

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUDGET HEARING FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2013
November 5, 2012

STENOGRAPHIC REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS in the
above-entitled matter held at Martin Luther King
College Preparatory High School, 4445 South Drexel
Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, commencing at 6 o'clock
p.m., MR. PETER ROGERS, moderating.

PRESENT:

MR. PETER ROGERS, Chief Financial Officer
MR. GREGORY VOLAN, Budget Manager
MR. MATTHEW WALTER, Office of Budget

Reported by: Anna M. Morales, CSR, RMR

License No.: 084-002854

1 (Whereupon, the following
2 proceedings commenced at
3 6 o'clock p.m.)

4 MR. WALTER: Hello. Thank you for coming to
5 the amended budget hearings.

6 To start, first I want to ask if anyone
7 needs a Spanish or sign language interpreter? If
8 so, you can come down to my bottom right and we'll
9 provide one for you.

10 Today's presentation will first start off
11 with a short presentation by Peter Rogers, the CFO.
12 We'll then go into a question-and-answer session.
13 I'm going to start by going through the logistics
14 of the meeting today. The hearing will begin at
15 6 p.m. and then promptly end at 8 p.m. or when the
16 last speaker has concluded. All who sign up to
17 speak will be given an opportunity to ask a
18 question or make a statement until the meeting is
19 adjourned.

20 All those wishing to speak are asked to
21 please sign in from 5 to 6:30 on the speaker
22 sign-in sheet at the entrance registration table
23 and each speaker will be given a number. Please
24 note that no one will be able to sign up to speak

1 after 6:30 p.m.

2 Speakers will be limited to addressing
3 topics related to the budget. Speakers are asked
4 to limit their comments to two minutes so that
5 everyone who would like to speak will have the
6 opportunity to do so. When multiple speakers from
7 the same organization or school are listed, only
8 one member per organization or school will be
9 allowed to speak regarding the same issue. If the
10 speaker has a follow-up question, we ask that you
11 please speak to CPS staff members who will be on
12 site to help you fill out the follow-up card. The
13 public hearing is scheduled to conclude at 8 p.m.
14 or after the last speaker, whichever is first.

15 CPS has a Web site where the public can
16 share their thoughts on the budget, cps.edu for
17 more information.

18 Our panel tonight consists of Greg Volan,
19 Budget Manager, and Peter Rogers, the CFO.

20 I will now turn it over to Peter to walk
21 us through the slides.

22 CFO ROGERS: Thank you, Matt, and good evening
23 to everyone. As Matt said, my name is
24 Peter Rogers. I'm the Chief Financial Officer for

1 the Chicago Public Schools, and it's a pleasure to
2 be here with all of you tonight at this terrific
3 school I must say, an auditorium that could hold
4 many of us even though only a few enthusiastic
5 people are here, and we hope we can address all
6 your questions and interests that you might have
7 particularly relative to the reason that we're
8 here, which is to present to you a discussion of
9 our amended budget for the calendar year -- rather,
10 I should say, the school calendar year of 2013
11 which we are now into that year by about three
12 months, and we're going to have a discussion about
13 that and some changes that we're proposing to make
14 in the budget. That's the purpose of the meeting.

15 Beyond that, if there are other questions,
16 we'll do our best to answer them, but I'm going to
17 say we're here principally to talk about the
18 amended budget which I will discuss with you
19 briefly and then open it up to questions.

20 So can we start? Again, the purpose of
21 this meeting is to talk about our amended budget,
22 and the first question which we'll get into is why
23 we are amending what we call the FY or full year of
24 2013 budget in the first place and what does the

1 amended -- what does the amendment to the budget
2 do. So I will address those various questions in
3 due course.

4 All right. First of all, why do we have
5 to amend the 2013 budget? And a little bit of
6 background on this. The budget for the school year
7 that we are currently in was established and
8 approved by the Board of Education on the 24th of
9 August, and it included funds for all concluded
10 union actions and agreements that we knew about at
11 that time; that is to say, we set the budget in mid
12 to late August. Any union actions requiring to be
13 included in the budget were included in the budget,
14 and the final budget was set and approved by the
15 Board accordingly.

16 As you all know, there was a series of
17 actions with the Chicago Teachers Union. That
18 contract entered into a new collective bargaining
19 agreement which we have now agreed to, and it added
20 \$103 million to the budget to increase teacher
21 compensation.

22 This increase requires us to propose an
23 amendment to the budget which we are in the process
24 of doing and we'll discuss with you this evening.

1 Feedback from hearings such as this -- there's
2 another hearing taking place today at Walter Payton
3 School on the north side. The feedback we get from
4 you will be provided to our Board and transcripts
5 will be posted on line. The Board, in turn, will
6 act on this budget at the November 14th meeting
7 coming up in just over a week's time. They'll act
8 on our amendment as we will present to the Board at
9 that meeting coming up on the 14th of November.

10 All right.

11 The added expense is primarily due to
12 teacher compensation that stems from the agreement
13 that we reached with the Teachers Union in
14 September, and those include a total of \$59 million
15 for a 3 percent cost-of-living increase that will
16 be effective in the school year that we are
17 currently in.

18 \$33 million for what are known as Step
19 increases. These are increases that teachers are
20 eligible for as they gain additional experience and
21 tenure in working in the school system. And so an
22 additional \$33 million will be paid this year in
23 this school year for those increases, increases
24 relative to rewarding for experience.

1 An additional \$5 million for what are
2 known as Lane increases. Lane increases are
3 rewards for academic accomplishments, for teachers
4 gaining additional degrees and proficiency in their
5 area of expertise. When that occurs, we reward
6 them. The school system rewards those teachers
7 rightly for getting those additional credentials
8 and experience that helps them teach the children
9 more effectively.

10 An additional \$6 million is for
11 nonteachers, various aides, and clerks that are
12 also part of the Chicago Teachers Union. The total
13 of that then is \$103 million, an additional expense
14 for our 2013 budget.

15 Now we'll cover those budgets, and that's
16 the reason for amending those additional expenses,
17 and that's the reason for amending the budget in
18 various ways.

19 First of all, from various operating
20 activities, we will cover \$21 million of the
21 budget's needed increases, and they come through
22 food service revenue and expenses, improvements in
23 our food service revenue and expenses, and,
24 additionally, more aggressive procurement targets.

1 So between those two activities, we've identified
2 opportunities for us which will generate, between
3 the two of them, 11 million for one and 10 million
4 for the other for a total of \$20 million in
5 opportunity saves. We have those programs well
6 underway right now particularly on the procurement
7 side.

8 We're looking through each and every
9 contract. We've hired an outside firm to help us
10 with that, A. T. Carney, which is going to help us
11 go through and look at all the contracts and
12 determine ways that we can make improvements as
13 well as any new contract that we're entering into.
14 We continue to bargain extremely hard and get the
15 lowest cost possible.

16 On the administrative side, we have
17 identified \$12 million in potential saves. This
18 comes from delay or cancelling filling vacant
19 nonteacher administrative positions that we had
20 intended to fill during the course of the year.
21 We'll need to delay those or cancel them all
22 together.

23 And, further, we're going to trim other
24 budget items that we have control over. These

1 range from a whole host of things down to something
2 like computer printing machines which are expensive
3 in terms of ink cartridges and so forth; and over a
4 system as large as ours, it mounts up.

5 We've gone through and identified
6 different administrative expenses which will result
7 in a save along with a delay to hire of another
8 \$12 million.

9 On the financial side, we have an
10 opportunity to do some things that will generate
11 \$70 million in saves for us this year or additional
12 revenue for us. First of all, we are capitalizing
13 the interest on August 2012 bonds. We had a bond
14 issue, new debt issue in August of this year,
15 couple of months ago, that will be used to fund
16 various capital projects; and by capitalizing the
17 interest, that is to say, rather than paying
18 interest, we make the interest part of the overall
19 debt expense. That saves considerable amount of
20 money for us.

21 We are intending to sell surplus
22 properties that we have in the system to the tune
23 of raising \$15 million in vacant lots and
24 properties that are not currently being used.

1 And, finally, we intend to refinance bonds
2 that are currently maturing to the tune of about
3 \$42 million. These are bonds that would have
4 ordinarily been matured and retired in 2013 and
5 2014, but instead of doing that, we'll extend these
6 through a new issuance. The rates are favorable
7 for us to do this right now. We'll raise an
8 additional \$42 million.

9 So between these financial activities,
10 we'll raise additional revenue of some \$70 million.

11 The combined total of all those will allow
12 us to cover the \$103 million in additional expense
13 in 2013 that I have referenced.

