

1 CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2 PUBLIC HEARING

3 FISCAL YEAR 2016 BUDGET PRESENTATION

4 held on

5 Tuesday, August 18, 2015

6
7 STENOGRAPHIC REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had in
8 the above-entitled matter at Schurz High School,
9 3601 North Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, Illinois,
10 commencing at 6 o'clock p.m.

11
12 PRESENT:

13 MR. TIM CAWLEY, Presenter, Chief Administrator
14 Officer

15 MS. JENNIE HUANG BENNETT, Facilitator

16 MR. FORREST CLAYPOOL, CEO

17 MS. KATE FOLEY, Diverse Learners

18 MR. PAUL OSLAND, Facilities

19 MR. PHIL SALEMI, Deputy Chief, Network 2

20 MS. ANNA ALVARADO, Network Chief, Network 1

21
22
23 Reported By: Karen Fatigato, CSR

24 License No.: 084-004072



1 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Good evening, my
2 name is Jennie Huang Bennett, and I'm the
3 treasurer of CPS. Welcome to the Chicago Public
4 Schools Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Hearing, and
5 thank you for coming to provide your input to
6 the district. We are joined today by members of
7 the Board of Education, CPS leadership,
8 including CPS CEO Forrest Claypool, subject
9 matter experts in Transportation, Facilities,
10 Diverse Learners and the budget.

11 This meeting is an opportunity for
12 Chicago Public Schools to hear your ideas,
13 priorities and concerns about the budget. The
14 Board is scheduled to vote on August 26th on the
15 budget proposal presented here tonight.

16 We have Spanish language translators
17 available. Can you raise your hands? Great.
18 We'll allow her to do a quick introduction in
19 Spanish.

20 THE INTERPRETER: Thank you very much.
21 We're going to be sitting in that area. So if
22 you hear us please bear with us, we're providing
23 services for the Spanish speakers. Thank you.

24 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Thank you. We also



1 have sign language interpreters who are here to
2 my right. I'm going to let them do a quick
3 introduction as well.

4 Many of you signed up to ask questions
5 already, and we want to get to you as quickly as
6 possible. If the slots are full, please fill
7 out a card and one of the floor monitors will
8 get it from you, and we will follow up on all
9 the questions on our website. Some of you will
10 also have detailed questions that we might not
11 be able to answer tonight, but we will post all
12 the answers to your questions on our website.

13 I want to go over a few guidelines for
14 this meeting before we give a very brief
15 presentation on the budget.

16 The budget hearing will begin at 6 p.m.
17 and end promptly at 8:00 p.m.

18 All who sign up to speak will be given
19 an opportunity to make a statement of up to 2
20 minutes until the meeting is adjourned.

21 Speakers are asked to limit their comments to 2
22 minutes so that everyone that would like to
23 speak will have the opportunity to do so.

24 The sign-up period to speak was from 5



1 to 6 p.m., and each speaker was given a number.
2 No one will be able to sign up to speak after 6
3 p.m.

4 Speakers will be limited to addressing
5 topics related to the budget, as well as the
6 capital plan.

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

15 The full budget proposed is on the CPS
16 website, where you can also provide feedback or
17 leave questions. CPS will respond to all
18 questions on the website, including any that we
19 are unable to address at this meeting. Please
20 visit <http://cps.edu/budget>.

21 Let me introduce the members of our
22 panel.

23 Forrest Claypool, CEO of CPS. Tim
24 Cawley, Chief Administrator Officer. Kate



1 Foley, Diverse Learners. Paul Osland,
2 Facilities. Phil Salemi and Alvarado, Network
3 Chiefs.

4 And now let me turn it over -- Denise,
5 I'm sorry, Denise Little. Thank you.

6 Now, let me turn it over to Forrest
7 Claypool to provide a welcome.

8 CEO CLAYPOOL: Thank you all for coming
9 out tonight, leaving your homes to participate.
10 And I'd like to acknowledge Alderman Arena,
11 thank you for coming out as well. And I'll turn
12 it over to our Chief Administrator Officer who
13 oversees the budget and give you a quick
14 overview. Tim Cawley.

15 MR. CAWLEY: Thank you, Forrest. And
16 let me reiterate the thanks to all of you for
17 taking time out of your evening to come join us
18 and hear about the budget. I have a very short
19 presentation that provides the overview of the
20 budget, the context of how this budget was
21 developed. As Jennie said, there's a lot of
22 detail on our website, department by department
23 budgets, descriptions of what we do with the
24 funds that we're requesting, and I urge you to



1 go there for a lot of the detail in what we're
2 doing. Next slide please.

3 All of us here and throughout the city
4 have one overriding goal, and that is the
5 success of our students in college, career and
6 life. And we work hard to pursue that goal, and
7 we're very proud of the progress that we've made
8 over the last four years of that. As you can
9 see on these slides, we've made great gains in
10 graduation rates, college admittance, attendance
11 rates, test scores throughout the district, and
12 we're so proud of that progress and what it
13 means for the students of the district. But
14 that progress is threatened right now, it's
15 threatened by a very challenging fiscal
16 situation with two big anchors, declining State
17 funding and inequity of how pensions are funded
18 in the State of Illinois. And this budget
19 reflects the reality of those anchors. The fact
20 that we have to put together a budget for our
21 students and maintain this progress despite two
22 enormous hurdles.

23 Now, over the coming weeks we're going
24 to be working with our partners in Springfield



1 to overcome those hurdles, to try to get funding
2 back to where it needs to be in the State of
3 Illinois and to address the inequalities of the
4 pension. And this budget relies on the solution
5 to those two hurdles, and I'll talk about that
6 in a moment.

7 But we're encouraged, we're seeing the
8 fact that the Governor, the Speaker of the
9 House, the Senate president are starting to
10 acknowledge the challenges at CPS and the
11 inequalities of our pension situation. We're
12 starting to have real dialogue about solutions
13 that will help us this year and in the future.
14 Next slide please.

15 This slide brings to life the State
16 funding challenge that we have. And let me
17 orient you what you're looking at here. On the
18 left are hundreds of millions of dollars. So
19 here this is \$1.7 billion. The orange bars, the
20 dark orange, the amount of funding that CPS has
21 received from the State of Illinois each year
22 going back to Fiscal '08. And the light orange
23 is a gap in our funding from the State, it's
24 called proration. It means that the State has



1 decided they're not going to fund districts
2 throughout Illinois at the statutory level, the
3 goal that they had set, and so they give every
4 district a little less money. So that's the
5 proration, every district receives less.

6 So I want to make two big observations
7 on this slide. First of all, as you look at the
8 solid orange line, notice that we are receiving
9 about \$250 million less in our Fiscal '16
10 budget, 250 million less than we did as recently
11 as Fiscal Year 2009. Imagine if we were able to
12 maintain that same level of funding and what
13 we'd be able to do for all of our schools. And
14 then as you see that decline, look at just the
15 last two years alone, over a hundred million
16 dollars dropped just from Fiscal '15 to Fiscal
17 '16.

