

**In The Matter Of:**  
*2010-2011 PROPOSED BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING  
AT CORLISS HIGH SCHOOL*

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*August 19, 2010*

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*Original File 8-19-10 Corliss.txt*  
*Min-U-Script® with Word Index*

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
FISCAL YEAR 2010-2011 PROPOSED BUDGET  
PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday  
AUGUST 19, 2010  
7:00 P.M.

Held at:  
CORLISS HIGH SCHOOL  
821 East 103rd St.  
Chicago, Illinois

1   **PRESENT:**

2  
3                   MS   MELANIE SHAKER,  
4                   Chief Financial Officer;

5  
6  
7                   MS. CHRISTINA HERZOG,  
8                   Budget Officer

9  
10                  MS.JORY SIMMONS,  
11                  Moderator

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19  
20           Reporter by:  Janice smith

21           License No. 084-001346  
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1                   MS. SHAKER: Hi, everybody. I think  
2 we are going to get started here. I just wanted  
3 to introduce myself. I am Melanie Shaker. I am  
4 the Deputy Chief Financial Officer of Chicago  
5 Public Schools.

6                   To my left is Christina Herzog, who is  
7 the leader of our Office of Management and Budget.  
8 And to my right is John Thomas, who is the Chief  
9 Area Officer of Area 23.

10                   So, I guess the first thing I  
11 wanted to do is just thank everybody for being  
12 here. I think it really expresses dedication to  
13 Chicago Public Schools and also your engagement in  
14 the budget hearings process. We do really  
15 appreciate that.

16                   We are here in front of everybody on  
17 behalf of the Board. On behalf of the Board and  
18 on behalf of the principals and everyone else who  
19 is represented by this table here tonight.

20                   So, first, what we want to tell you is  
21 that tonight is really for us to listen and to  
22 hear you. We are seeking your input. We are  
23 writing things down. That is our goal tonight to  
24 really hear from you and get your input, rather

1 than just start talking at you.

2           And to that end -- and we know you are  
3 going to have a lot of questions. You are going  
4 to have questions about tax increments financing,  
5 probably, about the 800 million line of credit,  
6 about class size reductions, layouts, all of this;  
7 and the restorations we have talked about as well.  
8 But each of these answers is really fairly  
9 complicated, and we want to make sure that we  
10 respond to all of these questions in a very  
11 thorough and accurate manner.

12           So to that end, we are going to be  
13 recording all these questions. We are going to be  
14 writing all this down. We are going to be  
15 compiling responses. And what we are going to do  
16 is post all of those answers on the Web. So  
17 starting probably late tomorrow and on a rolling  
18 basis, you are going to see these addressed.

19           But the goal here is again, to get the  
20 input and to start posting these things online.

21           Having a dialogue and an open exchange  
22 between us would be very difficult with the size  
23 of the audience here and with the number of  
24 questions we know we are going to get. So in our

1 efforts to hear you all, we want to make sure we  
2 allocate the time this year to really getting your  
3 input, rather than making presentations. So we  
4 will be listening to all your questions and,  
5 again, really, really appreciate that you are  
6 here. Thank you.

7 MS. HERZOG: Thanks, Melanie. Again, I  
8 am Christina Herzog from the CPS Budget Office. I  
9 want to take the opportunity as well to thank you  
10 for coming tonight on behalf of Chicago Public  
11 Schools, our budget office team who has worked  
12 hard to put together this budget.

13 We are excited to hear your  
14 feedback. We are looking forward to it. And I  
15 think this just, again, shows your commitment to  
16 Chicago Public Schools and our students. So I  
17 want to thank you.

18 I also want to thank Anthony  
19 Spivey, the principal of Corliss, for hosting the  
20 event, and welcoming us here and making the space  
21 available for us; and, again, John Thomas for  
22 joining us as well from the chief area office.

23 We -- you know, Melanie kind of  
24 talked a little bit about what we are going to do

1 tonight. I am going to go through some logistics  
2 and some ground rules. But, you know, we know  
3 that in a budget year as challenging as this one,  
4 that some people will agree and understand the  
5 tough decisions that we have had to make, and then  
6 others will of course not. And so, again, that is  
7 why we are here, to hear your feedback, to  
8 understand your input.

9                   And so we know that you have had an  
10 opportunity to examine the budget both online. If  
11 tonight you came and the budgets were gone by the  
12 time you got here, let us know. We will gladly  
13 send you a budget. It is also posted online and  
14 is available there for you to take a look at as  
15 well.