14 So that is what we're doing. In order to
15 accomplish this, since we set our budget in August
16 of this year, we are required with any change we
17 make to the budget to present that to the Board of
18 Education, to have a public hearing which we're
19 having right now on the proposed changes. We'll
20 present these changes to our Board as I mentioned
21 on the 14th of this month, and we'll also discuss
22 any input that we get from you at that time.

23 So at this point, I would like to open it
24 up to any questions of a speaker who has signed in.

1 You have two minutes to ask a questions and we'll
2 do our best to comment on those questions. After
3 all have signed in and spoken, the hearing will
4 adjourn.

5 So at this point, I will open it up to
6 questions. We do not have a roving mic, but we're
7 not that large a group, and I'm sure we'll be able
8 to hear you if you will speak up a little bit and
9 we'll answer as best we can.

10 MR. WALTER: We'll start in the order that you
11 signed in. So we'll start with Speaker Number 1.
12 So you know, I will have -- I will be keeping time
13 for two minutes. I will hold up a 10 seconds note
14 when you get to the end of your time. So if you
15 could wrap it up.

16 MR. BLUE: Gentlemen, how are you? My name is
17 Sylvester Blue. I am the chairperson of the Local
18 School Council at Dunbar High School. And in your
19 financials that you stated, selling of surplus
20 properties, you said vacant properties and
21 properties that weren't currently being used.

22 Are you taking into consideration any
23 school that may possibly be closed in this upcoming
24 year?

1 CFO ROGERS: No, we are not, unless it has been
2 at this point already. These are --

3 A VOICE: Repeat the question.

4 CFO ROGERS: The question was, which if you
5 don't mind, I will try to ask it for you. The
6 issue of selling surplus properties has been raised
7 and the question regarding that was will we be
8 selling any -- will any of those properties relate
9 to schools that we might be closing during the
10 course of the coming year. I think that was
11 correct, isn't it?

12 MR. BLUE: Yes.

13 CFO ROGERS: My answer to that is that is not
14 the intent. These are principally properties that
15 have been vacant for some time that in our planning
16 we haven't found a use for these properties, and we
17 think there's an opportunity to sell those right
18 now as the market for real estate has improved a
19 little bit.

20 We've also been waiting for most of the
21 property values to have been improved which we
22 think they have enough for us to warrant selling
23 them at the present time and, if successful, we
24 will raise \$15 million for doing so.

1 MR. WALTER: Speaker Number 2.

2 MR. BRUNSON: Hello. My name is
3 Michael Brunson. I am the recording secretary of
4 the Chicago Teachers Union. I will be quick
5 because basically I have two questions.

6 First of all, you said you had to add in
7 \$103 million to cover the contract, and when you
8 figured it at 3 percent, I know that before the
9 Board had anticipated a 2 percent increase with no
10 Steps and Lanes.

11 Did you deduct that from the 103 million
12 to come up with the 103 million? Was that taken
13 into consideration or did we start from zero to get
14 to 3 percent?

15 CFO ROGERS: That's a good question, Michael.
16 Did everyone hear the question?

17 A VOICE: No.

18 CFO ROGERS: I know you have a big voice. Do
19 you mind repeating it?

20 MR. BRUNSON: At first, the Board had
21 anticipated giving the teachers a 2 percent raise
22 with no Steps and Lanes, and they had built that
23 into the original budget. So when they came up
24 with this extra 103 million, did they deduct that

1 from the numbers they came up with to get this
2 103 million? That was the question.

3 CFO ROGERS: Greg, would you mind answering
4 that question?

5 MR. VOLAN: So it's true that we did budget in
6 the original budget for 2 percent salary increase.
7 One thing that changed after the original budget
8 was there was an agreement with the Chicago
9 Teachers Union before we reached the agreement on
10 the collective bargaining agreement. There was the
11 agreement on the full school day position -- on
12 full school day. And part of that required us to
13 open up over 500 teacher positions for full school
14 day. So that's all factored into this.

15 So we weren't able to deduct the full
16 2 percent that we had budgeted for salary increases
17 because there was that additional unanticipated
18 cost for the full school day positions.

19 MR. BRUNSON: And then my second question, and
20 I will let it go, and I have to bring this up
21 because this is something that's on everyone's
22 mind. There is the rumor of the school closings
23 that are coming up; and, in the past, the school
24 closings have been based on academic performance,

14

1 but this year the rumblings are that the school
2 closings will be based upon space utilization,
3 meaning that the schools are understaffed with
4 students.

5 So with that in mind, if you're planning
6 to close, to right-size this system or close
7 buildings based upon space utilization, why has the
8 whole Department of Demographics and Planning been
9 eliminated from Chicago Public -- from the central
10 office? You've had Department of Demographics and
11 Planning run by -- what was his name? --
12 Mr. Dispensa. He's been moved over since April to
13 Senior Manager of Business Optimization.

14 So it seems as though if you're going to
15 be closing schools based upon that, why would you
16 shut down that department?

17 MR. VOLAN: You want me to answer this one?

18 CFO ROGERS: Please, Greg, if you would.

19 MR. VOLAN: So the answer is that we have not
20 shut down that department. That department is now
21 part of the Portfolio Office. Jim Dispensa is
22 still with the CPS. He took a different position
23 at CPS. And I know the Portfolio Office is looking
24 to backfill his position. But the department has

15

1 not been eliminated. That function is still being
2 provided through the Portfolio Office.

3 MR. BRUNSON: You folded it into Portfolio now?

4 MR. VOLAN: Correct.

5 MR. WALTER: Speaker Number 3.

6 MR. JACKSON: Two questions I want to ask. Now
7 you got up there \$103 million for the teachers
8 whatever they agreed with; but according to the
9 graph that I got, the Board made a -- they said a
10 revenue surplus in 2009, '10 and '11, and also
11 basically in '12. You're basing your revenue on
12 expenses, on expenses.

13 So my question is how is it that you're
14 going to spend more money that you take in to, you
15 know, to get up this level?

16 Now we know that this TIF money as well as
17 the property taxes that is being -- going up by the
18 Board is supposed to really offset these expenses
19 that you're coming up with. And number two, the
20 \$80 million that was allocated for those teachers
21 that would have offset that \$103 million, why did
22 the Board not offer those teachers that 80 million
23 that they should have been getting instead of
24 deliberately diverting that money from the teachers

16

1 to pay for police officer and triple their pay
2 salary?

3 CFO ROGERS: Well, let me see if I can try to
4 repeat that. I think, in essence, what you've --
5 the question you have raised is that revenues and
6 funds that could have been used to cover the
7 increase in teacher compensation by way of the
8 recent agreement could have been covered by other
9 means and, in fact, some of the money was funneled
10 off to pay for policeman?

11 MR. JACKSON: Correct. The Teachers Union had
12 to file an FOIA, to get a freedom of information to
13 show you all had this money, but you lied to the
14 public and said you did not have the money to pay
15 the teachers, otherwise they wouldn't have gotten
16 to the place where it was.

17 So you had \$80 million to pay the
18 teachers, but you deliberately moved the funds just
19 as you're doing now. You're moving funds and
20 saying we got this big deficit. But you're not
21 telling how much money you're taking in on the TIF.
22 You are not adding up how much you're paying for
23 these 18 lawyers, and I mean the law firms you're
24 paying for.

1 So let the public know how much money it's
2 going to cost for us, as taxpayers, to pay for
3 outside law firms that your Board has. But you're
4 going to outside law firms to pay for it. You're
5 giving me zero seconds, but you're not going to
6 give us the real answer. You're not putting up
7 there about how much does it cost for the outside
8 consultant which you don't need and these outside
9 law firms that you hire and the Board got their own
10 law firm that could save money.

11 CFO ROGERS: Let me make an effort to answer
12 your question which is quite broad. I will tell
13 you this that, as I said, we are obligated to have
14 a balanced budget. We had a balanced budget on
15 August 24th when this Board of Education approved
16 it.

17 We then entered into a collective
18 bargaining agreement with the Chicago Teachers
19 Union that required us to pay an additional
20 \$103 million. So we were obligated to produce a
21 balanced budget which requires us to find expense
22 reductions or additional revenue to cover the
23 expense of the Teachers Union contract. That
24 amounted to \$103 million.

1 We have found those revenues and expenses
2 through activities that will continue over the next
3 several months which will allow us to, once again,
4 balance our budget.

5 MR. JACKSON: Do you not agree the \$80 million
6 was misappropriately and deliberately sent off to
7 another?

8 CFO ROGERS: I'm afraid I don't know about the
9 \$80 million you're talking about.

10 Next question.

11 MR. WALTER: Speaker Number 4.

12 MS. ROBINSON: The 80 million he was talking
13 about and the money he's talking about for the
14 teachers was the 4 percent that we didn't get.
15 That's what you're -- not the new contract. So
16 that does need to be answered. A lot of people
17 that one.