18 The second big observation is all of
19 that light orange that's how much the State has
20 underfunded education and how it affects CPS
21 each and every day over the past five years.
22 And the cumulative shortfall of each of those
23 underfundings is over \$500 million, over a
24 thousand dollars for every student in the



1 district.

2 So it's clear from looking at this that
3 the State of Illinois has not gotten the job
4 done funding education for our students, for
5 your students, and this is the first big
6 challenge that we face in this budget. Next
7 slight please.

8 The next challenge is even bigger.

9 This slide -- again, let me show you, this is
10 hundreds of millions of dollars in the years
11 across the bottom. This slide shows our pension
12 expenditures every year. And as you can see
13 back in 2005 when the pension was over 90
14 percent funded the State contributed in the dark
15 purple down here about \$65 million into the
16 Teacher's Pension Fund. And the district didn't
17 have to contribute anything, again because the
18 funding was -- the pension was fully funded.

19 But now as you go forward you could see that the
20 district was required to make a contribution and
21 that's the light purple on this graph. In the
22 beginning it started off \$37 million and it
23 gradually went up, meanwhile the State continued
24 to make a contribution of around \$75 million.



1 After the crash of 2008 the pension fund lost
2 over a third of its value, and so that's when
3 our costs started going up very, very quickly.
4 And what we see in the middle there from 2011 to
5 2013, that was when Springfield said, time out,
6 we're not going to make CPS make these enormous
7 payments, we're going to figure this out because
8 the district can't possibly maintain its
9 progress and do the right thing for students if
10 it's making such big pension payments. So they
11 gave us three years to find a solution.

12 Unfortunately, no solution came, and as you can
13 see in Fiscal '14 we made a payment of over \$600
14 million. And again in Fiscal '15 the payment we
15 just made on June 30th over \$600 million. So in
16 the last two years CPS paid \$1.2 billion in the
17 Teacher Pension Fund. That's \$3,000 per pupil.

18 So we are seeing an enormous amount of
19 money come out of the system to go to pension.
20 And that's not because we believe the teachers
21 don't deserve their pension, we know we have to
22 fund that. We have an obligation and we want
23 our teachers to receive their pension. This
24 obligation makes it very challenging for us to



1 put the budget together. And look at the dark
2 purple down at the bottom, it dropped from \$75
3 million, again, that's the State's contribution,
4 to 11 million, popped up a little bit this past
5 year to 62 and it's right back down to \$12
6 million in Fiscal '16. And so what does that
7 mean for us? Let's go to the next slide.

8 In the State of Illinois the State pays
9 for teacher's pensions in every single district
10 in the state except Chicago. So throughout the
11 state of Illinois in every district except
12 Chicago the State is contributing over \$2,000
13 per pupil to support the Teacher Retirement
14 system as it's called outside of Chicago. And
15 that \$12 million you saw in the previous slide
16 translates to just \$31 per pupil for the City of
17 Chicago. Make no mistake, your income taxes as
18 residents of Illinois are going to pay teacher
19 pensions throughout the state. And your
20 property taxes in Chicago are going to pay that
21 contribution that CPS is contributing every
22 year. So residents of Chicago are being hit
23 twice, and this is the pension inequity, this
24 huge gap that we talk about so often. And



1 hopefully you understand how we are challenged
2 to put together a budget that we believe in when
3 we have these hurdles. Next slide please.

4 Let me show you how we put this budget
5 together. Our revenues as you can see come from
6 a variety of sources with the biggest one being
7 on the right, property taxes, about \$2.3 million
8 that we receive in two big chunks every year.

9 And then there's State revenue, 1.6 million that
10 we'll receive from the State this year. Some
11 Federal revenue on the top left, 852 million.

12 And then some relatively minor things
13 contributing to the budget, some TIF surpluses,
14 some reserves that we have. But we don't have
15 enough money to run the district the way we want
16 to run it. This big gap, this \$480 million, is
17 the solution that we require from Springfield
18 for this budget to be balanced.

19 An alternative to doing the budget this
20 way would be to cut expenses out of our schools
21 by \$480 million, devastating cuts that would
22 undermine all of the progress we've made over
23 the last four years. So rather than make those
24 cuts, we said that we're going to bet on our



1 partners in Springfield that they will come
2 together to fill that gap for us because if they
3 don't we have no alternative but make additional
4 cuts and do more unsustainable borrowing to
5 close that gap, and that is not the path to
6 success for CPS. So that's why we are working
7 so hard in Springfield to come up with a
8 solution there. Next slide please.

9 Now, today we focus a lot on our
10 operating budget, a lot of this talk about how
11 we're creating the funds to operate our schools
12 and to run the programs that have gotten those
13 student outcomes we talked about earlier. But
14 the budget that we're proposing actually is the
15 capital budget, our debt budget and the
16 operating budget, so let me briefly address what
17 we're doing in capital. And it reflects the
18 same grim realities of the district.

19 As you can see in the past few years
20 we've spent anywhere from 400 to \$500 million a
21 year to shore up our buildings. I actually
22 smiled when I walked in here, this new paint on
23 the wall here, we had the LSC budget briefing in
24 here a month ago and there was water damage on



1 the wall of the auditorium. So I took a picture
2 of it and I was happy to see that it's been
3 fixed. But we have buildings throughout the
4 district that have water damage that have needs
5 like this auditorium, this beautiful auditorium
6 at Schurz High School, and we have invested in
7 those every year and that's what we've been
8 doing the last few years, but we don't have the
9 funds to keep spending at that level anymore.
10 So the capital budget that we submitted is only
11 \$177 million, and of that almost a third of it
12 comes from other money from TIF funds and other
13 sources that allow us to do additional projects
14 so that we don't have to issue bonds.

15 Now, this isn't the capital budget any
16 of us want. Your schools almost certainly need
17 a new play lot, repairs to the auditorium, new
18 computer labs, but we simply don't have the
19 funds to invest in our capital plans the way we
20 want to in the buildings, the beautiful
21 structures, the programs that help our district
22 grow. So we have a very austere capital budget
23 in Fiscal '16. And, in fact, we have to project
24 what we're doing over the next four years, and



1 as you can see it doesn't get any better because
2 we don't have a mind of sight to additional
3 resources that will allow us to invest in our
4 abilities any better than this.

5 So in closing, we've got some enormous
6 challenges here. The district has worked hard
7 to put together a budget that we believe in,
8 that we know that our partners will help us
9 deliver on and it will do the right thing for
10 your students throughout the City of Chicago.
11 This is our reality. This is what we deal with
12 every day, lower State funding and pension
13 inequity. And we've made a tough decision here,
14 we've said we're going to bet on Springfield to
15 keep dollars in the classroom, to keep teachers
16 and teachers aides and phys ed and all of the
17 programs that make our schools great, continuing
18 to move forward.

19 As I said, we're encouraged that
20 there's dialogue now in Springfield, and we're
21 right at the table with our leaders to try and
22 come up with a solution and we want you to
23 support us as we go forward in this. We know
24 that this is a partnership between the



1 leadership of the district, the legislative
2 leaders in Springfield, the mayor, the parents,
3 the community leaders, and we're confident with
4 all of us pulling together we can continue that
5 progress that we're so proud of. Thank you very
6 much. And now we welcome your comments and
7 questions about the Fiscal '16 budget that's
8 been presented.

