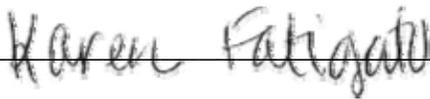
8 (Whereupon, these were all the
9 proceedings had at this time.)

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1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
2) SS:
3 COUNTY OF C O O K)

4
5 Karen Fatigato, being first duly sworn,
6 on oath says that she is a court reporter doing
7 business in the City of Chicago; and that she
8 reported in shorthand the proceedings of said
9 public hearing, and that the foregoing is a true
10 and correct transcript of her shorthand notes so
11 taken as aforesaid, and contains the proceedings
12 given at said public hearing.

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Karen Fatigato, CSR

LIC. NO. 084-004072



A	agenda 25:18	arent 26:10 30:7 34:16	bills 11:20	12:6 17:10 33:11 34:14 34:15	30:14	
able 2:23 11:8	agendas 30:9	arms 20:24	bit 4:1 5:6 7:7	build 15:11	changes 5:7 6:22 7:23 8:3 13:20,22 14:1 15:1 38:13,19	
aboveentitled 1:8	aggressive 6:11	arne 28:1	blind 35:24	buildings 7:14 10:19 37:10	chaos 15:17	
acceptable 33:6	agile 33:10	asked 2:18 3:3	blog 36:9	burlington 36:3	charitable 25:23	
accepts 9:20	ago 27:23 30:24	asking 13:10 19:3	board 4:10,11 5:3 8:1 17:17,23 18:15 22:8 22:24 24:22 28:15 29:11 29:24 31:10 31:14,17,22 32:2	business 14:17 31:1 40:7	chart 21:17,18 23:14	
access 26:14	agree 27:3	aspect 20:22	boards 30:9 31:9	buy 36:3	charter 15:16 20:16 22:16 23:1	
accessible 34:8	agreement 4:13,14,15,17 38:20	aspects 29:10	bond 6:24 22:9	byrd 29:20	check 16:6,21 17:2 18:10	
accountability 27:1	agreements 4:12	assessment 12:3,11	bonds 7:2,3,8,18		checking 20:19	
accounts 20:19,19	ahead 8:2,14	assessments 12:3,8,13	bonus 30:15	C	chicago 1:1,10 4:14,17 5:19 9:20 14:11 17:12 18:16 20:23 21:6,16,19 23:8 26:7 27:17 28:3,5 29:5,16 30:3 30:8,18 31:19 32:13 32:13,20 33:5 35:4,22 36:16,18,24 40:7	
accurate 15:5	aide 37:16	associated 22:20	book 34:10	c 15:22 40:3	calculated 17:24	
achieved 6:9	aides 5:20	attended 17:17	bordering 20:9	calendar 22:22	california 17:15	
act 8:2	air 37:9	attributable 10:12	borrowed 7:6	call 8:18	called 7:6 11:8 15:24 30:15	
acting 5:4	allowed 3:10 32:9	august 4:10 7:2	boundaries 9:21	campaign 31:3	cancelling 6:16	
action 15:2 30:9	amended 2:2 4:2,6,7,9 4:21	ausl 20:16	boys 15:7	cant 8:11 11:20 16:17 26:24 31:13 36:8 36:15 37:5 37:11	chicagoans 33:4	
actions 10:3 11:1	amendment 1:3	available 7:10 31:7,19 33:20,23	breathtaking 21:24	cap 23:1	chief 26:22 28:4,6 29:17	
activist 33:7	analysis 17:22 33:23	average 22:17	back 7:2 8:11,15 17:2 19:18 19:21 23:24 24:5 27:6,7 31:24	bringing 7:24	child 9:21 28:23	
activities 14:2	analyst 2:5 17:9 27:19	aware 25:6	background 25:12	brings 21:1	children 9:20 18:24 21:4 25:24 27:9 28:8 35:4 36:1 37:7 38:6	
actual 18:15 37:6	analytical 27:16		balance 22:7	brink 1:15 2:7	choice 9:22 21:3,5 22:5,6,11	