18 My name is Bonita Robinson, and I'm a
19 retired reading specialist who taught from 1972 to
20 2011 at Duke Ellington School in the Austin
21 community on the west side. I have a comment and a
22 question.

23 The comment is that for the past 20 years,
24 20 plus years, urban school reform has played out

1 in the Chicago Public Schools including the budget
2 has been a failure. Instead of admitting the
3 failure of the school system -- of the school
4 system to nurture, educate, and prepare our
5 students for successful productive lives, this
6 system has sabotaged the neighborhood schools by
7 withholding resources and then supplanting them
8 with accountability measures otherwise known as
9 testing which takes up too much time, and then
10 crafting a narrative of failure of the schools,
11 teachers, and students as opposed to the failure of
12 the system to provide the appropriate learning
13 environment.

14 It is well-documented that from 1971 to
15 '88, according to the NAPE scores, the achievement
16 gap, black/white achievement gap was narrowing, '88
17 at the best. It is also well-documented through
18 research that since the advent of reform 20 plus
19 years that the gap stopped narrowing and, in fact,
20 has widened.

21 I have -- there's a wonderful graph that
22 shows the closing of the NAPE scores from '71 to
23 '88. I taught during that time.

24 And then these last 20 years, the

1 Sun-Times last year showed us a University of
2 Chicago headline here, No real progress in grade
3 school reading in 20 years. So the past 20 years
4 of reform has been a failure.

5 I taught during both periods, and I can
6 attest to the fact that what's going on now,
7 including the budget -- and I can't want to hear
8 the details. I'm glad the people are covering the
9 details that I want to talk about but we don't have
10 time enough to talk about that. When I taught
11 during the period where the gap was closing, from
12 the administration, there was a by word of how can
13 I be of service to you? What do you need? Go in
14 there and teach. That's why it got closed because
15 we spent time teaching with the children.

16 And then in these last 20 years, the by
17 word is intimidation, do this, do that, and mostly
18 test, test, test, test. That is why I left the
19 classroom. I still want to be teaching, but I was
20 testing and my time -- one thing about it. We can
21 spend our money for the resources that you don't
22 fund, but when you start taking our time -- I'm
23 closing -- when you start taking our time, then
24 you're sabotaging our children and the research

1 proves this.

2 Just a few things that were taken from my
3 school. We used to have trips. We used -- I mean,
4 all the time. We brought in cultural events
5 through Urban Gateways. Our children went to camp.
6 All this is gone. Spanish is gone. Computer is
7 gone. You're going to be taking -- they're going
8 to be taking this new test, NWEA, on the computer.
9 We have little kindergartners who are going to take
10 that test who don't know how to use the computer
11 because we don't have -- we have a computer lab.
12 We just don't fund the teaching.

13 We had guidance counseling for the
14 children. We didn't have as much killing then, but
15 we at least had the guidance counseling. We had
16 aides. We had RIF, Reading is Fundamental. Choir.
17 I taught at Duke Ellington School. There's no big
18 music program there. Half music time.

19 And paraphrasing -- I'm closing -- to
20 paraphrase Linda Darling Hammond, we know what
21 works. I work for that period where the gap
22 closed. Why aren't we doing it? You're sabotaging
23 our children.

24 I worked in the past year on several

1 committees with some of your top administrators,
2 and it is clear to me that they are wonderful
3 people that I had met, but they do not know what
4 our children need.

5 Like I said, I taught them and I know that
6 many of the teachers that you all -- you're
7 budgeting and opening the charter schools and
8 saying you have too many seats in the regular
9 public schools, that's a manufactured seat
10 expansion. But what I'm saying is many of the
11 teachers that you have displaced and so forth, they
12 were teaching when I was teaching. They know what
13 they're doing -- they know what they were doing.
14 And this is killing our children.

15 The question that I wanted to ask -- and
16 I'm going to move on -- the question that I wanted
17 to ask was, Duke Ellington school branch, closing,
18 was torn down in 2005. Yet in your budget, you
19 have an item. It's a small amount, but why would
20 there be something on the budget for -- you're
21 making me wonder because the teachers didn't get
22 there -- it was on the 2012 list. Like I said,
23 it's a small amount, but that was a year that the
24 teachers didn't get their raise. I had just

1 retired last -- but why would there be an amount
2 for a school that hasn't existed for many years?

3 MR. WALTER: Do you know how much the amount
4 was?

5 MS. ROBINSON: Here it is. It's right here. I
6 have a copy because I would like an answer for that
7 because it makes me wonder, are there other
8 schools, are there other amounts in this budget
9 somewhere -- because it wasn't even listed next to
10 Duke Ellington School. The current Duke Ellington
11 School was listed as Edward Duke Ellington School,
12 and then it's listed about 23 schools down,
13 Ellington branch. So it's like you didn't want
14 people to see them together.

15 It might have a good answer. I don't
16 know, but it makes me wonder, are there other
17 things throughout this budget that are budgeted for
18 schools that don't exist?

19 MR. WALTER: We'll have to look into that for
20 you. In general, though, when a building is
21 closed, sometimes there are still expenses that are
22 associated with it. If a branch is closed --

23 MS. ROBINSON: I looked back at the other
24 years, and there was nothing there. So why would

1 it pop up after not being there for years?

2 MR. WALTER: We'll have to look into that.

3 CFO ROGERS: It's a question we wouldn't have.

4 MS. ROBINSON: It's a small amount, but small
5 amounts add up.

6 CFO ROGERS: I can assure you, if there's an
7 expense listed with the school, it was for a
8 legitimate expense, and we'll have to check into
9 what that was. We can get more detail on it. But
10 there are certainly residual expenses. They might
11 not happen the very next year. It could have been
12 something that came up as a consequence with the
13 school closing.

14 MS. ROBINSON: I would like to know. How will
15 I find that answer out?

16 CFO ROGERS: If you could give us your name and
17 address, we can get back to you with a response.

18 MS. ROBINSON: And, finally, I do want to leave
19 on a positive note, and I had planned on going to
20 the October Board meeting and I will have to
21 eventually come, but I was going to suggest that
22 reading the -- this whole system, in fact, I am
23 going to suggest to you that you suggest to your
24 real boss, Mayor Emanuel, that we all read as a

1 city, the Flat World in Education by Linda Darling
2 Hammond, who done the research on the closing of
3 gap, how America's commitment to equity will
4 determine our future as well as the miseducation of
5 the Negro.

6 To come up with a real plan instead of a
7 sabotage plan and fake failure plan, we need to
8 move our children.

9 CFO ROGERS: Thank you very much. I appreciate
10 your comments, and it's particularly good to hear
11 from someone who's got as much experience in
12 teaching in our Chicago district as you have.
13 Thank you very much.

14 MR. WALTER: Speaker Number 5, please.

15 MS. REGGS: First, I want to say I think it's
16 disrespectful to have two minutes regarding a
17 meeting when you come into a community talking
18 about budgeting and school closing and other
19 things.

20 I know you're talking about budgeting
21 today. The budget doesn't accommodate the schools
22 the way you're supposed to be. If we're going
23 through a crisis with the budget, how can the
24 richer -- I will classify this -- certain schools

26

1 that are richer is getting funded and certain
2 people are being funded while schools that are
3 closing are lacking resources more and more if
4 you're piling schools on top of each other and not
5 providing for that school?

6 So I just want to say when you guys
7 requested an extension for the schools -- for the
8 school closing for March, I think that we should
9 not do that. I think closing the previous schools
10 still haven't marinated yet, and you guys just keep
11 piling things up and you guys are not being
12 accountable for anything.

13 Total conspiracy with this budget. You
14 guys are dealing with federal funding that's not
15 properly going to the schools. No one has gotten
16 arrested. No one has become accountable.

17 Jean-Claude Brizard is gone. He still gets a
18 paycheck of 300 and some thousand dollars as if
19 he's still here. Our school deserves that money.

20 TIF money is not being properly funded
21 into the schools that you guys are closing. And I
22 oppose that you guys are constantly coming to
23 African communities destroying our schools by not
24 giving us the proper resources and you have the

1 money for the resources. Because we don't have
2 libraries at Dyett. We don't have computers at
3 Dyett. We don't have like a rehab. We don't have
4 a counselor to come in and work with our kids.

5 And you guys never sent me a letter saying
6 that the school was being phased out by e-mail.
7 You sent it to my daughter.