9 MS. HUANG BENNETT: So now we're going
10 to begin the public comment portion of the
11 meeting. I understand that John Arena, Alderman
12 of the 45th ward, is here to make comments.

13 ALDERMAN ARENA: Good evening.
14 Mr. Claypool, thank you for being here, it means
15 a lot and it sends a very heartening message
16 that you're hearing from us directly. I know
17 you have a great challenge, you've done a lot of
18 hard work in this city and the county, so I want
19 to say thank you for taking the time to be here,
20 it means a lot.

21 welcome to the 45th ward. Schurz High
22 School came into the 45th ward under the remap,
23 and it's my district school. I think that as
24 was talked about, this beautiful building that's



1 a landmark has, for me, a lot of great potential
2 that I see within CPS, and I think it could be a
3 model for CPS's success in the future. And I
4 say that because it's a school that's been
5 through an awful lot. It's been through ups and
6 downs like many neighborhood schools have, and
7 it offers, and should offer, classroom space and
8 education opportunities for kids as far east as
9 Western Avenue, far south from here, far north.
10 It covers an awful lot of ground, an awful lot
11 of economic range in terms of households and
12 types of students and where they come from and
13 what their backgrounds are. This could be the
14 melting pot school that really brings CPS to be
15 a network school that can have a lot of success.

16 But the challenge is getting people in
17 the neighborhood that's right here just across
18 Waveland Avenue to see this school as their
19 neighborhood school. And I hear that from them
20 in Old Irving Park when I was campaigning. And
21 I see new families moving into the neighborhood,
22 and you have the older class of kids who have
23 gone through -- either gone through CPS or
24 public schools and have moved on or have watched



1 their neighbors move out of the city because
2 they didn't have trust in their high school.
3 They didn't have trust in CPS. But what those
4 families, those young families are asking me is,
5 what do we need to do to make Schurz High School
6 our school?

7 And what's heartening to me is they've
8 come together and started The Friends of Schurz
9 High School. Those meetings are happening in
10 the coming weeks, there's going to be kind of a
11 kick-off meeting for that. And I think that is
12 the first and foremost thing we need to do is to
13 build on that kind of attitude that exists in
14 our population that says we want you here, we
15 can build together a school and a network that
16 you can trust that's going to be there for you.
17 But we can start that but we won't be able to
18 sustain it if we don't gain that trust and hold
19 that trust.

20 And I want to make a particular example
21 on top of a couple of other things I want to ask
22 you. But right here at Schurz we partnered
23 with, my office and some local residents in the
24 old Irving Park community and business owners,



1 partnered to start a hydroponics program here,
2 an aquaponics/hydroponics program. This was
3 brought to us by a resident. We introduced them
4 to the principal, Dan Kramer, who was incredibly
5 receptive. He's done an awful lot of outreach
6 to the community to make this happen. And what
7 I heard the other day, we've been working on
8 this for a better part of the year, and the
9 budget cuts that this school is faced with
10 threatened the ability for the school to have
11 staff that can help support that program. And
12 so I look at this as we are developing a
13 partnership with the community to bring an
14 opportunity, a learning opportunity, that would
15 make the entirety of the school in doing well.
16 They have robotics. They have automotive. They
17 have finance. I see this being an opportunity
18 for kids to come together from all different
19 levels, all different age ranges within the
20 school, from different economic background, and
21 the budget comes out and we don't know if we can
22 afford continuing or even get it off the ground.

23 So that's why -- you know, that's the
24 example of the trust. If we bring them to the



1 table, set them up, say we can do this and then
2 we pull the rug out because of our financial
3 situation, I can't -- it's very hard for me to
4 ask them to come back. So I wanted to talk
5 about that because we're in the room, we're here
6 at Schurz, and that's a real repercussion of
7 what's going on with our budget situation.

8 I have another school in my ward, Beard
9 school, just on the other side of Nagle Avenue
10 west of here, it's a special needs school up
11 till 3rd grade. And I've been there and I've
12 been through the classroom and seen the kids and
13 see what the teachers do for these kids, and
14 these are severe profound students. And when
15 their budget was cut severely this time around,
16 what I'm hearing from them is that the per pupil
17 funding model seems to have to have some
18 strategy or nuance put to it. It feels like
19 that every classroom and every student is being
20 painted with the same brush. So when they tell
21 me they have two teachers in a classroom because
22 of the support network that these students need
23 and CPS is saying you're only getting one
24 teacher in that classroom, we cannot expect that



1 classroom to function the same way a classroom
2 in a traditional school, neighborhood school,
3 functions because those students need those
4 support services.

5 And I've testified in front of the
6 Board of Education and asked for nurses to be
7 brought to that school, and they responded. But
8 not every school has that opportunity to be
9 petitioned for a particular thing they need on a
10 one off basis. So I ask you to look at the
11 model of per pupil funding and create more
12 nuances, and if it exists then explain it to me
13 and show me how it's working because I'm not
14 seeing it.

15 The other example of a school not in
16 the 45th ward but my kids' school for my
17 household is Portage Elementary. About half of
18 the students come from the 45th ward, 38th ward,
19 36th ward, and again, a school that was very
20 hard hit by this per pupil funding model. And
21 every year that that model has been in place
22 they have seen \$800,000, \$900,000 as being in
23 cuts. And then the whole policy was really kind
24 of kicking back in, getting the money back in.



1 So they survived for the last couple of years
2 but now this policy is gone and they're facing
3 \$900,000 in cuts this year. And the population
4 of that school, a high percentage talking to the
5 principal and this has been the case as far back
6 as when we were looking at it for my family, is
7 that there's a high percentage of English as a
8 second language students in that school. And so
9 they have to divert resources that might be used
10 differently in other schools to helping those
11 students that have to catch up on the language
12 side in order to be competitive in the math
13 classroom, to be competitive in reading, to be
14 competitive in writing.

15 So again, I think that the per pupil
16 model works as a blanket policy but has the
17 nuance to a particular school's situation, a
18 particular school's special circumstances. And
19 I know that's difficult in a system of 400-plus
20 schools, but I think that you're -- without
21 looking at that you are hurting some schools
22 exponentially versus some schools that have the
23 ability to weather these cuts like Bell
24 Elementary or Cooley that are in neighborhoods



1 that their friends routinely generate a quarter
2 of a million dollars to help support their
3 program. This school has trouble raising money
4 because of the economics of the population that
5 goes here. Their friends are not -- they're
6 raising tens of thousands of dollars, if that,
7 versus hundreds of thousands of dollars.

8 So again, we have an inequity in these
9 schools, and some schools are able to take the
10 hit and some are not. And I think per pupil
11 funding because of the very hard cuts hurts some
12 schools disproportionately than others. And I
13 can't speak to what happens in other lower
14 income neighborhoods. I'm solid middle class,
15 we have a good employment rate. I know by
16 talking to my colleagues on the City Council,
17 you have this problem that is exponentially
18 harder hit in other neighborhoods.