add 19:21 24:12 27:10,19 29:9	announced 9:13 27:24	B	barack 27:23	brizard 29:19	choosing 11:19	
added 5:8	announcements 10:21 36:14	back 7:2 8:11,15 17:2 19:18 19:21 23:24 24:5 27:6,7 31:24	barbara 29:20	broke 33:1	chose 9:22 21:3,5 22:5,6,11	
addition 11:21	annual 22:15,16,18	background 25:12	based 11:13 21:22	bronzville 36:19	choosing 11:19	
additional 5:13,24 6:12 6:19 7:20 13:16 18:8 30:12 33:18 34:20 36:16 38:20	answer 4:5,8 13:23 16:24 26:15	balance 22:7	basic 4:5 13:15	brothers 32:15	city 22:7 26:7 28:9 28:23 31:2 31:24 32:12 32:19 40:7	
additions 15:12	answers 25:1	barack 27:23	basing 15:2	brought 32:15	citywide 37:23	
address 8:11 27:21	anticipate 7:12,24	barbara 29:20	basis 30:8	budget 1:3,15 2:2,5,7 2:8,10,11 3:2,22 4:2,6 4:7,9,10,16 4:18,22 5:4 5:7,23 8:1 9:5 11:9 12:15 13:19 13:22 14:1,4 16:1 17:19 18:2,3,6 19:3 20:9,9 21:19 22:7 22:12 26:6 27:20 30:24 31:4,5,6,8 31:21,24 32:7 33:3,19 34:9 37:14 38:17 39:5	brothers 32:15	citywide 37:23
addressing 3:1	anticipated 7:3	barack 27:23	basic 4:5 13:15	bruzard 29:19	civilization 21:6	
adds 4:17	anymore 26:24 29:16 34:19	barbara 29:20	basing 15:2	broke 33:1	class 17:13 37:17,20	
adjourn 8:14	appears 21:9	based 11:13 21:22	basis 30:8	bronzville 36:19	classroom 38:3,7,22 39:2	
adjourned 2:17 39:7	apple 37:20	basic 4:5 13:15	beg 21:6	brothers 32:15	cleaning 13:9	
adjustments 5:13,16 6:24	applications 35:21	basis 30:8	belief 30:19	brought 32:15	clear 22:14	
adjusts 4:20	applies 18:24	basing 15:2	beliefs 30:19	budget 1:3,15 2:2,5,7 2:8,10,11 3:2,22 4:2,6 4:7,9,10,16 4:18,22 5:4 5:7,23 8:1 9:5 11:9 12:15 13:19 13:22 14:1,4 16:1 17:19 18:2,3,6 19:3 20:9,9 21:19 22:7 22:12 26:6 27:20 30:24 31:4,5,6,8 31:21,24 32:7 33:3,19 34:9 37:14 38:17 39:5	category 6:13	clerks 5:20
administration 6:14 15:1 18:12	appointed 29:11	balance 22:7	believe 9:14	celebrated 29:8	cleveland 29:23	
administrative 38:23	appreciate 11:3 20:2 23:17 33:21	barack 27:23	bennett 29:20	central 22:11	click 15:22 31:8	
admits 14:20	approach 8:23 9:1 11:5 14:9	barack 27:23	berkeley 17:15	ceo 28:1,2	close 10:8	
adopted 4:9,11 14:4	approved 4:14	barack 27:23	best 8:10	chairperson 35:10	closing	
afflicted 36:18	archived 34:5,6	barack 27:23	bigger 32:12	chairs 28:24		
afford 36:19	area 6:2 35:16	barack 27:23	bill 25:20	challenges 23:19		
aforesaid 40:11	areas 36:17,18 38:24 38:24	barack 27:23	billion 11:14 22:1 26:6 31:20	chance 8:13		
			budgeted 7:4,9 18:7	changed		
			budgets			

9:11	8:5	curious 14:13	details 24:3	28:1	16:5
closure 10:3	conditioned 37:9	currently 17:11	detroit 29:6,22	<hr/> E <hr/>	existing 16:14
closures 37:15	consider 10:11	custodians 13:5,17	development 11:13	earlier 2:14 3:17	expand 11:19
club 15:8	consideration 15:6 28:12	cut 15:9,10 18:12	dialogue 12:12	38:18	expanded 22:21
coat 36:3,3	considered 10:14	cuts 6:1 13:16	diana 31:2	early 7:18	expect 6:14 7:15
coats 36:2	constituting 32:7	22:11 37:14	didnt 38:17,22	ed 17:17	expenditures 4:20 21:22