8 I want to know why is it that you guys'
9 paycheck keep going up but the school is closing in
10 African-American neighborhoods?

11 CFO ROGERS: Thank you for your question and
12 comments. I will say that as far as the date that
13 you referenced relative to March 1st, I want to
14 comment on that because, in fact, it addresses some
15 of your points.

16 As has been documented in recent news
17 reports, our new CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett has made
18 it very clear that she does not intend to let the
19 school system take any actions on school closures
20 or adjustments despite recognizing that there is
21 quite a surplus of schools in the system relative
22 to the number of students we have. It's her intent
23 not to let any actions take place until we have
24 fully discussed all possibilities with the

1 community.

2 And a very thorough process has been set
3 up including a panel of experts and very interested
4 people representing all walks of the city to gain
5 opinion and to make sure that we are equipped with
6 a full view of community prior to taking any
7 action.

8 And the reason for requesting an extension
9 of the normal date that's required for notification
10 of school closures is that she rightly felt that we
11 were not in a position today and would not be by
12 the normal date of having to submit school closure
13 information. We would not have had an opportunity
14 to fully obtain input from the school -- from the
15 people that are most interested in the schools,
16 that being parents and the community.

17 And so it's her intention to fully obtain
18 as much information as possible. And I applaud her
19 for those efforts. Could we have your name,
20 please?

21 MS. REGGS: Kitesha Reggs, K-i-t-e-s-h-a,
22 R-e-g-g-s.

23 MR. WALTER: Speaker Number 6, please.

24 MS. CLENNING: Good evening, everyone. My

1 name is Joy Clendenning. I live right over here in
2 Hyde Park. I am the parent of four children who
3 attend Chicago Public Schools. This is my 12th
4 year as a CPS parent, and I'm here tonight to
5 specifically say to people who work on the budget,
6 can you please stop doing so much testing and stop
7 spending so much money on it? In terms of what you
8 presented tonight, I guess you could look at this
9 as a place where you can get some expense
10 reductions.

11 I would specifically suggest you look at
12 other budget items. You mentioned computer
13 printers. Well, I would suggest looking at all of
14 the vendor contracts and all of the infrastructure
15 and staffing required to run nonmandated tests such
16 as the NWEA MAP testing which has been extended
17 this year down into kindergarten including schools
18 which don't have the right sized text map,
19 including children who don't how to use a map.

20 So I would suggest that you in the budget,
21 maybe you can suggest to people that we need to
22 look at how we're spending the money and whether it
23 really helps kids.

24 I don't know the numbers, but I do know

1 that there's a lot of testing going on. I know
2 it's increased during the 12 years that my children
3 have been in the system. I believe that the people
4 deciding to approve all of the money for testing
5 must think that this helps kids, but I don't think
6 it does and I think research will back me up.

7 Please stop the testing. Move the money
8 to the things that we know will help kids. Invest
9 in our existing neighborhood schools including the
10 one right here around King. There are neighborhood
11 schools right here that have kids and need
12 investment and, frankly, would have more kids if
13 you invested more in them. We know that we need
14 things like smaller class sizes, playgrounds,
15 libraries, social workers, nurses, authentic
16 professional development, Restorative Justice
17 programs and college counseling, just to name a
18 few.

19 Please shift the money away from the
20 nonmandated testing and spend it on things that we
21 know work.

22 And I guess my question would be, can you
23 do this? Do you have a line to the Board? Do you
24 have a line to people? I mean, you look through

1 the budget to try to find things. Is there a way
2 that you can look at this testing issue? Thank
3 you.

4 CFO ROGERS: Thank you very much. To answer
5 your question outright, yes, there is a way and I'm
6 Chief Financial Officer. I have full authority to
7 look at any expense in our school budget and
8 question it and recommend changes if I don't think
9 it's an appropriate level.

10 In fact, just to reference your point,
11 which you will probably find interesting, we spent
12 three hours today going through budgets that
13 included testing with a view toward understanding
14 in full detail how much testing was needed, asked
15 for justification by way of an expert on our
16 education side relative to the consequences of
17 those testing.

18 And I can assure you, we regularly
19 question every expense throughout the Chicago
20 School District. And we need to do that and more
21 because, yes, we have a very substantial task in
22 front of us. We had to move rather quickly to fill
23 the gap that allows us to balance our 2013 budget.

24 But nothing goes without review, and we

1 put every resource possible in looking at all
2 expenses, vendor contracts, many of which are
3 oriented towards testing, you're right, because we
4 often use outside vendors for testing, and analysis
5 for results. And we'll look at every expense as we
6 have, and we'll continue to do so going forward.

7 Thank you for your comments.

8 MR. WALTER: Speaker Number 7, please.

9 MR. VANCE: Hello. Hello, ladies and
10 gentlemen. My name is Dave Vance. I am an LSC
11 member at James Thorpe Elementary School at 89th
12 and Buffalo.

13 Well, Mr. Rogers, I have to be blunt.
14 First, welcome, and there's all was a "but".
15 You're the fifth financial officer in the last two
16 years, some odd years. I can't name all the
17 financial officers. I can name the four CEOs since
18 Arne Duncan. Let me see. Yes, we had Ron.
19 Huberman, he's gone. We had Terry Mazany, six
20 months. We had J. C. Brizard. And now another
21 savior, Barbara Byrd-Bennett.

22 So what's going on? What's going on at
23 the top? You're new, but we've been going to these
24 meetings, and that's why I know you're new. We've

1 been going to these meetings. There's instability.

2 And then in September, they lowered
3 Moody -- Moody's lowered their rating on CPS bonds.
4 So, gee, instability at the top, lower your bond
5 ratings, what are we supposed to think?

6 So can you explain to me why they have
7 reduced the bond ratings? One question.

8 But we have all been watching this Board,
9 the different boards. We're worried that you don't
10 know what you're doing, and that it's just another
11 scam, and now the scam is instead of looking --
12 closing the bad schools, now they're counting
13 seats. You know, we're all human beings and we
14 want better schools and we're fighting for our
15 schools.

16 They chopped our school in half. I know
17 all about what you're doing. In the first year
18 they opened up L.E.A.R.N. Charter in my school,
19 they gave them \$2 million, a million from
20 Oprah Winfrey, another second million from Arne
21 Duncan. We know what the scam is.

22 I do have a question because I was at the
23 Board meeting and it was on the slide show. I
24 thought when Tim Cawley presented the same slide

1 show, I thought he questioned this 70 million
2 increase, how you could capitalize. Bienen asked
3 Cawley, you can't do that. So what happened? Is
4 it okay now?

5 CFO ROGERS: Who asked Tim Cawley?

6 MR. VANCE: The Board member --

7 MR. BRUNSON: Bienen. Board Member Bienen.

8 MR. VANCE: Bienen. He asked about this slide.
9 He said, this 70 million can't be added that way.
10 Did he discuss that with you?

11 CFO ROGERS: I was in that same Board meeting
12 -- thank you for your questions, sir. There are
13 several. I would like to try to comment on each
14 one as I can briefly.

15 First of all, yes, your observation is
16 well-taken. There has been a frequent change in
17 the CEO level, no doubt at the CFO level as well.
18 I can't explain fully since I was not here yet, not
19 to hide behind that. All I can tell you is I'm
20 here now. I'm dedicated to this position. I'm
21 very pleased to be here. And my sense of the
22 colleagues that I'm working with is that everyone
23 -- if you'll just bear with me on this -- everyone
24 has the best intention of education in Chicago or

1 we would not be in the positions that we're in
2 today.

3 Now time will tell how successful we are,
4 and with your input and comments such as what you
5 made, I think we can only get better if we listen
6 to those and make improvements. So that would be
7 my comment on that.

8 As I said, the principle point I want to
9 make is that there are a lot of dedicated, very
10 smart, and very motivated people that work in the
11 Chicago Public School System, both at the teacher
12 level and administrative positions, and we're
13 trying to do the best we can for children.

14 Second point I think that I want to
15 comment on -- I may have missed one, I'm sorry,
16 please let me know if I did -- you raised a
17 question about the financial aspects of the
18 \$70 million that were presented at the Board
19 meeting and a question may have come up on that. I
20 think the question that came up on this related to
21 the fact that we were going through and discussing
22 the 103 million, the coverage of the 103 million as
23 though it was all coming from expense save when, in
24 reality, a large part of it isn't really expense

1 save. It is actually additional revenue.

