CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PUBLIC HEARING
FY 2013 AMENDMENT BUDGET HEARING PROCESS
held on
Monday, November 5, 2012

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

PRESENT:

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

Reported By:  Karen Fatigato, CSR
License No.:  084-004072
MS. RODRIGUEZ: Good evening and welcome to the FY 2013 Amended Budget Hearing Process at Walter Payton College Prep High School. My name is Melanie Rodriguez, and I'm a compliance analyst with the Budget and Grants Office. This evening we have Ginger Ostro, Budget and Grants Officer, and Dana Brink, Budget Manager.

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

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

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

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

Please note that no one will be able to sign up to speak after 6:30 p.m.
Speakers will be limited to addressing topics related to the budget. Speakers are asked to limit their comments to two minutes so that everyone that would like to speak will have an opportunity to do so.

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

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

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

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

Ginger.

MS. OSTRO: Hi, thank you very much. I'm Ginger Ostro, I'm the Budget and Grants Officer.

We have just a very short presentation
for you this evening that explains a little bit about the amended FY 13 budget and why we're here this evening.

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

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

Throughout this process we'll take down
your feedback and present the information that you've shared this evening, as well as the specific transcript from tonight with the Board prior to their acting on this budget at the November 14th meeting.

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

So how are we going to cover these new costs in the budget? Well, essentially it's $70 million of additional revenue that you'll
see and $33 million in cuts or savings. So where are those coming from? So the first area that you see is in Operations, about $21 million. Here we'll see about $11 million of savings from improved food service revenue. We get reimbursement from the Federal Government when we serve meals, as well as reductions and expenses there.

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

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

And finally we'll see about $70 million of changes on the financial side through things we're doing with sale and surplus property as well as adjustments in our bond portfolio.
So first let me walk you through those. First, we issued bonds back in August, and while we had anticipated issuing those bonds we budgeted about $13 million to pay the interest cost during this fiscal year. Instead, we did what's called capitalizing interest or borrowed a little bit of extra money to pay the cost of bonds in this fiscal year which freed up the $13 million that we had otherwise budgeted. So that becomes money that's available to us to pay the cost.

Secondly, we anticipate selling about $15 million worth of surplus property. These are empty buildings that are already on the market, and we expect to receive about $15 million this year from those proceeds. And finally, we will either later this year or early next year be refinancing bonds that are maturing this year that will provide about $42 million of additional savings for us. So again this will provide money that will pay for some of the costs of the contract. With these changes and going through this hearing process we anticipate bringing this
budget before the Board in November for them to
act on, and once we do that then we can go ahead
and execute all of the changes that are
reflected here.

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

MS. RODRIGUEZ: At this time I would
like to call up the first speaker. The speakers
can come up to the podium and give their number
to the security officer. Once you begin
speaking you will have exactly two minutes.
So may I please ask speaker one to
please approach the microphone. You can look at
your sticker.
Speaker two, please approach the microphone.

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

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

And my comment is for those types of schools who may be impacted just to keep in mind for my own personal concern is we have a public school across the street, Ruben Salazar, who is options for knowledge with great scores but accepts children from all over Chicago and does not have boundaries. So every single child who is there is by choice, and we still have about 82 percent poverty in our schools. So I think we do a great job in using our resources and
getting great results. What concerns me is for schools that may find themselves on this list for the school actions, closure or co-location, and they're going to see an options for knowledge school right next door and think that that's a great option or possibly for co-location. We have two schools who I'm very concerned about that are close to us and we have a need for maintaining the integrity of the school, the leadership of the school, the safety of the school and just to consider that that is some of the things that are not attributable just to data, it is really some subjective terms that need to be considered.

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Your time has expired.

MS. DELGADO: Thank you.

MS. OSTRO: Let me just respond to your question, which is, you're correct, none of the buildings that we referred to that will generate the $15 million savings relate at all to any of the announcements that have been made. These are all properties that have been vacant for a long period of time and are already on the market. So none of this relates to any of the
discussion around school actions for anything going forward. And thank you for your other comments, we appreciate it.