cochair 15:6	contact 12:20	cutting 13:11	different 16:4,15	education 18:15 20:3	22:16
collect 37:10	contains 40:11	cyberspace 31:15	difficult 13:7	24:14 25:23	expense 5:8
college 1:9 2:3	contest 37:24	<hr/> D <hr/>	discussed 32:1	28:3,15	expenses 6:8 22:16
colocation 10:3,7	context 27:22 28:9	dana 1:15 2:7	direction 20:4	29:11 31:16	23:15 27:22
come 8:19 19:18,21	continue 33:11	data 10:13 33:19,24	discussed 32:1	educational 5:16	30:2,6,10,13
23:24 24:7	contract 7:22	date 31:13	discussion 11:1	educators 30:18	31:21
25:9 27:8	contractual 22:20	day 26:17 36:10	disease 37:3	efficiencies 36:5 37:2	expensive 15:12 29:10
33:5 36:1	contribute 20:18	37:21	dispensa 14:14 16:16	eighth 37:17,22,23	experience 5:14,16 18:2
37:7	contribution 25:23	days 22:23 26:16	district 12:8	either 7:17 30:13	experienced 30:18
comes 6:15 14:20	conversation 28:14	36:22	districts 22:15 23:6	elected 27:23	expired 10:15 18:21,23
18:8	copies 31:19,24	debt 22:18 39:1	document 15:19 22:12	electronic 34:13	explains 4:1
comfortable 37:9	corporate 32:14,16 33:5	decision 21:4,5,7	documentation 20:13	eliminated 31:8	exploded 22:21
coming 6:2 20:13	correct 10:18 19:15	dedicated 37:20	documents 31:20	eliminating 15:18	exposing 33:13
23:16 30:16	40:10	deficit 11:14 14:24	doesnt 11:12 15:24	elimination 23:1	extra 7:7
commencing 1:10	cost 4:18 5:10,11	21:20,24	doing 6:23 11:24	emailing 11:17	<hr/> F <hr/>
comment 8:9,16 9:7,15	6:10 7:5,7	delaying 6:16	14:16 24:15	emanuel 29:12	faced 21:20
23:12,20	7:11 12:7,11	delegate 27:17	24:20 25:1	employees 13:3	facilities 14:19
24:1 33:17	38:21	delegates 27:18	40:6	empty 7:14 15:16	facility 14:18
33:21 38:16	costs 5:23 7:22 22:3	delete 31:9	dollar 30:5	24:18	facing 23:14
comments 3:4 11:3,10	counselor 37:16	deleted 31:12	dollars 20:17 21:9,11	enormously 15:19	fact 11:13 18:1,9
19:8 24:8	county 23:7 40:3	delgado 9:3,4 10:16	26:14 27:2	enrollment 15:13	22:13 26:4,6
33:17 34:20	couple 29:9	34:21 35:1,2	36:5 38:21	entrance 2:20	27:5 28:22
39:6	court 24:8 40:6	deliberate 29:3	dont 13:13 15:5,14	equivalent 29:24	31:14 33:9
committed 33:4	cover 5:22	25:22	15:14 24:15	error 16:12	factory 23:2
communities 15:11,12	covering 17:10	demand 28:12	24:20 25:8	especially 14:24 27:19	fair 37:24
community 14:23 20:23	covers 5:10	demographics 14:13 16:3	25:13,19	essentially 5:23	false 22:2
compensation 5:9	cps 3:12 11:15,18	department 12:9 15:18	26:9,9 29:15	established 29:24	families 21:1
complained 38:4	12:14 13:5	16:14,19	33:14 34:19	evening 2:1,6 4:1,3,23	fathom 37:11
complaining 35:15	14:20,24	28:3	35:2,13,14	5:2 11:6	fatigato 1:23 40:5,15
complete 15:17 32:7	15:9 17:19	deserve 19:1	35:20 36:2,2	13:1 19:24	faulty 15:4
completely 27:8	17:19,21	deserves 26:19	36:13 38:2	39:5	federal 6:6 36:20
compliance 2:5	18:13 20:1,5	designed 29:4	38:11	everybody 19:10 32:4,8	feedback 5:1