19 The other thing I want to bring up and
20 really what was presented here, Mr. Claypool,
21 this might be to you, and I don't know if
22 there's an answer here, but I've read that
23 there's no plan B if the State doesn't go along
24 with this idea of the pension subsidies and



1 creating that end. I think you're absolutely
2 right, this has been something that's been
3 talked about for years, if not longer, about how
4 the school funds pensions in Chicago versus the
5 rest of the State. So the question is not so
6 much what's plan B, is how do we make plan A
7 work? what can I do as a legislator? what can
8 I do as a representative? How can I bring this
9 to my constituents to help carry the message
10 down to Springfield and say we need to ride this
11 part of the ship? So my offer to you is tell us
12 what we need to do, tell us how we can help you
13 fix this big problem, it seems like it's half a
14 billion dollars, if I'm reading the numbers
15 right, in our budget this year and ongoing. So
16 that's my offer to you.

17 The other thing on the credibility side
18 is we are we are expanding our charter school
19 network at the same time we're closing schools,
20 at the same time our neighborhood schools are
21 struggling, and if we can't sustain the system
22 we have now, then why are we adding schools to
23 the system? (Cheering and Applause) I'm going
24 to wrap up in 2 seconds here.



1 In this document that you've handed out
2 the charter schools are locked -- a pie slice
3 that says charter schools, telecom and other
4 services. You want to have credibility at this
5 point, folks, break it out, show us what we're
6 spending on the charter schools, don't label
7 it -- (Cheering and Applause). And then let's
8 have a real conversation about what we're
9 putting in charters versus our neighborhood
10 schools. I ask you that as somebody who
11 routinely is asked that from my constituents and
12 be credible. And when I do that I feel I am
13 more credible by showing them exactly what we
14 are talking about. If we hide from these things
15 we lose credibility on all of the good things
16 we're doing. One hidden item in a budget can
17 really hurt you on the ten other things you were
18 doing right. And I know when I started out by
19 saying we are doing things right, we are doing
20 things right in this building, we are doing
21 things right in schools across this network. So
22 don't shoot yourselves in the foot by being
23 tricky with the budget numbers to what you show
24 on paper.



1 The last I want to say, and this is
2 something I fought for on the City Council, is
3 we are codifying that there be surplus 25
4 percent of TIF moneys going forward. The mayor
5 for hearing the progressive caucus and many
6 other aldermen to do that, to increase that
7 number. I will partner with you, Mr. Claypool,
8 to lobby the mayor to increase that number.
9 Every percentage point that we surplus from the
10 TIF network gets half a percent back to the
11 schools. Right now that surplus it goes out
12 just like it would be a straight dollar paid on
13 a tax bill, so that's 50 percent goes to CPS.
14 There is money in that system to be had to go
15 help with this crisis, 25 percent is a good
16 start, let's finish it by getting it to 50
17 percent, and I will help you and work with you
18 to make that a reality. Thank you. (Cheering
19 and Applause.)

20 MS. HUANG BENNETT: As a reminder each
21 speaker will have 2 minutes. There is a
22 timekeeper here in the front who will indicate
23 the time as it proceeds and notify you when you
24 have 30 seconds left, and then when you have 15



1 seconds left he'll ask you to conclude. When I
2 call your name and speaker number please line up
3 at the microphone. The first five speakers are:
4 Rod Estvan from Access Living. Jerry Skinner.
5 Jennifer Velazquez. Doris Salgado. Maria
6 Teresa Turibio.

7 MR. ESTVAN: We're ready?

8 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Yes.

9 MR. ESTVAN: Rod Estvan from Access
10 Living on the education policy. I've been
11 looking at Chicago Public Schools budgets for
12 nine consecutive years, and for seven years I
13 was a Federal monitor over the special education
14 program over at CPS.

15 I want to start with Tim's \$480 million
16 gap. I would strongly suggest he pursues also a
17 lobbyist for Access Living in Springfield that
18 you begin to implement some of those cuts in
19 October because it's not real down there. And I
20 hate to say it, until they see blood on the
21 floor, there isn't anything real in that
22 capital. So I would suggest if you begin to
23 implement cuts in October and extend it into
24 January, to the extent you should have to cut



1 and can't borrow your way out of it.

2 The next point I'd like to make is that
3 the budget misrepresents the Peka1 (phonetic)
4 law. It doesn't explain that there is a
5 referendum process to go above the cap. And at
6 this point, given the crisis, it has to be
7 considered through the city. We have to look at
8 a referendum.

9 On the special ed cuts. Our count is
10 625 positions lost. We are having real problems
11 understanding how you're going to do that
12 through the Federal law. I suspect you're going
13 to raise positions over the course of the year
14 in costs. This is what has normally happened.
15 This district is what I would call aide
16 dependent in special ed. It has many aides.
17 And the reason it has many aides is we've made
18 it very difficult to hire full special education
19 positions. We've made that process very
20 difficult for principals, and the easiest thing
21 for them to do in this process --

22 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Please wrap up your
23 comments.

24 MR. ESTVAN: I'm sorry. We will be



1 submitting a full report on the 25th, and I will
2 be attending the Board meeting. And I would
3 like to continue this dialogue with you, but
4 there are real problems and I believe you need
5 this referendum to get the attention of the
6 State as a whole that does not believe that the
7 citizens of Chicago support this district.

8 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Thank you for your
9 comments.

10 MR. SKINNER: Hello, I'm Jerry Skinner
11 from Kelvyn Park High School, Kelvyn Park High
12 School, a neighborhood high school, the kind of
13 school that represents public education best.
14 We do not reject any students. We accept any
15 student that walks through our doors. We do not
16 push students out. This should be a value
17 that's practiced by every public school in
18 Chicago, all of Chicago Public Schools, that is
19 not a value that's reflected in this budget,
20 Mr. Claypool.

21 If you take a look at just some of the
22 high schools in this area. Schurz High School
23 suffers a budget cut of \$1 million. My high
24 school, Kelvyn Park High School, suffers a cut



1 of \$1.7 million. What does this mean in the
2 budget for our school? It means that many of
3 the young, new teachers, the staff members who
4 are enthusiastic, energetic have lost their
5 jobs. It means that veteran teachers, some of
6 whom are here, been over 20 years at our school
7 have lost their jobs. Almost 20 people in total
8 at our school. This is not promoting our
9 school, this is not keeping our morale up, but
10 this value -- this budget does not value these
11 people.

12 But who does it promote, this budget.
13 Well, take a look like Intrinsic Charter School,
14 \$2.6 million budget increase. This budget
15 promotes charter school entrepreneurs (Cheering
16 and Applause) who see our students as
17 opportunities for profit.

18 Mr. Claypool, please get this budget
19 back to the value represented by the
20 neighborhood schools who welcome our students,
21 who want to keep our students, who see our
22 students as people striving to achieve their
23 full potential. Thank you.