2 And Tim may have not explained that
3 initially, but I'm sure he corrected himself
4 eventually in that. And Mr. Bienen was correct in
5 saying that of the 70 million, much of that comes
6 from -- the 70 million, it's principally from
7 additional revenue which comes from refinancing
8 bonds or capitalizing bonds; and, on the one hand,
9 capitalizing bonds does allow you to save expense
10 from interest you would otherwise pay. But a large
11 portion of the 70 comes from revenue, not expense
12 save. And you're correct in that regard.

13 I'm sure you may have asked -- is there
14 another part to your question? I'm sorry if I
15 missed it.

16 MR. VANCE: Well, the other part was, of
17 course, the money that's being spent going to the
18 charter schools, and while they get money we get
19 starved. And they cut our budget this year from
20 last year a quarter of a million dollars. So
21 they're cutting school budgets and then giving the
22 charter school in our same building 800 million and
23 cutting us by 250 -- excuse me, 800,000 and cutting
24 us by 250,000.

1 So we see it as a scam. We don't trust
2 the Board. We don't trust the Mayor. So good luck
3 with your new job.

4 CFO ROGERS: Thank you. I have a feeling I
5 will need it.

6 Just to further comment on that. I think
7 this goes back to a comment I made a moment ago
8 which is to say that your opinion, which I know is
9 very well thought through considering the role you
10 are playing at the school you're involved with, the
11 opportunity is there right now with our new CEO to
12 give as much opinion as possible to shape the
13 direction of our school district.

14 As I said, it's the intent of everyone
15 working there to improve the quality of our
16 education for Chicago's children, and whether it's
17 through charter schools spending or more spending
18 in neighborhood schools, now is the time to make
19 sure your voice is heard. Yours have been heard
20 this evening and thank you for that.

21 MR. WALTER: Speaker Number 8.

22 MS. DAWSON: My name is Dorothy Dawson, and I
23 have been connected with Dunbar Vocational Career
24 Academy for the past 51 years. I have been more

1 than some of you guys' ages are.

2 But I have you know this: I looked at
3 this 103 million. I want to know how many million
4 are you going to put into Dunbar Vocational High
5 School, to put all of our shops back in shape, back
6 where they were before? In the last eight to ten
7 years, you just started nibbling one at a time, one
8 at a time, taking them out. We had brick, auto
9 mechanics, body fender, welding, sheet metal,
10 printing, all of the office things that you could
11 have, accounting, court recording, anything that
12 you could name, we had it at Dunbar, and we are
13 almost down to zip now.

14 We want this school back and up to par.
15 Now that I met you, I know you and I will be seeing
16 you because we want that back. You put simple
17 stuff in the school that you don't even ask the
18 school. Like they filled in the orchestra pit with
19 cement. They had no business doing that. They
20 never asked us as a Local School Council, can I do
21 that. They just did it. And we don't like it and
22 we're not going to accept it.

23 You're going to give us what we want and
24 put our kids back on lane.

1 I got something that I want to give you
2 personally about what happens to the best products
3 that come from vocational and technical high
4 schools, some of the best people in the country,
5 and we got them -- like that little guy sitting
6 over there, three master degrees that finished in
7 carpentry in my school. You know, you have a
8 number of them that we can name that own their own
9 business. Ernest Brown own his own business
10 because we had the equipment and stuff that you
11 needed at Dunbar.

12 We want it back. We going to word the
13 heck out of you. We need it back.

14 CFO ROGERS: All right. Thank you for your
15 comment, and I look forward to getting more as time
16 goes on. I appreciate how much you --

17 MS. DAWSON: One other thing, please. Take
18 Marriott Food out of our school and let us go back
19 to cooking and making good meals for our kids so
20 they can be healthy and live longer.

21 CFO ROGERS: We'll take your comments to the
22 right people including ourselves. Thank you very
23 much.

24 MR. WALTER: That's it. That was the last

1 speaker that registered.

2 CFO ROGERS: Are there any new speakers that
3 have not registered?

4 MR. WALTER: We have Speaker Number 9.

5 MR. SAFFOLD: I'm Number 9.

6 CFO ROGERS: Yes, sir.

7 MR. SAFFOLD: First comment -- my name is
8 Lonnell Saffold. I am a resident of the Englewood
9 neighborhood, and I overheard you talking about
10 school closing. And while I don't have much to say
11 about it other than the people -- I mean, the
12 gentlemen raised a question about spacial
13 utilization and how they want to go about making
14 the choice of which school is going to stay open
15 and which school is going to close.

16 Are they taking into consideration the
17 safe passage? Because if you close a school to
18 fill another, you're taking another kid out of the
19 neighborhood who had safe passage to that school,
20 now he's going to be put in the school where it's
21 going to be probably met with rival gang members.
22 You saw what happened at Fenger High School. It
23 was a travesty, and it was seen all over the
24 country.

1 Are they taking into consideration, if
2 they're closing 100 schools, the danger that's
3 going to put young teens' lives at stake just
4 trying to get to a new school? Are they taking
5 that into consideration? That's my first question.

6 CFO ROGERS: Now the answer to that is a
7 definite yes. That is a very important factor that
8 is being taken into consideration. In any
9 discussion about school closures -- let me
10 emphasize, once again, that there have been no
11 final decisions. There is not a plan for school
12 closures at this point. We're at a fact-finding
13 stage right now that's been announced, and we'll
14 continue until our new CEO feels confident she has
15 appropriate input from the community.

16 One of the factors, though, I can tell you
17 for sure because I heard this mention on numerous
18 occasions has to do with the safety of the children
19 recognizing that is a factor that's critically
20 important to any discussion of this sort.

21 MR. SAFFOLD: So is there going to be finances
22 put in place to hire more security officers? Our
23 champion, what I see right now, where I see parents
24 standing on corners, security, I don't know what

1 their titles are, but I like the fact that you have
2 parents in their vests being identified. I guess
3 when trouble happens, they can reach out, contact
4 the CPD or what have you. Will that increase?
5 That's part of a monetary budget that will have to
6 be approved, right?

7 CFO ROGERS: It would be if it were increased
8 from the current budget. I can tell you that, yes,
9 indeed, we have an entire group that works on
10 safety and security as you referenced, and that is
11 -- as I mentioned, while there is no definitive
12 plan at this point in terms of any additional
13 school closures, any discussion will have to
14 consider and will actively involve safety and
15 security. If that means additional expenditures
16 for safety and security, that will have to be taken
17 into consideration before any changes are made.

18 MR. SAFFOLD: My second question, and I will be
19 brief, you mentioned there was going to be a
20 \$21 million savings I guess with food service and
21 purchasing.

22 Tell me how these savings already have
23 been accounted for. Are you going to be
24 renegotiating contracts with current contractors?

1 And you say you've identified the money. So is it
2 safe to say the cuts are going to come? Because if
3 you're going make savings, that means there's going
4 to be cuts with procurement. These are the people
5 that you contract with. So are you saying today
6 that these cuts have already been made but we just
7 don't know what they are?

8 CFO ROGERS: No. Actually it's a good
9 question. You're right. The number was
10 \$11 million I think for -- in the food service area
11 and another 10 million for contracts in general.

12 Speaking for the people that are
13 responsible for procurement and food service, I can
14 tell you right now that they do not have those all
15 in hand at this point. They intend to work hard to
16 find them. They feel confident that there is areas
17 particularly in the procurement and contract area;
18 not making cuts of services. It does not have to
19 do with cutting services. It has to do with buying
20 goods and services more smartly, going back and
21 looking at contracts that have been negotiated in
22 the past and perhaps not fulfilled perfectly.

23 This is a very large school district. We
24 have a \$5 billion budget. It's enormous, as you

1 can imagine. There's many contracts and many
2 vendors. We have a team of professionals that I
3 feel confident that has never existed before in the
4 Chicago Public Schools that are working these
5 things on a very rigorous basis to identify the
6 opportunities. They won't come from reducing
7 services. They'll come from reducing expenses to
8 vendors and finding more efficient ways to operate.

9 MR. SAFFOLD: Would those services include
10 wages and benefits of those who are providing the
11 services?

12 CFO ROGERS: They might if they are outside
13 vendors and providers, but not certainly anybody
14 who is currently an employee delivering for us who
15 might be under a contract or an agreement already.
16 It's principally on outside suppliers.

17 MR. SAFFOLD: There's 1800 custodians right now
18 that's with a contract that's contracted out with
19 CPS.

20 CFO ROGERS: Yes.

21 MR. SAFFOLD: Right now they provide a very
22 good service to many of the schools. I just want
23 to make sure we're not talking about balancing the
24 budget off of hard-working families who have to

1 provide -- kids who probably attend CPS who also
2 have to provide for their families, taking a
3 \$14 janitorial job down to \$10. Is that your take
4 on how you want to balance the budget? I'm asking
5 the question.