16                   And, again, our job tonight is to  
17 listen to you, ensure your questions and concerns  
18 are put on record, and take those questions and  
19 concerns back to our larger team and the Board of  
20 Education.

21                   So tonight many of my colleagues  
22 sitting in the audience will be taking down your  
23 questions, taking down your comments, so we can,  
24 as Melanie said, post those responses online so

1 that everybody, even those who couldn't be at the  
2 hearing tonight, could see the responses.

3           If you do have a question that is  
4 specific about a particular school, a particular  
5 budget, a particular position, that you want  
6 feedback on that might not be appropriate to post  
7 online, please make sure that we up here, Jory,  
8 get your individual information so we can make  
9 sure to get that individualized response back to  
10 you on that.

11           You know, because we are here to  
12 listen and not talk, and because we want to hear  
13 from as many of you as possible tonight, there is  
14 many of you out in the auditorium, we will only  
15 comment, you know, to clarify certain things and  
16 to make sure that, you know, we understand what  
17 the parameters are of tonight.

18           So let's go over a few logistics  
19 before we begin. For the evening we have provided  
20 a Spanish translator, as well as a sign language  
21 interpreter. If anyone needs assistance with  
22 those, can you let us know? Okay. Thank you.

23           We have a list of registered  
24 speakers for the evening, and when your name is



1 called, please proceed to the microphone. It is  
2 right there in the middle. And you will be given  
3 two minutes to speak. And you will be notified  
4 when those two minutes are about to conclude, so  
5 that you can conclude your comments in a timely  
6 manner.

7                   We ask that you adhere to the time  
8 limit, so that we have an opportunity to hear from  
9 all of you tonight. Ms. Simmons, from the budget  
10 team, has graciously accepted the role to moderate  
11 this evening, and so she will be the one that will  
12 be calling your name, calling the name of the next  
13 speaker so you can prepare to be able to walk to  
14 the microphone, and also notify you of when the  
15 time is up.

16                   The public comments are scheduled  
17 to conclude at 9:00. I know we started a little  
18 bit late, so if they run a little bit late, I  
19 understand. And so we are going to begin. And on  
20 behalf of Chicago Public Schools again, the budget  
21 office and the finance team, thank you for taking  
22 the time to come here tonight and sharing with us  
23 your feedback. We appreciate it. So let's get  
24 started.

1 MS. SIMMONS: Anthony Spivey. And  
2 following Anthony Spivey is Jeneva Ingram.

3 MR. SPIVEY: My question today is, when  
4 would the actual budget be finalized and when will  
5 the Chicago Public School Board actually vote on  
6 it?

7 MS. HERZOG: Probably I can respond to  
8 that question. The Board is going to be voting on  
9 a budget next Wednesday.

10 MR. SPIVEY: They can't hear you.

11 MS. HERZOG: Oh, I'm sorry.

12 The Board of Ed will be voting on a  
13 budget next Wednesday at their Board meeting.  
14 Thanks.

15 MS. SIMMONS: Jeneva Ingram.

16 MS. INGRAM: I have a list of  
17 questions. Will CPS ask the city to declare a TIF  
18 surplus and then request those funds to help fund  
19 schools? If not, why not?

20 Money from the government -- from  
21 the settlement recent fail to restore teaching  
22 positions is supposed to be used to put teachers  
23 back to work. Will the Board guarantee that this  
24 money will be used for its intended purpose? If

1 not, why not?

2 Regular teachers -- regular high  
3 school teachers' school begin in two weeks. Why  
4 are class sizes just now being restored to their  
5 previous levels? What will the Board do to help  
6 these schools restore the programs to all of their  
7 students and ensure that qualified teachers are in  
8 every classroom?

9 And the question I had last you  
10 already answered. I need a physical copy of the  
11 budget, if possible. Thank you.

12 MS. HERZOG: Give us your address and  
13 we will definitely get it to you.

14 MS. INGRAM: Okay.

15 MS. HERZOG: Thanks for your comments.

16 MS. SIMMONS: Dr. Carmen Palmer. And  
17 following Dr. Palmer is Alyson Kennedy.

18 DR. PALMER: Hi. I have five quick  
19 questions. I am holding in my hand a copy of  
20 information that was brought to my attention a  
21 couple of weeks ago entitled, "The CPS millionaire  
22 list." This is a 51-page document. The first  
23 seven to eight pages is a narrative. And then on  
24 the eighth page there is a portion that reads,

1 Below list of the employees of the Chicago Board  
2 of Education, listed in the board's position, file  
3 budget documents as being paid more than the CEO  
4 of CPS during 2009-2010 school year, CEO salary  
5 being 230,000 per year. Source is listed as  
6 Chicago Public Schools position file budget,  
7 obtained through the Freedom of Information Act.