comprehensive 14:23	24:15 25:1	despite 33:9	door 10:5 27:5,6,7	ex 26:3	feel 11:23 25:22
computer 17:14 32:5	26:23 36:11	destabiliza... 29:2	27:7	exactly 8:21	fellowship 33:1
concept 14:24	36:12 37:3	destroy 18:16 29:4	draft 9:11	excuse 22:1,17	fighting 37:8
concern 9:17 28:8	37:11 38:10	destroyed 29:6	drain 11:16	execute 8:3	figure 12:7,17
concerned 9:5 10:8 14:11	38:11	detailed 24:6	dramatic 17:21,24 23:15	executive 26:22 28:4,17	fill 3:13
23:13	crisis 23:10 24:19		29:15	29:17,18	filling 6:16
concerns 10:1 34:2	critics 31:1		drawn 30:8	executives 26:3	finally
conclude 3:16 39:5	cross 31:2		driving 22:3	exist	
concluded 2:13 4:12	csr 1:23 40:15		due 14:18 15:19		
concludes	ctu 18:8		duly 40:5		
			duncan		

5:17 6:21 7:17	16:19	37:17,22,23	30:12	increases	25:17,17 34:4,7,11
financial	funding	graduated	historical	5:12,15 13:17	judge
6:22 28:6	4:15 24:14,21	25:3	34:14,15	22:18 23:15	28:12
find	36:16	grants	hold	increasing	june
10:2 12:4 16:7	funds	2:5,7 3:23	13:11 21:17	13:6	29:13 30:12
31:24 32:2	4:11 12:5	great	31:14	independent	
fine	further	9:19,24 10:1,6	home	30:24	K
19:23	13:12 14:1	36:6,23 38:1	11:20,21 36:8	indiana	k
finish	future	greater	36:19	23:6,7	40:3
19:17 24:1	28:8	17:23	hopefully	indicates	karen
finished	fy	green	25:5	18:14	1:23 40:5,15
17:13	1:3 2:2 4:2,6	21:23 22:5	hoping	individual	katten
first	20:9,10 22:1	group	12:16	32:22	11:6,7 12:23
4:8 5:7 6:2	23:14	11:7,11,17,23	hours	industry	24:11,11
7:1,2 8:18	G	12:10 24:12	18:23 37:21	17:14 38:1	keep
29:13 33:10	games	25:2	house	infiltrated	9:16 36:6,11
34:17 40:5	31:15	guess	27:18	25:20	37:7 38:5,5
fiscal	general	27:18	huge	information	38:14
4:19 7:5,8	11:10 38:16	guidelines	14:24	5:1 12:10,20	key
23:19	generate	8:7 9:11	human	34:13	31:9
five	10:19	guttled	17:21	infrastructure	kids
14:8 28:5	generated	18:13	humble	17:20,21	15:14 25:5
fix	22:10	guys	29:21	institutional	26:17 35:9
23:9 37:5	generations	21:6 26:6 27:5	hundred	18:3 28:7	37:17,18,21
fixing	33:12	H	38:20	instructional	37:22 38:3
37:4	gentrification	hainds	hundreds	12:15	kind
flattening	36:17	14:10,10	30:19	insult	11:23 26:19
21:23	gentrifiers	halls	husband	28:22	know
floor	15:13	24:18	36:20	integrity	14:18 15:9
31:3	gentrifying	hand	hypocrisy	10:9 28:7	18:6,22
focus	15:12	11:8 24:12	33:14	31:11	24:15,16,19
4:4 20:6	george	36:9	I	interest	24:20,23
focuses	17:7 23:24	hands	id	7:4,6 20:6	25:24 26:1,2
13:20	27:15	26:8	30:22	internal	32:22 37:9
focusing	getting	hanes	ill	17:20	38:2,3
20:5 38:18	10:1 20:3 26:8	16:10,15,23	17:22	international	knowledge
folks	ginger	17:4	illinois	13:3	9:19 10:5
12:20 24:5	1:14 2:6 3:19	happy	1:10 30:19	iowa	18:14 35:17
follow	3:20,22 18:6	24:5	40:1	23:6,7	knows
12:17,21 16:23	19:5,9 28:19	hard	im	irresponsible	18:17
17:3 24:6	girls	12:6 13:13	2:4 3:22,22	11:24	kurt
followup	15:7	22:24 39:1	9:3,4,5 10:7	isnt	21:15
3:11,14	give	hardworking	11:7 12:4,6	16:7,8	L
food	8:19 12:10,19	20:18	12:8,16	issue	laid