6 CFO ROGERS: It certainly is not. I have not
7 heard that mentioned, frankly, and I know that our
8 schools are served well by the janitorial staff
9 that we have.

10 As I said, it is a range of things that
11 we're looking at. They are not -- if we had these
12 at the start of the budget, we would have booked
13 them into the original budget.

14 But we've asked people all across the
15 school system to go back and look harder at
16 contracts and agreements, how can we do things
17 better than what we're currently doing now. It's
18 really recovering an expense that we probably
19 should have been smarter about in some cases or for
20 new contracts going forward, negotiating those at a
21 better rate. That's what we're trying to do.

22 MR. SAFFOLD: Thank you very much.

23 CFO ROGERS: There are many opportunities as
24 you can imagine in a school system our size. You

1 need to work very hard on it, and that's what we
2 intend to do.

3 MR. SAFFOLD: Thank you very much.

4 CFO ROGERS: Thank you.

5 MR. WALTER: Speaker number 10.

6 MS. COLEMAN: Good evening. My name is
7 Samantha Coleman. I am the Executive Director of
8 Assist Her, Incorporated. I believe my concern
9 actually piggy-backs off the gentleman that just
10 spoke in regards to the procurement target, things
11 of that nature.

12 There's a few people from Dunbar which is
13 a school that Assist Her has worked with in the
14 past. So when we're revisiting our schools to try
15 to give them services, the topic, of course, that
16 comes up is we don't have funds.

17 Our particular programming as it relates
18 to girls across the city has been that our
19 programming and counseling has assisted in academic
20 gains, attendance issues, social emotional
21 learning, things of that nature. It's very
22 disheartening to go to schools this year and hear
23 that they don't have anything. So that's been like
24 something that's new for us this year.

1 And also, too, with the contracts that
2 have been out there, there's been the Cultural of
3 Calm, social emotional learning. Then you go to
4 another school and it's called New Frontier.
5 There's like all these different names and no one
6 really knows exactly what's happening.

7 And so my concern is that as an
8 organization that is trying to provide quality
9 services for our students, are we going to
10 continuously get cut in terms of, you know, school
11 budgets when they essentially can't afford us?

12 And when are schools going to be notified
13 whether or not -- because I have some schools,
14 we're waiting to hear about our budgets. So some
15 are almost indicating that there may be monies
16 coming for our services. So there's quite a bit of
17 confusion, and I'm hoping you could give some
18 clarity.

19 CFO ROGERS: I will certainly try although
20 that's quite -- I think your questions which are no
21 doubt well thought through would be perhaps best
22 served for more complete answer if you would put
23 those in writing and send them to us so we can get
24 back to you with more detail and specifics, address

1 specific issues that you might have.

2 I can tell you that in terms of budgets
3 coming or money might be forthcoming, without
4 knowing exactly what program is being referenced,
5 it would be difficult for me to respond to that. I
6 know our budgets, of course, are set at the start
7 of the year, communicated to the schools --

8 MS. COLEMAN: For instance --

9 CFO ROGERS: -- but there are new programs that
10 are developed throughout the year for which budgets
11 were created, and those monies that support those
12 budgets are often trailed at the first announcement
13 of the school budget. That might happen throughout
14 the year.

15 MS. COLEMAN: So like, for instance, we were --
16 we definitely went through a process with obtaining
17 a new contract with CPS that's called Social
18 Emotional Learning. We -- at the beginning of that
19 process, I felt that it was a good job in stating
20 that, okay, we're really trying to get the most,
21 you know, bang for our buck or what have you. So
22 we're really forced to kind of like go all the way
23 down to the very least that we could possibly do.
24 And it was, you know, told to us that the reason

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1 was because of budgetary concerns within the system
2 which is fine.

3 To my knowledge, the contract that I'm
4 speaking of is through the Department of Positive
5 Behavior and Supports. And so then when we're
6 going to schools, we hear that schools have to now
7 apply for these funds, whereas that was something
8 that was never even told to vendors.

9 So we essentially have no clue as to what
10 schools we should be reaching out to, but the
11 problem is that schools that we work with in the
12 past now are like, they have nothing, Dunbar being
13 one of them.

14 CFO ROGERS: All right. I don't know if one of
15 my colleagues would like to comment on that. I
16 think it's -- I have to repeat myself and say that
17 I think you have raised some very specific points
18 which are good. Rather than just trying to answer
19 generally, I would appreciate it if you would
20 funnel those -- you can send them to me if you
21 would like and I will make sure you get an
22 appropriate answer. I don't want to try to answer
23 something that relates to your specific programs
24 and not be accurate and correct. I'd rather give

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1 you a thoughtful and appropriate answer.

2 MS. COLEMAN: Okay.

3 MR. WALTER: Speaker Number 11.

4 MS. NICOL SWEAT: Good evening. I am
5 Sherry Nicol Sweat. I am a 33 year teacher,
6 Chicago Public Schools, a product of Chicago Public
7 Schools, a graduate, 1975, graduate of Dunbar
8 Vocational High School. I have been teaching at
9 Dunbar now -- this is going into my 24th year.

10 One of the things that I first would like
11 to say is there needs to be proper notification
12 about these meetings because I heard about it
13 through the grapevine. Just like they use the
14 robocalls like when they were trying to get the
15 parents to tell the teachers not to go on strike,
16 they should have used them to tell them about this
17 meeting tonight. Because I just heard about this
18 this afternoon. So it makes you think that you
19 don't want to us know about the meeting.

20 Over 100 of my family members have
21 graduated from Dunbar Vocational High School. I
22 was very sadden when Ms. Dawson said -- we call her
23 Mother Dawson. She was the dean when I was a
24 student there. They filled in the orchestra pit as

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1 if our children don't need an orchestra pit, we
2 don't need an orchestra. They put a ridiculous
3 looking handicapped lift right here on the front of
4 the stage and just made a spectacle of our stage
5 and auditorium. Dunbar produced Jennifer Hudson
6 and many other students that are in the industry.

7 So that is just a very sad thing, and we
8 want that rectified and we want our programs, our
9 fine arts programs to be reinstated at Dunbar
10 because, right now, I don't even have a choir class
11 or -- I had the vocal music industry.

12 One other thing is that no longer do we
13 have the business department, and so many of the
14 shops that she says are missing.

15 So the budget is really the plan. The
16 budget is the plan. So we need money to be
17 allocated for our programs, you know, at Dunbar and
18 other schools like Dunbar. We want programs that
19 will help our kids. They're pushing -- now this is
20 a vocational school, but they are pushing the
21 college readiness, the college this, that, and the
22 other, and then the vocations going last.

23 They want the vocations teachers to teach
24 reading. When the kids come to high school, they

1 supposed to know how to read. You know, teachers
2 spend all day trying to teach people how to read
3 and do math and stuff like that. So the auto
4 mechanic teacher can't really teach what he needs
5 to do in auto mechanics. You follow?

6 CFO ROGERS: I do.

7 MS. NICOL SWEAT: So I'm saying to you -- one
8 last question, how do you get on this committee to
9 -- you said there's a committee being formed
10 because I would like to serve.

11 CFO ROGERS: I will mention that there's a
12 city-wide committee that was announced in the last
13 few days. I think there are 11 members of the
14 committee who were picked from various aspects of
15 community service from minister to educators to a
16 wide range of people.

17 However, this committee is of no use
18 unless it is a committee that's designed to reach
19 into the community and obtain opinions and
20 direction from the committee. It's not a group
21 that's going to meet somewhere in central Chicago
22 and decide what to do.

23 The purpose of this committee which spans
24 all over the city in terms of its networking

1 capability is to meet with people who are in the
2 schools such as yourself and others and obtain
3 opinions that we value for shaping the direction of
4 what we do in the future. So that committee, while
5 it's established with SEP, the intention of that
6 committee is to facilitate comments from as many
7 people as possible.

8 I know there's an effort to reach into all
9 school committees, any parents committees and
10 obtain as much information as possible, and I
11 believe there is a -- this ability to find out how
12 to give an opinion is detailed on our Web site
13 which would allow you to go in and make sure that
14 you can either attend meetings or provide your
15 thoughts and point of view directly to the
16 individuals who are referenced as being on this
17 committee.

18 MS. NICOL SWEAT: Let me just say this. You
19 said they were picked. Who are these people? I
20 mean, you come up here with a committee that we
21 don't -- we didn't have any say about. You follow
22 me what I'm saying? And this is the same okedoke
23 all the time in the City of Chicago, whether they
24 be a minister or whatever. Some of them just sold

1 out and they are going to say what they're told to
2 say.