8 And from page 7 to page 51 are  
9 names of Board employees who are receiving sums of  
10 money that are in the million dollars. And that  
11 is for page 7 to page 51. So I was just figuring  
12 to give CPS maybe the benefit of the doubt. I  
13 will definitely be looking forward to a response  
14 to that question.

15 And then number two, now that the Board  
16 is going to vote on a budget that we haven't seen,  
17 can copies of the budget be placed in the public  
18 library, seeing as how the taxpayers are the ones  
19 who provide those funds?

20 Three, how were these hearings  
21 communicated? It is always so amazing that such  
22 significant hearings and forums are conducted, and  
23 so few of the taxpayers are made aware in ample  
24 time to be able to attend.

1                   Four, I definitely would like a  
2 copy. I got here at 6:00 o'clock. I come at  
3 7:00. And I find out -- I come back at 7:00 when  
4 I had to step out for a second, to find out there  
5 had been budgets provided. And the darling young  
6 women at the table never said a word.

7                   And so number five, the correct  
8 online address, if we want to get those answers,  
9 what is the correct online address to get these?

10                  MS. HERZOG: You will be able to get  
11 from the CPS home page, at [www.cps.edu](http://www.cps.edu). There  
12 will be a very clear link on there directing you  
13 to the budget.

14                  DR. PALMER: I am sorry, repeat that  
15 again because everything has gone out. I don't  
16 know what happen here.

17                  MS. HERZOG: It is [www.cps.edu](http://www.cps.edu).

18                  DR. PALMER: Thank you.

19                  MS. SIMMONS: Alyson Kennedy.

20                  MS. KENNEDY: Good evening. My name is  
21 Alyson Kennedy, and I am a Socialist Workers Party  
22 Candidate for United States Senate in the State of  
23 Illinois. I am a factory worker at an auto parts  
24 transmission plant in Chicago.

1                   And I want to make a statement in  
2 solidarity with the teachers in the City of  
3 Chicago and throughout the State of Illinois.  
4 Working people throughout this state should oppose  
5 the layoffs and cutbacks that Chicago Public  
6 Schools CEO Robert Huberman is threatening in his  
7 budgets.

8                   In a cynical attempt to blame  
9 teachers, Huberman says that Chicago Teachers  
10 Union's refusal to give up a four percent pay  
11 increase is one reason for the layoff of an  
12 additional 1,200 city workers, city school  
13 workers, on top of close to over 2,000 teachers  
14 already laid off.

15                  The financial crisis that Chicago  
16 Public Schools is facing is totally bound up with  
17 the financial and budget crisis faced by the state  
18 of Illinois. The truth is the shortfall in tax  
19 income that Illinois and every state in the  
20 country is experiencing today stems from the deep  
21 growing crisis that grips the United States and  
22 the entire world, the world capitalist financial  
23 crisis, the world depression that we are just in  
24 the beginnings of.

1                   This is just the beginning of cuts.  
2 We will see more proposals for cuts in the coming  
3 years. That is why it is very important in any  
4 fight we wage today against these cuts will help  
5 us build stronger fights in the future.

6                   The capitalist and their democratic  
7 and republican party representatives in government  
8 are using this crisis, this economic crisis, to  
9 hammer us, to hammer the working class through  
10 layoffs, through furlough days, through wage cuts,  
11 increased workloads, speed up on the job and  
12 worsening of safety conditions and cutbacks in  
13 social services.

14                  The democratic and republican party  
15 politicians try to convince us that there is a  
16 limited pool of money in the city and state  
17 budgets, and if this runs out everybody has to cut  
18 back. But the truth is everybody doesn't cut  
19 back. Only working people are told to cut back.  
20 Only working people are told that our wages are  
21 cut, that we have to work at temporary jobs and  
22 factories. Most workers work today making eight,  
23 \$10 an hour, if you are even lucky enough to make  
24 that.