6:5	24:2,5 26:24	health	13:23,24	3:10 12:2 24:6	22:23
footnote	given	36:21	14:10,13,19	24:21	lane
20:11	2:15,22 40:12	hear	17:8,10 19:3	issued	5:14
force	glad	24:8,19	20:3 21:16	7:2	large
14:19	36:10	hearing	27:16 32:23	issues	6:15
foregoing	go	1:2,3 2:2,10	33:9,11 35:1	33:13	late
40:9	8:2,14 11:8,21	2:11 3:15	35:10 36:9	issuing	30:23
form	15:15,24	7:24 8:8,15	36:10 37:14	7:3	law
31:7 32:10	30:22 31:22	8:16 11:9	impact	item	4:21 14:22
33:22	goes	18:23 21:19	18:8,22 39:2	11:12 16:1	34:4
format	33:1	31:4 39:5	impacted	20:10	leadership
33:20	going	40:9,12	9:10,16 38:13	items	10:10
forward	5:22 7:23 9:8	hearings	impacting	6:19	leads
11:2 21:21	10:4 11:2	17:9,16 33:1	12:14	30:22 34:11	18:4
34:2	16:7 18:18	held	implement	J	learned
found	19:11 20:15	1:4	38:19	janitors	33:10
38:23	20:20 21:9	hello	important	13:5	learning
four	21:21 23:19	9:3 17:7	15:7,19 20:22	jeanclaude	26:2
12:24 26:16	26:17 27:2	help	21:11 31:20	29:19	lease
27:23 28:4	28:1 33:11	3:13 12:17	importantly	jerry	15:15
free	37:2,21 38:2	23:16	18:11	13:2	legal
35:22	38:12	hes	improved	jim	31:17
freed	golden	14:15,16 26:20	6:5	14:14	legitimate
7:8	37:19	26:20,22	include	job	23:9
freeze	goldman	38:2,6	5:19	9:24 30:15	leisure
23:3	26:3	hi	included	jobs	32:10
front	good	3:21 14:10	4:11,16 5:11	30:3 32:23	length
27:6 28:11	2:1 11:6 12:16	high	5:14,17	36:23	17:23
frustrates	13:1 19:24	1:9 2:3	income	joke	level
25:14	gotten	highpowered	23:5,8 25:3	30:20 32:11	14:23 15:5
frustrating	14:21 32:14	32:5	35:5 36:12	juan	24:24
24:18 25:7	government	hilgendorf	increase	25:24 26:19	levy
26:9	6:6 36:20	21:15,16	4:19 5:11	juarez	23:4
function	grabbing	hire	21:22 22:19	19:24 20:1	libraries
16:5,20	26:8	29:15,16	increased	24:2 25:11	
funded	grade	hireds	22:3,17,19		

library 32:10	3:16	5:14,17,21	15:8	offices 12:5 31:23	11:17,22,22
lic 40:16	maam 19:5	5:24 6:1,4,4	needs 15:10 20:21	oh 24:23	12:12 19:22
license 1:24	maintain 28:6	6:12,15,20	37:3	okay 14:6 16:23	21:2 22:22
lifeline 37:12	maintaining 10:9	7:13,16,20	neighborhood 20:7,21 21:1	17:4 39:4	28:11 32:18
limit 3:3	major 6:13 21:22	10:20 12:4	21:11	once 8:2,20 33:3	35:13,15,19
limited 3:1	majority 35:3 38:12	18:8,12	nelson 31:2	ones 9:12	36:7
line 11:12 13:11	making 21:7 26:20,22	20:10,11	network 12:5	online 12:7 26:2	part 5:18 6:15 8:16
16:1 18:11	management 28:24	23:8 30:5	never 11:21	opened 27:5	13:21 16:4,9
20:10 22:5,5	manager 1:15 2:8 14:17	38:20	new 4:16 5:22	operational 22:10 38:24	partner 15:11
link 15:23 16:7,21	march 9:14 21:18	millions 36:4	11:13 15:2	operations 6:3 14:17	passed 13:22
list 9:13 10:2	marching 26:4	mind 9:16 36:6,11	18:19 29:7	opinion 29:21	pay 7:4,7,10,21
23:23	marguerite 17:2	37:8 38:14	29:20 33:2	opportunity 2:16 3:5	11:20
listed 3:8	market 7:15 9:9 10:24	minimal 37:1	33:12	option 10:6	paying 30:1
literally 30:18	massive 21:20	minutes 3:4 8:9,21	nice 27:4 36:19	options 9:19 10:4	payton 1:8 2:3