24 MS. VELAZQUEZ: My name is Jennifer



1 Velazquez, I'm a graduate from Kelvyn Park High
2 School. I now attend Northeastern Illinois
3 University majoring in secondary education. And
4 I'm currently the community representative for
5 Kelvyn Park High School Local School Council.

6 I have dreams of teaching at Kelvyn
7 Park because I, and everyone else in this
8 audience, understands the important role a
9 neighborhood school plays in the community.
10 (Inaudible) are little by little being cut.
11 This is not the first time that I've talked
12 about Kelvyn Park wanting to be a good
13 neighborhood school. No one on this panel would
14 send their child to Kelvyn Park. Your kids need
15 a college career counselor. The school you send
16 your kids to must have a social worker and
17 stable teachers who do not fear to lose their
18 jobs. Why are you setting Kelvyn Park up for
19 failure?

20 We know CPS has the resources to
21 properly fund Kelvyn Park, and we see this in
22 the \$2.4 million plus given to each of the
23 charter schools. Why do they receive an
24 increase? Because we are trying and the



1 students at Kelvyn Park are trying. why is
2 there fundamental components that keep students
3 in school? Tutoring programs, sports, the
4 teachers that keep students in schools. CPS is
5 hanging on by a thread and cannot continue
6 instability. You can't fire teachers and expect
7 students to learn. what is the real message
8 that you're telling us to do? I'm here to ask
9 you for your commitment to Kelvyn Park. Kelvyn
10 Park needs funding and should not get the small
11 end of the stick because of poor positions made
12 by the mayor and CPS. Kelvyn Park is a
13 neighborhood school that has served many
14 generations. Fund us properly --

15 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Jennifer, please
16 conclude.

17 MS. VELAZQUEZ: Let us keep our
18 teachers and staff. Our students need a fair
19 opportunity to have a genuine education. Don't
20 call us underperformed, we are under-resourced.

21 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Thank you for your
22 comments.

23 MS. SALGADO: Hi, my name is Doris
24 Salgado, I recently graduated from Kelvyn Park



1 High School in June. Believe it or not I
2 actually dreaded going to Kelvyn Park my
3 freshman year due to the bad reputation it had,
4 but I would have never left Kelvyn Park. Kelvyn
5 Park helped motivate me and to continue on to
6 college. I went to a public neighborhood school
7 and now I'm attending UIC the following Monday.
8 I have Kelvyn Park to thank for this. But you
9 see, Kelvyn Park doesn't have enough resources
10 to give the necessary education needed.

11 (Inaudible) so are they the only social worker
12 we have at Kelvyn Park. By laying off the only
13 AP certified Spanish teacher KP had, you're not
14 giving the students an opportunity to receive
15 college credit. By laying off the only college
16 counselor at Kelvyn Park High, you're not
17 motivating students to be college bound. By
18 laying off counselors (Inaudible) Kelvyn Park
19 basically leaving Kelvyn Park to fend on their
20 own.

21 The more money you take from us the
22 more difficult you make it for Kelvyn Park to
23 function. The more resources our generally
24 caring staff you take away from us the more



1 difficult you make it for our students who face
2 personal struggles at home. These students are
3 the future and have the potential to succeed
4 just like any other student from charter
5 schools. We just need more financial help.

6 (Inaudible) the majority of the student
7 population not meeting academic standards, but
8 what message are you trying to give these
9 students and the community if you're setting
10 them up to fail? Now, tell me, what are your
11 solutions? (Inaudible)

12 (Whereupon, Ms. Turibio spoke
13 in Spanish and her comments
14 were interpreted.)

15 THE INTERPRETER: I am a mother of a
16 boy who is 9 years old who goes to Barry School
17 and another one who is 2 years old. I, as many
18 other fathers -- parents, are very concerned for
19 the academic future of our kids and for the
20 current situation of the CPS schools. I believe
21 that all kids have the right to have equal
22 education because our kids need programs, after
23 school programs, such as, music, among many
24 others. We hope that -- we are afraid many of



1 these programs will no longer exist in our
2 schools. Music is very important because it's a
3 life to our kids and it keeps them out of the
4 streets. We need education that has high
5 quality and we are to be using that. Thank you.

6 MS. HUANG BENNETT: At this time I'd
7 like to call up speaker 6, Josh Radinsky,
8 speaker 7, Daniel Phelan, Speaker 8, John Casey,
9 speaker 9, Elaine Allen and speaker 10, Audrey
10 James.

11 MR. RADINSKY: Good evening, my name is
12 Josh Radinsky, I'm a father of my three sons who
13 are all CPS students. My middle son, Sammy, is
14 17, about to turn 18. He's a rising senior at
15 Jackie Vaughn High School. Jackie Vaughn is one
16 of the unknown treasures (Cheering and
17 Applause). Jackie Vaughn is a treasure in the
18 CPS system. It's a specialty school serving
19 kids with cognitive disabilities. Sammy has
20 Down Syndrome. And usually I feel that these
21 budget and policy initiatives forget about our
22 kids with special needs, but strangely with this
23 one it seems like our kids with special needs
24 have been targeted by this budget.



1 Jackie Vaughn has 200 kids and lost
2 more positions in our faculty than any other
3 school in the district, that is according to
4 reporting in (Inaudible) magazine. And it seems
5 short-cited to me, unwise and immoral and
6 illegal to try to balance this budget by going
7 after special ed as a way to save money.

8 (Cheering and Applause) These dollars -- our
9 children's IEPs and education plans are
10 Federally mandated contracts to provide services
11 based on what our IEP teams have determined they
12 need. We have fought and fought. Our new
13 principal has stayed up late nights trying to
14 restore this devastating budget. We were lucky
15 to have Dr. Foley out at the school earlier
16 today, we had about 70 parents packed in the
17 auditorium. We need to see the investment in
18 kids with special needs as part of how we
19 survive as a society.

20 There's a moral obligation to protect
21 the people who are the neediest, but there's
22 also a legal obligation. This is not going to
23 save you money, you're going to waste time and
24 energy fighting a lawsuit when you get the



1 avalanche of lawsuits coming down on this. And
2 as Ron Estvan said earlier --

3 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Josh, can you
4 conclude?

5 MR. RADINSKY: Yes, I will. The
6 paraprofessionals are a key piece to the puzzle
7 for serving our kids. (Cheering and Applause)
8 so many of our positions at Vaughn that there is
9 no way we can do this without them being
10 restored. We understand the district is working
11 with us on this, but we need to see an
12 investment of people with special needs as a top
13 priority in this district.

14 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Thank you for your
15 comments, Josh.

16 MR. PHELAN: My name is Danny Phelan.
17 First, I want to thank the Board for coming out
18 here and making all this possible. I also want
19 to thank the staff for arranging everything.
20 I'm not a teacher. I'm not a parent. I'm a
21 tour guide downtown, but I'm a CPS alumni so I
22 feel I have a stake in all of this. And I'm a
23 taxpayer so I want to see what you guys are
24 doing with the money. And I got to say, I don't



1 like it. I don't like what you guys are doing.