1           The attitude of the democratic and  
2 republican politician holders from Daley,  
3 Huberman, to Obama and Quinn make it clear that we  
4 have to stop relying on these political parties to  
5 solve our problems. These parties, the democrats  
6 and republicans, always put the interest of the  
7 bankers, the real estate developers, the  
8 industrialist first. We need a labor party --

9           MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please  
10 conclude.

11           MS. KENNEDY: -- based on a fighting  
12 union movement that puts workers' interests first,  
13 a labor party that can challenge the political  
14 power of the capitalists who exploit us.

15           And I just want to end by saying  
16 that the Socialist Worker's Party urges the union  
17 movement and all working people to join us in  
18 demanding no cutbacks in education, no layoffs of  
19 teachers and other school workers, no cuts in  
20 bilingual education and other curricula, and hands  
21 off the pensions of teachers and other state  
22 workers. Thank you very much.

23                           (Applause.)

24           MS. SIMMONS: Our next speaker is



1 Porcia Walton. And after Porcia Walton will be  
2 Megan Cusick.

3 MS. WALTON: Good evening, ladies and  
4 gentlemen. My name is Porcia Walton, and I am  
5 from CORE Organization. And I am just here today  
6 to talk about more funding for charter schools.

7 It is a serious epidemic in all  
8 communities as far as gun violence, gun crime, gun  
9 crimes, safety within schools, low income, loss of  
10 jobs. I feel that we need more charter schools to  
11 better our children's education. Whereas me, now  
12 I am a CPS graduate and I take that with pride.  
13 But if I was given a better opportunity then, I  
14 would have took it. I feel like we need more  
15 charter schools for our children nowadays, because  
16 it is just not the same no more, ladies and  
17 gentlemen. Everything is changed.

18 The gun crime is just overwhelming  
19 with everything. And then I am not knocking CPS  
20 schools, because I am a graduate. I love it. But  
21 I feel like we do need more charter schools to  
22 better our education for our students and our  
23 children.

24 A wise friend told me if we don't

1 name our children, someone else will; meaning as,  
2 if we don't place our children with better, like  
3 better funding, better education, better this,  
4 better that, someone else is going to name our  
5 children. I am upset for mine. I want what is  
6 best for my daughter as well as the next person's  
7 child. More funding y'all.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. CUSICK: Megan Cusick. I am a  
10 casualty of the Department of Clever Terminology  
11 at CPS, which I suspect is in the 1,500 page  
12 appendix of the budget, which I did not receive  
13 with my printed copy. However, I have been  
14 honorably dismissed as a result of program  
15 reduction.

16 I have several questions posed to  
17 members of the Board and I would like to see the  
18 answers online.

19 The first question I would like to know  
20 is whether or not Board members are actually going  
21 to review transcripts of these hearings prior to  
22 voting on -- voting on the budget next week? I  
23 expect that they would be reviewing transcripts  
24 from all three days of the hearings.

1           My second question is that I would like  
2 to know whose values this budget represents? I  
3 think after a couple days of hearings, we can see  
4 pretty clearly that it is not the values of the  
5 teachers, the parents and the students. So whose  
6 values are represented by this budget? Are they  
7 Mr. Huberman's values? Are they Mayor Daley's  
8 values? Perhaps they are the values of the Civic  
9 Federation to whom Mr. Huberman appeared and  
10 discussed the budget, despite the fact that he  
11 won't come to these hearings and discuss them with  
12 the community at large.

13           So I am concerned, even though it  
14 is difficult to find this information in the  
15 budget both in the printed and online version,  
16 that while we see cuts in classroom positions and  
17 cuts in educators throughout the Board, not only  
18 in the classroom, but in central office as well,  
19 that we see increases in educational vendors,  
20 increases in consultants, increases in business  
21 analysts, increases in lawyers, and that is all  
22 coming at the expense of our children.

23           And what we are creating is a  
24 system where in a small number of schools, parents

1 will fund raise and they will fill a position, or  
2 they will save a program. But in the majority of  
3 schools our children are not going to have that  
4 privilege, and they will lose out.

5 That creates an unequal education  
6 system, and that it is undemocratic and it is  
7 unethical. And that does not reflect my values.  
8 And I suspect it does not reflect the values of  
9 most people in here.

10 (Applause.)

11 MS. CUSICK: Two other quick comments.  
12 The first one is that I am assuming that the  
13 proposed revenue for the 2011 year has not been  
14 received, that it is not all money in hand, which  
15 makes me wonder why the Edu jobs money wouldn't be  
16 considered anticipated revenue as part of the  
17 budget as well?