little 4:1 5:6 7:7	master 14:18	19:11,12	nine 23:21,22	organization 3:8,9 14:12	pdf 34:9
14:13 23:16	mastering 32:24	mirrors 23:10	noble 20:15	organizations 20:16,20 21:10	pension 22:3 23:2
live 35:16 36:19	math 18:9	moderator 19:6	nonpersonnel 6:19	26:2 27:8	pensions 23:4
living 5:11	matter 1:8 18:24 29:3	modified 31:11	nonprofits 25:21	orleans 18:19 29:7	people 13:4 17:18
lobby 24:20	matters 27:20	mom 36:22	nonstaff 6:18	33:2	18:18 26:4,7
lobbying 24:17	maturing 7:19	monday 1:5	nonteachers 5:18	orphan 28:13	26:10,11
local 13:3 23:5	mayor 22:6 29:12	money 7:7,10,21	nonteaching 6:17	orwellian 32:14	29:5,18 30:2
long 10:23	meals 6:7	20:12,13	normal 32:10	ostro 1:14 2:6 3:19	30:6,7 32:3
longer 16:16 31:6	mean 15:17 24:16,17	25:9 26:19	north 1:9	3:21,22	33:3,5,12
32:2 33:9	24:23,24	26:24 35:12	note 2:23	10:17 12:19	36:13 37:11
longterm 33:7	media 32:16	36:3	notes 40:10	13:19 16:2	37:13 38:9
look 8:23 12:6 16:2	meet 37:2	month 28:1	notice 38:21	16:12,17	38:10
16:13 18:5	meeting 2:17 5:5 39:7	months 14:19 32:17	38:21	17:1,5 19:6	percent 5:11 9:23
20:8,9 22:4	meetings 14:20	moral 31:18	november 1:5 5:5 8:1	19:17 23:12	22:17,19
22:22 36:24	melanie 1:16 2:4 8:15	mouth 38:5,5	2:22 8:19	23:22 24:4	23:7 35:5,7
36:24 37:4	member 3:9 19:13	moved 14:14 16:11	23:22	28:17,20	36:11,12
looking 34:21 35:2	members 3:13 13:12	14:14 16:11	numbers 12:18 18:5,6	33:16 34:6,9	period 10:23
37:6	17:17	32:18		34:15 38:16	person 18:17 28:10
looks 36:13	memory 18:4	movement 34:1	0	outoftowners 29:16	30:14 32:24
lose 15:13	mentioned 5:9 13:20	multiple 3:7	o 40:3,3	outrage 37:18,19	personal 9:17
loss 12:15	mercenary 29:21	murdered 28:11	oath 40:6	outraged 36:15 37:1	personnel 16:18 30:10
lost 36:5	member 3:9 19:13	murkier 31:5	obama 27:23	38:6	philadelphia 29:7
lot 11:17	members 3:13 13:12	murkiest 31:6	obligation 31:17,18	outside 23:16 26:7	pick 25:19
love 30:22	17:17	murky 31:5	oblivious 25:18	outsourced 13:4	pitchforks 26:5 32:4
low 35:5 36:12	memory 18:4	museum 37:24	obviously 14:5	overall 38:17	place 29:2,14
lsc 35:10	mentioned 5:9 13:20	musical 28:24	oclock 1:11 19:12	P	places 33:6
ludicrous 28:10	mercenary 29:21		office 2:6 12:3 14:12	p 1:11 2:12,12	plan 14:18,22
lunch 35:22	member 3:9 19:13	N	15:22 16:3,9	2:19,19,24	planned 13:23
lying 35:21,21	28:16	name 2:4 11:6 13:1	16:16 17:19	3:16	11:15 13:16
	members 3:13 13:12	16:4 17:7	18:2 20:9		14:13 15:24
	17:17	19:24 21:15	21:8 22:11	pages 32:6	playing 31:15
	memory 18:4	24:9 25:15	33:3	paid 30:6	please 2:19,23 3:12
	mentioned 5:9 13:20	25:17 27:14	officer 2:7 3:23 8:20	parent 9:4 11:7,7	8:22,23 9:1
	mercenary 29:21	27:15 34:24	19:3,10	17:11 20:1	11:5 14:8
	member 3:9 19:13	necessarily 22:12	26:23 29:18	27:16 28:22	24:9
	28:16	need 10:9,14 24:7	officers 28:4,6	33:7	podium 8:19 14:9
	members 3:13 13:12	25:1 26:11		parents	point 23:13
	17:17	27:10 32:23			