3 CFO ROGERS: I suggest what you should do is go
4 on our Web site, find the people that are on the
5 committee and formulate your own opinion. If they
6 are not -- if you think they are not people that
7 are representative of the community, you should
8 make your view known.

9 I can tell you that our CEO made an
10 extraordinary effort to make sure that these are
11 people that would be viewed by anyone in the city
12 as being representative of a wide group of
13 individuals, and they're not what you would refer
14 to as names that would be expected to just fall in
15 line with what everyone tells them to do. These
16 are opinionated people. I am sure they would like
17 to hear your point of view on that as well.

18 MS. NICOL SWEAT: I certainly hope so because a
19 lot of these people that are making decisions don't
20 even have children in Chicago Public Schools.

21 A VOICE: Can you answer her question about the
22 meeting notice?

23 CFO ROGERS: I'm sorry. You had a question
24 about the meeting notice. I did not mean not to

1 respond to that. In fact, there's a process of
2 procedure that we do go through to notify about
3 meetings principally in the press and on our Web
4 site a certain number of days prior to the calling
5 of a public meeting.

6 If you have comments and questions about
7 the effectiveness of that, which is a fair comment,
8 you made them tonight. I think it's worth looking
9 at in terms of how far our reach is. I do know
10 that the procedure that is in place was followed
11 and adhered to in this case. I'm glad you are here
12 as a consequence even though you had to hear it
13 from somebody else. I'm glad you at least heard
14 about it.

15 MR. BRUNSON: Can I ask a question? Will the
16 transcripts of this meeting be published?

17 CFO ROGERS: I do not believe there's a
18 transcript from this. But I'll ask one of my
19 colleagues.

20 MR. BRUNSON: You're being transcribed.

21 MR. WALTER: I think they are.

22 CFO ROGERS: I'm sorry. Yes, in fact, I
23 believe they are published. They're taking them
24 down right now and they will be published.

1 MS. ROBINSON: Jumping off of that, our
2 children should be given those notices so parents
3 can get that information. A lot of them do not
4 have access to Internet. Where I work, a lot of
5 parents don't. And they use this in the home.

6 It seems like when you don't send the
7 notice home by the children to let them know about
8 important meetings, it really comes across as if
9 you really don't want involvement by the parents,
10 you know, and that's what we got. Very few parents
11 are here.

12 A VOICE: This is terrible.

13 CFO ROGERS: Good comments, and those will be
14 taken down, and I think they are constructive
15 comments for sure.

16 MR. WALTER: Speaker 12.

17 MS. WINSTEAD: I hope that everybody can hear
18 me. I'm going to stay right here because my little
19 cheerleader here might try to follow me up on the
20 stage.

21 My name is Valencia Reis Winstead. I
22 serve on the Local School Council at the School of
23 Leadership at South Shore, a school where we're
24 very concerned that we might be named one of the

1 schools to be closed because, of course, our
2 schools were consolidated two years ago. We have
3 two classes left.

4 And I heard Barbara Byrd-Bennett last
5 night on that issue with Craig Dellimore on WBBM
6 here, and she says that the space utilization is
7 like their number one thing.

8 However, we do have what's known as
9 Community Action Council. We also have other
10 community organizations that have a stake, myself
11 included, with other organizations who help to
12 build a brand new school, the new South Shore
13 International College Prep which sits a block away
14 from the old school where we are.

15 We are very concerned that we are not
16 going to have a voice in what goes into this
17 building that has already been refurbished. So I
18 think it would be cost prohibitive at this point
19 with so many capital improvements over the last two
20 years that they would tear that building down.

21 So that's my first comment is that we must
22 have a community process that helps to gather input
23 as to what the community would like to see happen
24 and not just our school that's going to be empty in

1 two years. Well, it probably won't be empty. I'm
2 sure they'll probably find a charter school. That
3 was a facetious comments. I'm sorry.

4 We have to find a way that the community
5 at the beginning, not at the end when the students
6 have all left and graduated or when the next wave
7 of new administrators come in to put a new school
8 in there and say, okay, well, this is what you're
9 going to get.

10 You know, we have lots of community
11 organizations, and I want to specifically tout the
12 Local School Councils. I have not heard anyone on
13 this panel, anyone, even Barbara Byrd-Bennett, talk
14 about how important it is with Local School
15 Councils to learn their budget, monitor their
16 budget and what you're going to do to help
17 facilitate that learning process.

18 Because right now, not just with you -- we
19 can't blame you because, of course, you're new, we
20 can't have any animosity towards you -- but your
21 predecessors, I hate to say it, they sucked. No
22 one has reached out to an elected group, the Local
23 School Councils, to help them to learn what they're
24 supposed to learn about their school budgets and to

1 properly make decisions about what they want in
2 their schools, either individually or collectively
3 as a community.

4 And I think that if you want to take
5 something back -- and I'll put this actually in
6 writing on your Web site that I see here -- I would
7 like to see you perhaps maybe try to initiate that
8 because it has never been done. We've been asking
9 for years.

10 I have served for 15, 20 years on a Local
11 School Council. I don't have any children. My
12 babies are 26 years old, a set of twins. So I am
13 still working and volunteering in schools and
14 talking to children and working with parents and
15 community members because we have to live in these
16 communities.

17 And when you close schools down or you
18 starve us of resources, we are destabilized. And
19 we are -- when we're destabilized, that leads to a
20 whole slew of -- I could go on and on, but he's got
21 the little sign-up.

22 I just want to say two more things. One,
23 find a person with a pulse at 125 to answer the
24 phones. It's ridiculous and so unfair that the

1 third largest school district, in Chicago, only has
2 a voice mail with very limited options. No options
3 for the general public at all.

4 And then two, when you come to these
5 meetings, could you please bring copies of these
6 presentations? It's not you again. We can't get
7 upset with you, but I have asked continuously. It
8 is very difficult to sit and listen and absorb and
9 then try to respond to something that you are not
10 providing us a copy of in writing.

11 So if you could pass that on and maybe
12 with your new administration, good luck, you know,
13 and give us the copies.

14 CFO ROGERS: Thank you for your very thoughtful
15 comments. I appreciate it. Are there any other
16 questions? Yes, sir?

17 MR. MINTER: I am a member of the community --
18 Jerry Minter -- and former teacher and I am a
19 guardian for a girl who's in a charter school.

20 And so my first question is, under
21 Ron Huberman and under Arne Duncan, we're
22 \$500 million in debt, the Board of Ed. And so I
23 apologize. I got here late. How much in debt are
24 we now compared to that time?

1 CFO ROGERS: Well, I can answer that directly.
2 That is -- sorry you missed the first part.

3 This meeting is really about assuring our
4 budget is balanced and it will be for the year
5 2013. We made adjustments to it. This was really
6 a meeting about an amended budget, and we have a
7 balanced budget for 2013.

8 We've not finalized our 2014 budget yet.
9 There are significant challenges in it that we know
10 we'll have to face, and we're working on that and
11 will be particularly over the next several months.

12 MR. MINTER: As a former teacher, I know that
13 many of the capital improvements were done on the
14 south side first and then done on the north side
15 second and then done on the west side Hispanic
16 community third, were done because there was
17 significant borrowing from the Teachers Pension
18 Fund by the Board and it took a long time to get
19 it. So I guess that may have caused some of the
20 problems with the budget being out of balance.

21 Is the budget being balanced because of
22 the TIF money that's being utilized? Because I
23 know some people in the groups are requesting or
24 saying they were going to demand that you consider

1 it.

2 CFO ROGERS: We do have -- we do certainly
3 utilize TIF funds to a great extent. We also --
4 just to be clear on what I said, we also utilize
5 debt. Of course, we issue debt in the form of
6 bonds as any public institution does, and you might
7 call that borrowing that we do to fund capital
8 improvements and other aspects of our program.

9 But in terms of revenue and expense, were
10 in balance for 2013, and that's -- we'll be
11 striving to keep it that way going forward. Thank
12 you for your comments.

13 MR. MINTER: And then under -- the man who
14 mentioned here earlier, when we open up a new
15 charter school, there's a significant amount of
16 investment; but, in contrast, I found out that in
17 some charter schools, there's a group in the
18 charter schools that are saying that the per capita
19 amount spent per child is around \$6,000 per year in
20 a charter school as compared with those in the
21 Chicago Public Schools that are around at 12 to
22 \$15,000 per child.

23 I don't know if you have those numbers
24 available or if you could remember or if somebody

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1 on your team remembers it. Can you clarify that?

2 CFO ROGERS: I can't clarify it in anything
3 other than in a general way. As you can appreciate
4 with a district the size of ours, there are
5 variations from school to school, but we would have
6 to look at each specific school to look at that.