18 And last a comment, and this is to  
19 members of the audience. I strongly encourage you  
20 to contact Dick Durbin and let him know that  
21 Chicago seems to be confused about the real  
22 purpose of the funds that he came to Robeson High  
23 School to talk about last week. And express your  
24 concern that somewhere in the past week there has

1 been some misunderstanding since that time. And  
2 while you are at it, call your alderman as well,  
3 because they are going to be up for election soon.

4 Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. SIMMONS: Melita Patillo. And  
7 following Melita is Danielle from Robeson High  
8 School. If she could pronounce her name as well  
9 when she comes to the mike, please?

10 MS. PATILLO: Hi. My name is  
11 Melita Patillo.

12 Okay. As we all know, Chicago  
13 Public Schools are faced with certain challenges  
14 as far as education, party level and bias. Even  
15 though charter schools are faced with some of the  
16 same challenges, they are exceeding state level at  
17 reading, math and science.

18 For example, the charter school in  
19 Gage Park, they are exceeding the level -- the  
20 state level in math, reading and science by  
21 between 11 percent and 26 percent. They are  
22 90 percent -- 99 percent Hispanic.

23 Another example, the charter school  
24 in Austin, in the Austin Belmont Cragin area, they

1 are exceeding the state level in reading and math  
2 by 13 to 19 percent. So, I feel that we should  
3 get more charter schools within the community.

4 We said we wanted a change and we  
5 wanted to better our children's education, and it  
6 is factual that charter schools are doing so, are  
7 helping us do so. So if we get more of them, then  
8 we could probably have better results, you know,  
9 things like that.

10 Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. SIMMONS: Danielle Cieslelski. And  
13 following Danielle will be Chloe Gilmore.

14 MS. CIESLELSKI: My name is  
15 Danielle Cieslelski. I am a current teacher at  
16 Robeson High School, not to last much longer. I  
17 am going to eat up a lot of my time.

18 Charter schools, the studies has  
19 come out, only perform about 17 percent of the  
20 time better or even on par with public schools, so  
21 please stop the lies.

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. CIESLELSKI: Secondly, Mr. Thomas,  
24 I am so glad to see you here. My principal

1 reported to us today that we have to level our  
2 classes in the middle of August. Not even the  
3 first day of school when our kids are expecting to  
4 come back, a lot of Robeson students still think  
5 they are going to Dunbar or some kind of charter  
6 school that's going to end up dumping them out,  
7 like Noble Street (phonetic) always does with our  
8 kids.

9                   So what this is going to end up  
10 doing is have about ten teachers in our building  
11 with no students in front of them. It is two  
12 weeks until they can fire us from September 7th.  
13 So I want to say thank you for that. If you have  
14 any more information about how that is going to  
15 work, if you could explain to me and my students,  
16 I am sure we would be more than interested.

17                   And then the actual budget comment.  
18 I went to the budget hearings for three years. I  
19 hear about a crisis every year. The chief  
20 financial officer has a proposed budget of almost  
21 a million dollars and a staff of four. So I am  
22 trying to figure out how a department of people  
23 being paid \$250,000 a year with a mission of  
24 ensuring that every child is on track to graduate,

1 and prepared for college work and life not manage  
2 three years running to get a balanced budget.

3 In the meantime, what are you guys  
4 doing that we can't get these questions answered.  
5 This is the budget hearings. Isn't this the  
6 biggest priority right now? Shouldn't this be the  
7 focus? I want to know an answer to my questions  
8 from Tuesday.

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. CIESLELSKI: At some point -- at  
11 some point it needs to be understood that the  
12 person has got to be paid. You've got to do it.  
13 There is a legal requirement to pay the pension.  
14 The teachers have to be paid. You made a contract  
15 to pay these teachers their salaries. This needs  
16 to be the basis and the budget goes from there.  
17 Find some money somewhere and create a reserve  
18 that is going to be ready, instead of saying, oh  
19 my God, we are going to have to pay \$600 million  
20 in four years from now.

21 Well, you got four years to build a  
22 reserve. Do it. That should be the basis of your  
23 budget. That shouldn't be an emergency thing that  
24 we think of again in 2014.



1 (Applause.)

2 MS. CIESLELSKI: Three years is a  
3 really long time to keep screwing up the budget.  
4 Over time, consistent incompetence is usually  
5 interpreted as sabotage. The only way the public  
6 can interpret this is that CPS has no intent of  
7 ever putting students first or ever creating a  
8 balance in our budget.