	memory 18:4	36:6,11 37:1			
	mentioned 5:9 13:20	38:10			
	mercenary 29:21	needed			
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				
	28:16				
	members 3:13 13:12				
	17:17				
	memory 18:4				
	mentioned 5:9 13:20				
	mercenary 29:21				
	29:21				
	member 3:9 19:13				

snow 13:9	26:5 32:19	32:20	9:13	unfortunately 36:12 38:10	1:9
social 37:15	strike 32:20	teaching 12:16	time 2:9 3:18 4:13	union 4:12,15,17	wendy 11:7 24:11
society 20:23	strong 20:24	tell 16:18 26:18	8:17 10:15	5:19 13:3	27:3
somebody 12:21	student 20:1 35:8	ten 18:20	10:23 11:19	14:11 21:16	went 15:21,22
soon 25:6	37:23	tens 30:17 32:18	12:1,6,15	27:18	whats 7:6 23:14
sorry 35:1	students 17:11 21:2	tentative 9:13	18:21,22	united 27:24	whichever 2:13 3:17
sort 11:19 20:6	subjective 10:13	terms 10:13 11:18	19:2,4,16	uno 20:15	whitney 17:13
25:22 27:1	submitting 17:23	12:13 23:16	24:17 28:5	unprecedented 29:14 30:1	widely 29:23
sortable 33:20	subsequently 4:13	25:1	39:9	urban 31:3	winds 33:2
speak 2:15,18,24 3:5	succeed 37:22	terrified 20:4	timekeeper 1:16	utilization 15:3	wishing 2:18
3:10,12 8:13	success 6:9 20:6	testing 22:20,21,22,23	times 32:21	<hr/> V <hr/>	won 37:23
16:17 31:12	successfully 17:13	tethered 20:24	today 8:12	vacant 6:16 10:22	wondering 12:9 15:20
speaker 2:13,20,21	supplies 36:23	thank 3:21 10:16	told 38:4	version 32:14	wont 9:13 30:22
3:11,16 8:8	support 26:20 27:4	11:2 12:18	tonight 5:3 14:3 17:18	virtual 31:16	work 12:10 13:2,5,8
8:18,22 9:1	supporting 20:21	12:23 14:6	18:5 22:8	visible 30:10	14:21 24:20
11:4 12:24	supportive 15:10	17:5 18:19	28:16	vocal 26:10 36:6	26:16 33:12
14:8 17:6	supposed 25:21	19:7,22	top 28:17,24 29:17	36:20	worked 33:3
21:14 23:21	supposedly 15:21	21:13 23:10	30:4	38:11	worker 37:15
speakers 3:1,3,7 8:18	sure 17:3 22:2 24:4	23:12,20	topics 3:2	<hr/> W <hr/>	working 13:12 16:8
19:19 34:19	surplus 6:23 7:13 9:6	25:10 27:11	total 5:21 12:7,11	wage 35:18	17:14,19
speaking 8:21	9:8	28:21 33:15	32:6	wait 36:8	25:2,8 35:18
specific 5:3 16:18	survey 30:8	33:16 38:15	town 30:17 31:1	walk 7:1	workload 13:6,17
specifically 13:24	survive 35:23 37:11	39:6	towns 29:19	walter 1:8 2:3	works 37:21
spend 26:17	sworn 40:5	thanks 25:9 32:2	transcript 5:3 40:10	want 19:4 20:14,14	7:13
spending 36:22	system 18:14,17 29:1	4:22 5:21 7:10	transferred 20:12	23:24 24:3	wouldnt 28:16
spoke 35:14	<hr/> T <hr/>	9:14 10:6	transparency 20:14 27:1	24:12 25:19	wrong 26:23
spoken 8:14 19:22	table 2:21 12:21	13:21 18:9	33:19	25:20 26:16	<hr/> X <hr/>
springfield 22:24 24:13	tables 33:24	19:4,15,23	traveling 29:21	27:21 29:9	<hr/> Y <hr/>
ss 40:2	take 4:24 15:6	28:13,21	tried 39:1	33:17 34:21	yeah 16:17 17:1
staff 3:12 5:20	34:18,20	29:2 32:2	trish 20:1 25:17	wanted 27:10	year 4:20 7:5,8,16
16:14,15	taken 40:11	34:1,10,11	true 17:18 40:9	wants 19:21 24:4	7:18,18,19
stamp 31:13	talk 5:6	36:18 38:1	try 37:4	ward 31:23	9:12 11:16