2 You said we don't have the funds to
3 keep spending, and I agree with you. So why
4 don't you stop? There's this idea that we're
5 out of money, so why do I keep seeing charter
6 schools getting more money? (Cheering and
7 Applause) And they just built a charter school
8 over on Milwaukee and Central Park. I thought
9 that we were out of education money. What are
10 you doing building it? And isn't it the same
11 charter school where they strip searched one of
12 the students and there's a pending lawsuit.

13 So you say you're not going to be
14 spending. Stop splurging on charters. Tell the
15 mayor to stop offering up my tax dollars. Like
16 it would be one thing if it was somebody I voted
17 for and you guys let me down, but I didn't. In
18 fact, like me and like over 90 percent of the
19 city voted for an elected school board, so this
20 is a 90 percent vote of no confidence.

21 I was talking to my buddies and I was
22 saying nobody wants the Board here and proven
23 your methods are really expensive and negative
24 for the city so this Board is just like Jay



1 Cutler, and just like Jay Cutler you guys --

2 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Please conclude
3 your comments.

4 MR. PHELAN: What's up?

5 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Please conclude
6 your comments?

7 MR. PHELAN: I'm done. Sure thing.

8 MR. CASEY: Good evening, thank you for
9 the opportunity to speak. My name is John
10 Casey, and I'm a proud parent of two CPS
11 students. I'm also an elementary school
12 counselor and special education case manager at
13 Cameron Elementary on the city's west side.
14 Currently close to 70 percent of the elementary
15 school counselors in Chicago are sadly with
16 special education (Inaudible). While it is
17 vitally important, this city demands the
18 necessary tasks to share our diverse learners
19 receive the services they need. As such,
20 schools with large special education case loads
21 are less and less likely to receive the services
22 of professional school counselors, things that
23 we are trained to provide, academic guidance,
24 lessons on college and career opportunities, as



1 well as social/emotional support, group and
2 individual counseling services to address the
3 traumas so many of our students struggle with.

4 I would like to see all of our students
5 have full access to the services and the
6 certified school counselor. Other clinicians,
7 social workers, nurses, upload data on their
8 time and submit it to Medicaid for reimbursement
9 to CPS.

10 My question is has any effort been made
11 to try to explore the possibility to increase
12 the revenue by using our certified school
13 counselors as counselors and then billing
14 Medicaid for services to allow us to meet the
15 needs of our kids more directly? Thank you.

16 MS. ALLEN: My name is Elaine Allen,
17 I'm a teacher. I have a statement and a
18 question.

19 The statement is, to solve the pension
20 problems, take teachers out from under the
21 umbrella of social security offset rule like
22 almost every other state in this nation and you
23 will have teachers that are the education field
24 is a second job instead of a primary. You will



1 have lower pensions like almost every other
2 state in this nation.

3 And my question is, having had the
4 privilege of working in a family company, a
5 large Chicago family company for decades, I know
6 that when you disinvest your money from your
7 company and you take away your valuable
8 employees, your aim is to close down. So what
9 is your agenda? When are you going to entirely
10 take away public education from the children of
11 the City of Chicago, this year, next year or the
12 year after? Thank you.

13 MS. JAMES: Hello, my name is Audrey
14 James, my daughter attends Jackie Vaughn Special
15 Needs High School. At Vaughn our students are
16 taught to step into independence and life for
17 the future in special education classes which
18 they look forward to every year. First in
19 school they're talking about the special
20 olympics.

21 Our teachers and the teacher's aides
22 assistants play vital roles in supervising in
23 the classroom, helping them with their work.
24 They're learning values, their life skill



1 values. They're -- almost 10 percent of our
2 students meet one-on-one. And to downsize our
3 staff like you want to downsize is just like
4 crippling our children even more. Thank you.

5 MS. HUANG BENNETT: At this time I
6 would like to call Maria Patino, Brian Brennan,
7 Nancy Bucha, Pavlyn Jankov and Drew Heiserman.

8 (Whereupon, Ms. Patino spoke
9 in Spanish and her comments
10 were interpreted.)

11 THE INTERPRETER: As a mother of two
12 girls, I am completely indignant with the cut,
13 such a cut that was made to our school, 1.7
14 millions of dollars. And I am concerned with
15 this situation. We lost nine teachers and we
16 lost tutoring programs that were benefitting our
17 kids. I'm asking to help these young kids
18 without the support of the programs and what
19 about the loss of teachers. Are we going to
20 give our kids to the lions and to danger? I'm
21 worried about the lowering of the academic
22 level. And this is not fair to deny them the
23 opportunity to give them high level quality
24 school.



1 My question is, why more money was
2 taken from our school than from other schools?
3 And what is the purpose of these big cuts? As a
4 matter -- mother it makes me think that these
5 cuts has to do with a very racist act and this
6 is because ours is a school where there is a
7 high percentage number of Latin kids.

8 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Thank you.

9 MR. BRENNAN: My name Brian Brennan,
10 I'm from Kelvyn Park High School. From the
11 PowerPoint that was presented, one of the
12 underlying keys seem to be inequity of funding
13 the CPS, and yet when we look at the CPS budget
14 that is simply perpetuated in terms of how the
15 schools are funded themselves. And per pupil
16 funding is a myth based on the budget that
17 you're putting forward.

18 And just to give you an example of
19 that. Bogan is projected to lose 143 students.
20 Their funding was cut \$704,000 or approximately
21 \$4,900 per pupil. KP is projected to lose less
22 students, 125 students, but their budget was cut
23 \$1.65 million. This amounts to approximately
24 \$13,000 per pupil. How do you account for and



1 more importantly how can you rationalize this
2 gross inequity of funding?

3 MR. JANKOV: Pavlyn Jankov, Chicago
4 Teachers Union. So there was some talk about
5 plan B, there being no plan B. I'm unclear what
6 plan A was. You started this budget talking
7 about pension from 2011 to 2014, and there was
8 no sustainable revenue that came into the school
9 district or plan set during that time period and
10 now we have -- I'm going to focus just on one
11 specific cost, direct cost of that lack of a
12 plan A, and that's the district's \$1 million
13 short-term credit line for your cash flow needs
14 that's costing the school district \$24 million
15 right? \$24 million that's not to pay back
16 interest on building schools, it's not to pay
17 back your pension debt, it's not to provide
18 services to students, it's just a penalty for
19 the fact that you haven't managed the finances,
20 you haven't set up the revenue stream,
21 progressive revenue stream, right? And that's a
22 cost because what's happening is that's actually
23 more than the entire raising the property tax to
24 the cap, that's about two thirds of the kids of



1 special education that you're spending on
2 virtually just giving money to the banks.

3 And lastly, Approved Reaction
4 (phonetic) released a report saying there's
5 really no way that the school district can
6 manage its finances without raising a
7 substantial amount of new revenue. So they've
8 been really berating you all, and it's not out
9 of goodness of their hearts, they've been
10 raising interest rates. So you're being
11 penalized not just in short-term but most
12 long-term cost dollars. And throughout all of
13 this it comes to light that this week CPS is
14 supporting a property tax freeze, a two-year
15 property tax freeze with the state legislature
16 that's actually going to penalize you further
17 because now your main revenue source is going to
18 be frozen.