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

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

One is just that our group really doesn't understand the line item for $76,361,054 in new school development just based on the fact that we have a one billion projected deficit over the next three years and CPS is planning to drain the reserves this year. It just seems -- our group -- parents are e-mailing us with a lot of questions in terms of why would CPS be choosing to expand at this time. It's sort of like if I can't pay my bills at home, I would never go do an addition on my home. So many parents -- we have around like 6,000 parents now in our group and many feel that it's kind of irresponsible to be doing such a thing at this
And then the other issue is around assessments. The Office of Assessment has over $13 million, but I'm trying to find out other funds under like the network offices and school budgets. I'm having a hard time when I look online to just figure out what the total cost of assessments is for the district. So I'm wondering if someone from the department could work with our group and give us information on the total cost of assessment. We're just trying to have like a real dialogue with parents in terms of understanding what those 22 assessments are on the CPS website and how they're impacting the budget and also instructional time and loss of good quality teaching. So I'm hoping someone can follow up with me and help me figure out those numbers. Thank you.

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

MS. KATTEN: Thank you.

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

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

MS. OSTRO: This budget really just focuses on the changes that I mentioned so anything that's underway was already part of the budget that passed. So any of the changes that are planned, I'm not trying to not answer your question, I'm just saying specifically this
budget does not make any further changes to any
of the SEIU-related activities, what we're
presenting tonight. Anything that was presented
previously and already adopted in the budget
obviously is already underway.

MR. MESSLER: Okay. Thank you very
much.

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

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

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

So I was just wondering if you can say anything about where it went. It supposedly went into C Cat's (sic) office and it says click here and then there's nothing. There's a link called planning that doesn't go anywhere. And
the line item is zero for the budget.

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

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

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

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

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

MS. HANES: Okay. Can I follow up with
someone to get an answer?
MS. OSTRO: Yeah, we will, if you just check with Marguerite or Mike in the back we'll make sure we follow up with you.

MS. HANES: Okay.

MS. OSTRO: Thank you.

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Speaker six.

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

In 2006 at these hearings, which were not attended by any Board of Ed members, as is true tonight, not one of the people here from the CPS budget office was working for CPS. The destruction of the internal infrastructure, the human infrastructure of CPS is dramatic, and by my analysis, which I'll be publishing and submitting to the Board at greater length, not only dramatic but calculated.
The fact that in six years there is no one in the budget office who has experience with the budget, there is no remaining institutional memory, it is the scandal that leads to those silly numbers we had to look at tonight. The budget numbers, as you know, Ginger, were already budgeted for the raises, there is no additional 103 million that comes out of the CTU raises. That's a simple fact of math that anyone can check.

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

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Your time is expired.

MR. SCHMIDT: I know my time is expired, but we have two hours for this hearing on a matter that applies to 400,000 children,
and I think we each deserve the respect that
says we get more time for our questions and our
statements. So I'm asking the budget officer
that all of us who want to get more time, that's
not up to you, ma'am. Ginger?

MS. OSTRO: She's our moderator.

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you for your
comments.

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

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

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

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

MS. JUAREZ: Good evening, my name is
Trish Juarez, I am a parent of a CPS student, two of them. I very much so appreciate the quality education that they're getting, but I'm terrified by the direction and the pursuit that it seems that CPS is focusing on without any sort of interest and focus in success around neighborhood schools.

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

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

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Next speaker.

MR. HILGENDORF: My name is Kurt Hilgendorf, I'm with the Chicago Teachers Union. And I hold up this chart because this was the chart that was presented on March 28th at the budget hearing that said that the Chicago Public Schools faced a massive deficit not only this year but also going forward and that this is based on in red a major increase in expenditures and in green a flattening of revenues. And the result is a breathtaking deficit of almost
$1.5 billion by FY 2014 -- 2015, excuse me.

Except this is a false projection. Sure, there are increased pension costs that may be driving some of this, however, if you look at the revenue line, that green line, that is a choice, that the mayor has made a choice to make rosy revenue projections to balance the city budget. The Board tonight makes rosy revenue projections with regard to bond refinancing and other operational savings that might be generated from cuts at Central Office. This is a choice, and any budget is a policy document, not necessarily a statement of fact. And it's a question of priorities, let's be clear about that.

Since 2004 the district's annual expenses on charter schools, annual expenditures has increased 625 percent. Average -- excuse me, annual increases in debt service have increased 50 percent a year. Increase and testing in contractual services associated with testing have expanded and exploded as well. Look at any testing calendar. Parents, you have 22 days at least laid out for testing. The Board pushed these policies hard in Springfield
for an elimination of the charter cap, for
pension reform. Why no equivalent push for more
revenue? We could have a TIF freeze. We could
have a tax levy for pensions just like there was
before 1995. We could have a local income tax
just like in Iowa and Indiana. 600 districts in
Iowa, every county in Indiana, a 1 percent
income tax in Chicago would raise $600 million
in revenue. That would be a legitimate fix to
this crisis, not more smoking mirrors. Thank
you.