7 But I feel confident in saying that we're
8 not over funding -- not over funding charter
9 schools at the expense of neighborhood schools and
10 the rest of the public school district.

11 MR. MITNER: I said it was the reverse.

12 CFO ROGERS: I know what you said. I can't
13 specifically cite the dollar difference frankly.

14 MR. MITNER: Sometimes I misspeak. Excuse me.

15 CFO ROGERS: You were very clear all the way
16 through. Yes, ma'am?

17 MS. BURGE: I would just like to echo the
18 comments that someone made earlier about my concern
19 about people being concerned about money and not
20 the safety of our children.

21 So as you close schools based on seats,
22 I'm very concerned that our children are going to
23 be moved into different schools where there's going
24 to be conflict with them getting back and forth to

1 school, and I want to make sure that it's on the
2 record that we are concerned about the safety of
3 our children and our children being able to come
4 and go and be safe.

5 And as a parent of a CPS student, I don't
6 want to get anymore of those calls that it is not
7 safe for me to come home, someone needs to come and
8 get me. My daughter was also in a school where she
9 was volunteering after she graduated, and there was
10 a shooting outside of the school and the young
11 people inside of the school were being treated very
12 badly by the Chicago Police.

13 So there are a lot of concerns that I have
14 about safety and a lot of concerns that I have
15 about how our children are being treated and that
16 there is more to this issue than just the bottom
17 line. My name is Dorothy Burge, B-u-r-g-e.

18 CFO ROGERS: Are there any other questions? We
19 have a process, you can appreciate, for running
20 meetings that call for submitting your questions in
21 advance, but you're here. I would like to hear
22 your thoughts. Is there any other comments? I
23 believe you had your hand up.

24 MS. HARRIS: I had a question. I'm a retired

1 special ed early childhood teacher, and I'm
2 concerned that when I left that the services were
3 being taken out, the speech therapy, the PT. All
4 those services were being taken out and the
5 children were not getting their services. And that
6 comes from the federal government, and that's
7 supposed to come down to the states.

8 When I was leaving, they were getting rid
9 of all of the people who were supposed to be
10 servicing these kids. And they need help. And
11 they have a right to have it just like all of the
12 children need the right to have the same services,
13 be it public schools or the charter schools. The
14 tax dollars we pay is paying for these kids to go
15 to school and be educated and not be taken and --
16 you need your senior teachers in there because some
17 of these teachers don't know how to teach. They
18 don't know the learning style of these children.
19 They run and they get scared. Oh, I'm afraid.

20 In order to talk to the African-American
21 children, you need to know how to talk, not run.

22 CFO ROGERS: Thank you for your comment.

23 MS. HARRIS: I also work on the LSC at Ellis
24 School.

1 CFO ROGERS: Are there any other questions that
2 we can answer?

3 MS. NICOL SWEAT: I had one more question
4 about --

5 CFO ROGERS: How about this lady who has not
6 had a chance to speak?

7 MS. WALSH: Marion Walsh. I have a question as
8 it regards the \$12 million. You said that it went
9 towards (inaudible) and nonteaching positions or
10 delay or cancelling some positions that weren't
11 already taken, and then you said other budget
12 items.

13 Now you got \$12 million. I think "other"
14 needs to be a line item explained because "other"
15 and 12 million, to me, they don't go together. Is
16 there some line item accounting that we could have
17 access to that would explain "other"? Because
18 "other" and 12, that's a big number to just put an
19 umbrella under.

20 CFO ROGERS: As I mentioned, that was a
21 combination of delays and hires or not hiring at
22 all for people, largely administrative positions
23 and a whole host of different areas that not all of
24 which are identified yet but we're looking at to

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1 save money across the school district.

2 And I can tell you this, that we go
3 through everyone's budgets and do so on a monthly
4 basis in excruciating detail, and it's one that's
5 designed to make sure that we're not wasting.

6 If there's any way to do things more
7 efficient or cut that's not absolutely necessary,
8 we'll do that because our full intention is to
9 spend as much money as we have in our budgets
10 through grants and allocations that we get from the
11 federal government, property tax, and state
12 government and so on, to spend as much as we
13 possibly can on education and not spend it in
14 anything other than that.

15 And we scrutinize every budget in great
16 detail. We have a very large budget. And it's
17 where we go through and try to identify
18 opportunities such as I mentioned. It often
19 encompasses numerous items, hundreds of items that
20 we've decided not to pursue.

21 I believe we have time for one more
22 question.

23 MS. NICOL SWEAT: It's in reference to the
24 reading labs and math labs that they used to have

1 in the schools. Reading and math, I believe it was
2 Title I money or whatever budget, and all of the
3 schools had this to assist students, teachers with
4 students who had problems in meeting the standards
5 of whatever. So we don't have those anymore.

6 So my question, if you could go back and
7 ask or you can all look at this. We need these
8 labs back because that has now been put on the
9 classroom teacher in all of the subjects at this
10 point. When you used to have that --

11 MS. ROBINSON: When the gap closed.

12 CFO ROGERS: I can comment on that. I don't
13 know the specific situation you're talking about,
14 but I can tell you, I know of no discussion that I
15 have ever heard in terms of cutting back on special
16 education requirements. We get grants. We're
17 obligated to spend those grants for what they were
18 intended for. And we spend as appropriate, as we
19 should, significant amount of money across the
20 district on special ed requirements which is very
21 appropriate. We should do that and we'll continue
22 doing it. I don't know the specific situation
23 you're talking about.

24 MS. NICOL SWEAT: I'm talking in general.

1 CFO ROGERS: Across the district I'm
2 convinced --

3 MS. NICOL SWEAT: This is special ed. I'm
4 talking about the regular population. Students had
5 reading labs, math labs to assist the students who
6 were --

7 CFO ROGERS: I can't comment on the specific
8 situation other than to say that we do spend
9 significant amount of money on all forms of
10 education as much as we can. Yes.

11 A VOICE: I was going to address her concern.
12 Basically we provided reading and math specialists
13 out to the schools under Title I grants. Those
14 funds have been liquidated and those funds have
15 been pushed out to the schools for them to, if they
16 need to, they can actually purchase those reading
17 teachers or those reading specialists inside of
18 their schools.

19 So basically we gave the schools an option
20 by pushing additional funds out to them under
21 Title I. If they wanted to continue with the
22 reading specialists and the math specialists,
23 they'll pull out services for those children.

24 CFO ROGERS: We have time for one more

1 question. I believe you had a question. Yes,
2 ma'am?

3 A VOICE: Two questions, real short. The
4 amended budget, when do you anticipate this to be
5 approved? When does this have to be approved?
6 One.

7 Two, will the information, detailed
8 information of how the spending of like the
9 70 million of the properties that you plan on
10 selling or -- will all of that information be
11 detailed and given to the general public before
12 this budget is approved?

13 CFO ROGERS: The answer to your question, the
14 budget will be approved or at least presented to
15 our Board of Education on the 14th of this month.
16 It is our intention, as it always is, all our
17 information is subject to full disclosure, and we
18 present our information on a frequent basis through
19 the Web site and other forums.

20 There may be something that I would have
21 to comment on relative to selling of the property.
22 There may be a reason for reasons of wanting to
23 make sure we get the best price and sell it
24 appropriately and so on. That means we wouldn't

1 disclose everything right at the beginning. I
2 don't know the answer to that for sure.

3 But, generally speaking, it's our
4 intention to have full disclosure as we're
5 obligated to do.

6 A VOICE: After the fact? Because this here,
7 what we're seeing here is just so general. I mean,
8 anybody could put some numbers up there. I mean,
9 we need to see the detail.

10 CFO ROGERS: You'll see the detail after -- in
11 the case of property, you'll be able to see what
12 properties we sold.

13 A VOICE: After? So we have no say until
14 after?

15 MS. REGGS: I just want to quickly say, there
16 was a school that was consolidated, and then an
17 education task force found out that the school was
18 in -- that the Board was in noncompliance.

19 So what are you going to do about those
20 schools that illegally took on actions and removed
21 students from schools? And that's the part of the
22 budget because that school is consolidated. Price
23 Elementary School kids are traveling to NTA and
24 just like you're doing with other schools.

1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
2) SS:
3 COUNTY OF W I L L)

4
5 ANNA M. MORALES, as an Officer of the
6 Court, says that she is a shorthand reporter doing
7 business in the State of Illinois; 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.

13 IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF: I have hereunto set
14 my verified digital signature this 8th day of
15 November, 2012.

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Illinois Certified Shorthand Reporter

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