19 Now, we need to move to a sustainable
20 source of revenue that the people that have the
21 money for it, but we can't just borrow and
22 freeze our main revenue source at the same time
23 there's a huge budget hole. We will call on CPS
24 (Cheering and Applause) sets another example to



1 your situation.

2 MS. HUANG BENNETT: At this time I'd
3 like to call up speaker 16, Cindy Ok, speaker
4 17, George Schmidt, speaker 18, Wendy Katten,
5 speaker 19, Tina Padilla and speaker 20, Andrea
6 Redfeairn.

7 MR. HEISERMAN: Hi, my name is Drew
8 Heiserman, I live here in the neighborhood. I
9 have a child who attends Roman Elementary, it's
10 just a little south and east of here, and I also
11 teach down in Englewood. I want to talk today
12 about a question I have about the budget.

13 The budget is -- it sets priorities,
14 and I'm a little curious about the priorities.
15 I want to know -- it doesn't really state here
16 in this pie chart how much do you allocate to
17 legal services? How many lawyers do you employ
18 at CPS? And here's why I ask. Because special
19 ed services have been cut by hundreds of
20 millions of dollars, and this is going to lead
21 to a bunch of lawsuits that have been mentioned
22 by Mr. Estvan and a couple of other speakers
23 already. Parents have children with IEPs and
24 they're not going to be receiving their legally



1 mandated services. wouldn't it be more cost
2 effective to lay off some of these lawyers so
3 that you can provide legal services for our kids
4 that have special needs? It looks to me as a
5 parent of a student that has an IEP that CPS is
6 inviting a class action lawsuit.

7 MS. OK: Hello, my name is Cindy Ok,
8 it's spelled O-k, but I want to tell you that
9 I'm more than okay, I'm actually feeling greatly
10 concerned. I have two children, both of them
11 with disabilities. They are receiving amazing
12 services, and there are some wonderful things
13 that we have received from ODLSS. Once of those
14 last year was the transition 101 to help parents
15 transition their students from high school into
16 adult world.

17 Right now I have two students in high
18 school, and my job is to make taxpayers. And
19 because of the help that my students -- my elder
20 student received from her high school, she had
21 one teacher and two assistants who trained them
22 in work study program, and my daughter was able
23 to get a job this summer. She worked in the
24 park district and she was a taxpayer.



1 Now, her younger sister who is not
2 getting help from aides, their jobs have been
3 cut, the two that were particularly in this
4 program for the work training. I'm concerned
5 because I want my younger daughter to be able to
6 have the same opportunities as her older sister.
7 And I believe that there's a very long end after
8 the age of 21 students who --

9 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Please conclude.

10 MS. BUCHA: -- are going to be using the
11 system for a very long time. Taxpayers are
12 going to be -- are going to have to pay for
13 these students or these adults that don't have
14 jobs. So thank you for this time. Thank you.

15 MR. SCHMIDT: Good evening, my name is
16 George Schmidt, and I've been coming to these
17 budget hearings since most of you -- well, you
18 certainly weren't working for the Chicago Public
19 Schools when I began. The first copy of a CPS
20 budget I have is dated 1979, that's the last
21 time where the city set the school system up for
22 a financial crisis which was going to result in
23 further layoffs.

24 This budget is about as dishonest as



1 anything I've read and that's saying something.
2 And I'll give you just one example from the
3 PowerPoint that was up there because it's on
4 you, Mr. Cawley, as you do these things so
5 often. You had a chart showing the State aid to
6 CPS, but you didn't show local property taxes at
7 all. And I want to know, and I think everybody
8 would ask, why that was left out? Because, and
9 it's interesting, it's possible for CPS to go
10 over the cap to raise local property taxes and
11 that's what we need.

12 For the past five years the Civic
13 Federation has pointed out that those of us who
14 own homes in Chicago as I do are paying the
15 lowest property taxes in the Chicago region. We
16 have to raise property taxes to make it
17 equitable so that we can fund not only our
18 schools but all public services, and to leave
19 that out is pure hypocrisy, it's wrong.

20 As for the stuff that's being addressed
21 tonight, the fact that you increased the law
22 department this year again while paying since
23 last June a million dollars to Lang (phonetic)
24 Law Firm, an outside firm, more than a million



1 dollars to Jim Francis Law Firm, an outside
2 lawyer, but you're cutting more than 600 special
3 ed --

4 MS. HUANG BENNETT: George, please
5 conclude your comments.

6 MR. SCHMIDT: It says 15 seconds.
7 Thank you very much for the interruption.

8 while you are cutting more than 600
9 people out of the schools for special ed just
10 makes it disgusting to even have to sit here and
11 discuss this with you. You don't deserve to be
12 in front of us, let alone drawing salaries as
13 people in the public sector.

14 MS. KATTEN: Good evening, my name is
15 Wendy Katten, and I'm with the parent -- the
16 city-wide parent group called Raise Your Hand.
17 I also want to thank CEO Claypool for being here
18 tonight. I've attended almost every Board
19 meeting for the last five-and-a-half years and
20 I've attended all of these budget hearings, I
21 don't think I've ever seen a CEO come out so
22 thank you.

23 That said, this budget is a tragedy for
24 our most vulnerable students in Chicago. 75



1 district schools lost 10 percent of their
2 budgets. The PGA reported district schools are
3 projected to lose is \$146 million, Kelvyn Park
4 and Vaughn. I just want to mention these other
5 schools that are losing 15 percent of their
6 staff. Julian High School, Gage Park, Carlin,
7 Harper, Fenger, Orr, Robeson Hirsch, Manley,
8 Austin Business and Entrepreneurship and Dunbar.
9 Many others lost over 10 percent. Obviously you
10 should know those are high schools in our
11 communities set by the most violence. We go to
12 Board meetings and we watch the patterns
13 develop. This has to be settled.

14 We support our revenue, we've been in
15 Springfield. But when and if you get more
16 revenue, it has to go into our neighborhood
17 schools. (Cheering and Applause) you have a
18 charter -- you have documented it closely --
19 it's not a conspiracy, we're not detractors as
20 we've been called, we have watched you expand
21 while you take away from children who you know
22 need these supports. And I think to those kids
23 you are telling them you don't believe in them
24 and you've given up on them. You have to put



1 that money back in our schools. (Cheering and
2 Applause)

3 We also felt really analyzing the
4 special education pilot program budgets 84
5 percent of those schools, 84 percent cut special
6 ed positions. We have that information from the
7 CPS budget, we can give it to the press. All
8 means less for most of the students now in
9 special ed. Please be accountable to us, make a
10 decision to stop charter expansion. (Cheering
11 and Applause) talk about revenue, talking about
12 all of these solutions that don't mention
13 revenue. We get the politics. We need to come
14 together to find revenue for the children of
15 Chicago. Thank you. (Cheering and Applause)

16 MS. HUANG BENNETT: At this time
17 speaker 13, Nancy Bucha, and then also Tina
18 Padilla, Andrea Redfeairn, Gregory Redfeairn,
19 Judy Schectman and then Martin Ritter.