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

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Speaker nine.

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

George, did you want to come back and
finish your comment?

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

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

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

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Please say your name again.

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

I met with the Board President who said, oh, there's no will. Well, I mean, I know you're a certain level there but, I mean, we
need answers in terms of what CPS is doing for revenue. And our group is working on a graduated income tax and I get the politics of all this, but you have to do something on the revenue side for our kids and hopefully something that we can become aware of soon because it's been quite frustrating to see the reforms that you've been working on that don't come with any money. Thanks.

            MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

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

            MS. RODRIGUEZ: Can you say your name again?

            MS. JUAREZ: My name is Trish Juarez. You do have an agenda, and it's so obvious that you don't want the taxpayers to pick up the bill, you want it to be infiltrated with the private sector and those supposed non-profits that feel like they're delivering some sort of charitable contribution to the education of our children. But we all know Juan Rangel makes,
what, $260,000 a year? We all know that these
online learning organizations, you know, they're
ex Goldman Sachs executives.

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

It's not the answer.

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

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

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

MR. SCHMIDT: I was much more --

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Can you state your name?

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

I want to address three things on the expenses side and put them in context. Since four years ago when Barack Obama was elected president of the United States and announced a
month later that Arne Duncan, our CEO, was going
to Washington to be the CEO of the U.S.
Department of Education, Chicago Public Schools
have had four chief executive officers. Since
that time Chicago Public Schools have had five
Chief Financial Officers. To maintain that
there is any institutional integrity or any
concern for the future of the children of this
city in that context would be bordering on
ludicrous. It would be like the person who
murdered his parents and then got up in front of
the judge and demanded consideration because he
was an orphan. That's how silly this
conversation is.

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

MS. OSTRO: Yes.

MR. SCHMIDT: Thank you. And that's a
fact that is an insult to every parent, every
child and every taxpayer in this city. The
management by musical chairs at the top of the
school system has got to end because the destabilization that's taking place is deliberate as a matter of policy and it's designed to destroy the public schools of Chicago in the same way that the same people have destroyed the public schools of Detroit, Philadelphia, New Orleans and elsewhere, and in some cases celebrated that destruction.

I want to add a couple other small aspects of that policy that are expensive. Since this Board of Education was appointed by Mayor Rahm Emanuel in May of 2011 and took its first seat in June of 2011, several unprecedented policies have been put into place. The most dramatic of those is that we don't hire from Chicago anymore, we hire out-of-towners. Top executive positions starting with the Chief Executive Officer have gone to people from other towns. Jean-Claude Brizard was from Rochester, New York. Barbara Byrd Bennett, who is a traveling mercenary in my humble opinion, came to us most recently from Detroit, not from Cleveland as widely reported. In each of those two cases the Board established the
unprecedented policy of paying what are, quote, relocation expenses to these people, as if no one in Chicago was qualified for these jobs. In each of those cases $30,000 on top of their quarter of a million dollar salary to those people was paid for relocation expenses.

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

Just one last thing because as you could see I’d love to go on, but I won’t. I’ve been watching this for 30 years and as late as six years ago when the last independent budget
critics were still in business in this town,
Diana Nelson, who was with the Cross City
Campaign for Urban School Reform, took the floor
at a budget hearing like this and said this
budget has gone from murky to murkier to
murkiest. The budget is no longer made
available to the public in print form. The
proposed budget was eliminated by a click of the
delete key from the Board's website. Nothing
that the Board posts on its website has any
integrity because it is being modified and
deleted sometimes as we speak. Unless we print
these things down with a date stamp, we can't
hold the Board to any fact because they're
playing games with us in cyberspace and not only
with virtual education.

The Board has a legal obligation and
even more so a moral obligation to make
available to every citizen of Chicago copies of
documents this important that are $5 billion
expenses in the budget. For the past two years
the Board has refused to do so. If you go to
any of the ward offices or libraries in this
city you will find back copies of the budget
that was proposed and discussed. You can no
longer find them thanks to this Board. That's a
scandal that people should be carrying those
pitchforks for too because not everybody has a
high-powered computer and a rapid printer to
print out 2,000 total pages that are actually
constituting this complete budget. Not
everybody should be required to, they should be
allowed to read the portions of it at their
library at their leisure in normal form.