start 13:9	talking 36:4	there 5:17 9:6 13:8	trying 12:4,11 13:23	washington 28:2	21:21 22:19
starting 29:17	target 6:11	15:23,23	turn 8:15	wasnt 11:8	24:13 26:1
state 27:4,13 34:23	task 14:19	20:11,12	twice 24:13	waste 26:13	34:16,17
40:1	tax 23:4,5,8 25:3	24:23 26:23	two 3:4 4:5 8:9,21	watch 3:18	35:7,9,13,14
statement 2:17 19:14,18	taxpayer 20:17 28:23	28:15,17	9:1 10:7	watching 30:23 32:23	35:18,20,23
22:13 25:11	33:7	34:9,12 36:1	11:4 14:18	way 18:20 29:5	37:18,22
statements 19:3	taxpayers 25:19	theyre 10:4 12:14	17:11 18:19	38:23	38:2
states 27:24	teacher 27:17 37:16,19	15:4,16 20:3	18:23 19:11	wearing 32:19	years 5:13 11:15
stenographic 1:7	37:20 38:1	25:22 26:2	19:12 20:2	website 12:14 16:6	14:15 17:10
step 5:12	teachers 4:15,17 5:10	31:14 35:18	28:18 29:24	31:9,10	18:1,19
sticker 8:24	33:7	35:20,21	31:21	33:18 34:10	24:14 27:23
stop 26:12,14	taxpayers 25:19	thing 11:24 30:15,21	try 37:4	34:16	28:18 30:23
storage 34:13	teacher 27:17 37:16,19	things 6:22 10:12	trying 12:4,11 13:23	week 26:16,17	30:24 31:21
street 1:10 9:4,18	37:20 38:1	27:21 31:13	turn 8:15	weird 14:16	34:17
streets 27:18 32:18	teachers 4:15,17 5:10	think 9:23 10:5	twice 24:13	welcome 2:2	york 29:20
	5:15,19,20	13:13 19:1	two 3:4 4:5 8:9,21	wells	youll 5:24 38:21
	14:11 21:16	21:7 23:18	9:1 10:7		young 17:13
	27:18 32:18	24:7 30:16	11:4 14:18		youre 9:8 10:18 15:2
		33:18,22	17:11 18:19		
		34:1 35:2,4	18:23 19:11		
		35:6 38:8	19:12 20:2		
		thinking 37:5,14	28:18 29:24		
		thousands 30:17,19 32:18	31:21		
		three 11:4,15 24:14	type 36:13		
		27:21	types 9:15		
		tif 23:3	<hr/> U <hr/>		
		till	u 28:2		
			understand 11:12 20:15		
			26:12 34:2		
			understanding 12:13		
			underway 13:21 14:5		

15:18 19:9 19:10 21:7 24:24 35:24 36:10 youve 5:2 25:8 27:7	22:1 21 6:3 22 12:13 22:23 23 20:10 24th 4:10 25 35:14, 20, 23 260 26:1 28th 21:18	<u>9</u>			
<u>Z</u>					
zero 16:1, 10, 22					
<u>0</u>					
000 11:22 18:24 26:1 30:4 32:6 35:7, 9 35:12, 13, 14 35:18, 20, 23					
054 11:12 084004072 1:24 40:16					
<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>				
1 13:3 15:16 22:1 23:7 26:6	3 5:10 30 2:19, 24 30:4 30:23 35:7, 9 32 17:10 33 5:12 6:1 361 11:12				
10 6:12 103 4:18 5:8, 21 18:8 1035 1:9 104 20:10 11 6:4 14:15 12 6:15 20:9 26:21, 21 37:21	<u>4</u>				
13 4:2, 6 7:4, 9 12:4 20:10	4 6:20 40 35:12, 13, 19 400 18:24 42 7:20 45 37:17, 18, 22 38:3, 6				
14 18:12 23:14, 19	<u>5</u>				
14th 5:5 15 7:13, 16 10:20 26:20 35:7 35:18	5 1:5 2:19 5:14 22:1 26:6 31:20 36:22 50 22:19 59 5:10				
1980 33:11 1995 23:5	<u>6</u>				
<u>2</u>	6 1:11 2:12, 19 2:24 5:17 11:22 600 23:6, 8 625 22:17				
2 32:6 20 30:11 36:3 2004 22:15 2006 17:16 33:1 2007 17:14 2011 29:12, 13 30:12 2012 1:5 2013 1:3 2:2 4:19 2014 22:1 2015	<u>7</u>				
	7 19:12 24:16 70 5:24 6:21 76 11:12				
	<u>8</u>				
	8 2:12 3:16 80 35:5 36:11, 12 82 9:23				