20 MS. PADILLA: Hello, my name is Tina
21 Padilla, I'm a teacher at Lane Tech High School.
22 For the record I want to make sure that
23 everybody knows that the teachers are not
24 responsible for the current pension liability.



1 Teachers have paid their portion for their
2 pension contribution out of each and every
3 paycheck. We also know that CPS is legally
4 obligated to pay what is called the normal cost.
5 This is also known as a service cost.

6 I want to make sure that everybody
7 understands that a pension is nothing more than
8 deferred compensation and not paying this
9 obligation is nothing more than wage debt.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. REDFEAIRN: Hi, my name is Andrea
12 Redfeairn, and as a parent and as a special ed
13 teacher I know of all the challenges that budget
14 cuts can do for all of us, teachers, parents and
15 students. My question to you is why are the
16 cuts so disproportional? Why don't all teachers
17 and all students who are under CPS, including
18 charters, get the same resources? I find that
19 appalling. And all I have to say is shame on
20 the State of Illinois and the Board of Ed for
21 thinking that education is anything less than
22 the most important topic in this state.

23 MR. REDFEAIRN: My name Gregory
24 Redfeairn. I won't get into the fact that my



1 grandmother has been in Illinois for 150 years,
2 my family has been in Chicago for 70 years. I'm
3 a CPS graduate. And in spite of the horrible
4 trials I faced as a child, I stand here with a
5 Master's Degree thanks to the wonderful teaching
6 of CPS public schools. So what I want to focus
7 on in particular is where I work at Foreman High
8 school as a math teacher for 15 years. Foreman
9 was a dumping ground for the northwest side and
10 we are now a success story. We are now a
11 success story. By every metric you look at
12 Foreman has improved, dramatically in some
13 cases.

14 These cuts we're looking at 9 percent
15 of our budget, close to a million dollars to be
16 lost, I don't know how many staff exactly, maybe
17 about eight or nine staff we're losing, some of
18 them through just we are not rehiring people.
19 It's going to destroy our school slowly but
20 surely, and yet I look at Intrinsic, which has
21 increases, only a walking distance from my
22 school. Charter school money is going up, my
23 school money is going down. We won't even talk
24 about the fact that my son's school who goes to



1 CPS school also, his school is going down. I'm
2 very disappointed in this budget. Thank you.

3 MS. SCHECTMAN: My name is Judy
4 Schectman, I've been a social worker at CPS for
5 25 years. Under this budget social workers and
6 psychologists will be cut. We have a crisis
7 with our students with mental health. A number
8 of agencies have been closed. Not only are
9 special ed students, IEPs and mental health
10 services going to be cut, but students
11 throughout the system. We have crisis at the
12 school who have the all time abuse, neglect,
13 et cetera, they will not get services. I urge
14 you to increase mental health services for our
15 students. Thank you.

16 MR. RITTER: My name is Martin Ritter,
17 I'm a local school council member at Whitney
18 Young High School and community rep. I was also
19 a former Chicago public school teacher.

20 In this current budget CPS is paying
21 \$300 million in swap termination fees, I know
22 you know what that means, as part of this
23 budget. And have you asked the banks that are
24 currently so close to in repaying for refunding



1 this termination fees. These bankers are
2 getting fat while people at Dyett High School, I
3 know you know about this too, are starving
4 themselves to have a new high school in
5 Bronzeville. They know they have to do a hunger
6 strike to get your attention.

7 Meanwhile at Union League Club or the
8 standard Club or whatever clubs you guys go to
9 to have lunch at, you're meeting with the
10 bankers and talking about -- and we want to
11 know, the 300 million that we're paying fees
12 because you did bad borrowing, when do we get
13 that money back? Because our schools are
14 starving. Hang on, Les. Our special ed kids
15 are starving. Our neighborhood schools are
16 starving. And this is a big problem because you
17 are stewards of a public school system for
18 400,000 kids and thousands of staff members
19 across many different disciplines. We want a
20 better leadership from our school district.

21 The people that have been in charge of
22 the finances of CPS for the last four years,
23 they should be let go. Forrest, you're really
24 good at letting go of people who have made bad



1 choices in public distributions. (Cheering and
2 Applause) They've bankrupted our school system.
3 I mean it makes no sense that they get to keep
4 their positions while you say --

5 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Martin, please
6 conclude.

7 MR. RITTER: You need to find revenue.
8 You need to partner with whoever you have to
9 partner with and put money into our schools and
10 you cannot be credible unless you've stopped
11 charter school expansion now while your
12 neighborhood schools are starving. (Cheering
13 and Applause) there's words I can say. Don't do
14 that anymore. Thank you.

15 MS. HUANG BENNETT: That concludes the
16 list of speakers that signed up at the beginning
17 of this meeting. I just wanted to say thank you
18 so much to everybody for taking the time and
19 coming to share your comments and thoughts, we
20 appreciate the passion that you have for the
21 school district and we will look forward to
22 hearing more from you.

23 If you have any comments we have cards
24 that you can submit comments to on the website



1 and we'll also post answers to those comments
2 and questions on the website as well.

3 At this point this concludes our public
4 hearing and we thank you for coming.

5 MR. SHARKEY: The person who signed me
6 up said that I can have a brief comment if
7 there's time.

8 CEO CLAYPOOL: Go ahead.

9 MR. SHARKEY: My name is Jesse Sharkey,
10 I'm the Vice President of the CTU. I was going
11 to ask a question which was, if this is not a
12 balanced budget, which it isn't, how is it that
13 we can propose a budget which relies on Governor
14 Rauner, on Governor Rauner, to provide new
15 revenue and a pension holiday in order to avoid
16 laying off perhaps five or 7,000 teachers?

17 I was going to ask what are those
18 teachers who will likely be laid off in December
19 or January going to do for the rest of the
20 school year? If you lay us off now we have to
21 find work elsewhere, but if you lay us off
22 halfway through the school year we're without
23 livelihoods.

24 I was going to ask if a lack of revenue



1 is the problem, what new revenue is the
2 leadership to the Board of Education or the
3 political leadership of this city advocating
4 for? Because I haven't heard one new source of
5 revenue that's been called for by the appointed
6 leadership of the Board.

7 I was going to ask why the one-year
8 contract was pulled from the table? I still
9 don't understand.

10 But really I think I just want to say
11 this one thing, maybe this isn't a question. I
12 need you to understand the depth of anger among
13 teachers and parents and staff in this city.
14 And that we will not see the schools be bled
15 dry, special education students be cut,
16 elementary school sports eliminated behind the
17 city's administration which consistently chose
18 that its priorities are defending the wealthiest
19 in the city. We will not stand by while our
20 schools are closed, our communities are bled
21 dry. We will fight that and not just -- that's
22 my promise, that this is not the CTA, this is
23 not the park district, these are the public
24 schools. We have well-organized parents and



1 community leaders and educators. And that's a
2 promise for us. I hope that we can resolve this
3 amicably, but if we can't there's going to be a
4 real show of conflict in this city. Thank you.

5 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Thank you,
6 everyone, for coming and that concludes our
7 hearing.

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

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