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

I know this is not on any individual,
you all need jobs. But I'm also watching as a
person who sat in that seat ring mastering the
2006 hearings, goes through the broke fellowship
and then winds up in New Orleans. All the other
people who once worked in the Budget Office who
weren't made of Chicagoans and committed to the
people of Chicago come from the same corporate
places. That is not acceptable to me as a
parent, as a taxpayer or as a long-term activist
here.

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

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

MS. OSTRO: Thank you for your
comments. I just do want to comment on the
website which I do think provides additional
transparency on the budget because more data is
available in searchable and sortable format. I
appreciate your comment about it not being in
print form, but we do think it makes it
available so you can do your own analysis on it
rather than just taking data tables that we
present to you. So we think that's a movement forward. I understand your concerns on why you prefer it in print.

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

MS. OSTRO: It is archived.

MS. JUAREZ: And where is that accessible?

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

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

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

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

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Could you state your name?
MS. DELGADO: I'm sorry, Brenda Delgado. Looking around the room I don't think that we probably are reflective of the majority of Chicago Public School children. I think about 80 percent of them are low income. I think probably everyone in this room makes at least $30,000 a year. About 15 percent of the student population at Ruben Salazar makes over $30,000 a year. It's for the kids because their -- I'm the LSC chairperson at Ruben Salazar and we did -- we gave $40,000 of preschool money to parents who don't make $40,000 a year. They don't make $25,000 a year. And when we spoke to some of the parents who were complaining because they live around this area and we are an options for knowledge school they said they make only $15,000 a year and they're working wage, and how can we get 40 slots of preschool for parents who don't make $25,000 a year? Because they're all lying on their applications. They're lying on their free and reduced lunch. No one in Chicago could survive on $25,000 a year. And I said, are you blind? You're not seeing everyone
around you. There's children who come to Ruben Salazar who don't have coats because they don't have money to buy a $20 coat at Burlington Coat Factory. And we're talking about millions of dollars of positions lost and efficiencies and we need to keep in mind that we have great vocal parents.

I can't wait to get home and get on the blog of Raise Your Hand because I'm on there every single day, I'm so glad that you're here. But we need to keep in mind 80 percent of CPS is low income. 80 percent of CPS unfortunately looks like me. I don't see that type of people in this room even though I sent announcements out. We should be outraged that we can't provide additional funding for Chicago Public Schools. It's not the gentrification of areas. Those are few areas of Chicago that's afflicted. I live in Bronzeville, I can afford a nice home. I work for the Federal Government. My husband is a health practitioner. But I still remember the days when my mom was spending $5 on school supplies. And, yes, we have great jobs now, but look around you, look around Chicago, this is
what we need to be outraged about. Minimal efficiencies are not going to be enough to meet the needs of CPS. Poverty is a disease, and if we try to look at the priorities for fixing it and thinking that we can't actually fix it by looking at the actual reasons for the poverty and where these children come from, just keep in mind who it is that we are fighting for. And I know it's as comfortable in our air conditioned buildings and when we collect our paychecks, we can't fathom how these people survive in CPS schools, but that is a lifeline for these people.

And I'm thinking of the budget cuts, of the school closures, of one less social worker, one less counselor, one less teacher aide. My eighth grade class has 45 kids in Ruben Salazar this year. 45 kids. That is an outrage, outrage. Only because that teacher is Golden Apple Teacher and dedicated to his class and works 12 hours a day are those kids going to succeed. 45 kids in eighth grade. Last year his eighth grade student won the City-Wide Senior Fair Contest at Museum of Science and
Industry. That's how great of a teacher he is.
I don't know how he's going to do it this year
with 45 kids in his classroom. And you know
what they told him when he complained about it,
keep your mouth shut. Keep your mouth shut.
Because he's outraged that he has 45 children in
his classroom.

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

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

MS. OSTRO: And just a general comment
overall on the budget that I didn't make
earlier, which is again we're focusing here on
the changes that we made to implement the
agreement, the additional hundred million
dollars of cost. And you'll notice in what I
presented that we didn't impact classroom in any
way, we found reductions in administrative
areas, operational areas and through refinancing
on our debt side. So we tried really hard not
to impact the classroom for many of the reasons
that you just raised.

MS. RODRIGUEZ: Okay, that will
conclude the budget hearing for this evening.

Thank you for all of your comments and
questions. The meeting is adjourned.

(Whereupon, these were all the
proceedings had at this time.)
STATE OF ILLINOIS

COUNTY OF COOK

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

Karen Fatigato, CSR
LIC. NO. 084-004072