9 MS. SIMMONS: Chloe Gilmore. And  
10 following Chloe Gilmore will be Jermiska Smart.

11 MS. GILMORE: Hi, ladies and gentlemen.  
12 My name is Chloe Gilmore.

13 My issue today is getting more  
14 classrooms, getting more teachers, two to a  
15 classroom, instead of one teacher to a classroom.  
16 Let's make a better future for our children and a  
17 success throughout the year. Our children is the  
18 key to success. Our parents and teachers play an  
19 important part in their lives and future. Because  
20 I am a parent of three and I want the best  
21 education for my children. Thank you guys.

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. SIMMONS: Jermiska Smart. And  
24 please spell your name.

1 MS. SMART: Good evening. My name is  
2 Jermiska Smart and I am a proud parent of a child  
3 that is on a long waiting list for a charter  
4 school. And I know what great things charter  
5 schools have to offer. And I know our kids  
6 deserve a better shot at a better education, safer  
7 schools, access to computers in every classroom.

8 The 2010 consensus show that CPS  
9 kids are getting better grade and are more college  
10 bound. So that means our kids are striving  
11 harder. So teachers, parents, mentors and friends  
12 let's strive harder for them and get more charter  
13 schools on the south side of Chicago and give our  
14 kids an equal opportunity and a fair chance for  
15 the generation of tomorrow.

16 Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 MS. SIMMONS: Rosland Johnson. And  
19 following Rosland Johnson is Michael Brunson.

20 MS. JOHNSON: Good evening, ladies and  
21 gentlemen. Hi. My name is Rosland Johnson and my  
22 comment relates to the young ladies from earlier.  
23 Five -- get more schools and charter schools,  
24 because I am a young parent of a four-year-old

1 son. And I feel like if they have someone in  
2 school to help him, he will look for love outside  
3 the street, or whatever. Just help me help him  
4 not be in jail, dead or anything, robbing or  
5 stealing, none of that. I feel like if you all  
6 will help him, show him he could do better than  
7 that, he would do better than that.

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. SIMMONS: Michael Brunson. And  
11 following Michael Brunson is Geraldine Howard.

12 MR. BRUNSON: My name is Michael  
13 Brunson. And -- I hope I didn't break it. I am a  
14 recording secretary of the Chicago Public Union --  
15 Chicago Teachers Union, I meant. I'm sorry about  
16 that.

17 And I just want to state a concern  
18 that I have. You know, I went to the budget  
19 hearing a couple of days ago up at Lane Tech and  
20 there were about 200 people there. I didn't make  
21 the one last night. But I come to this one and I  
22 am counting close to a hundred people. And that  
23 tells me that the public is very interested in  
24 what is going on with our public schools.

1 (Applause.)

2 MR. BRUNSON: Now, we might have  
3 differences on how to go about this, and I think  
4 if some of our other members of the audience were  
5 able to talk to me, and I would really like to  
6 talk to you to state the case about why public  
7 schools with teachers that are in a union, that  
8 have good benefits, and good decent salaries, and  
9 job protection is what you really want to go  
10 after, I would really like to have that  
11 conversation with you, because I don't think that  
12 is offered in the charter schools. But that is a  
13 whole other thing.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. BRUNSON: Anyway, but I would  
16 really like to talk to whoever has sent you up  
17 here to state the case for the charter schools.  
18 That is really what I want to do.

19 Anyway, what I am concerned about  
20 is that because we have so many people from the  
21 public here that are obviously involved in this, I  
22 think they should have some input. Rather than  
23 just coming up and asking questions that don't  
24 really get answered, they should have an

1 opportunity. Everyone should have an opportunity  
2 to actually look through this budget book,  
3 understand what is going on, because the budget  
4 has a whole philosophy behind it and it tells you  
5 a lot about the future. At least, it is going to  
6 tell you what is going to happen this year, so  
7 that we can actually ask some questions on it and  
8 not have to take them off the cuff.

9                   Some people have studied. But  
10 people like me, I didn't get the budget until a  
11 couple of days ago. So I would like to see this  
12 become a more public process. And I would like to  
13 know that these questions are going to be answered  
14 that these people are going to ask. But even more  
15 importantly, I would like for Chicago Public  
16 Schools or the Board of Education to take some of  
17 the concerns that the public has, take them into  
18 account, because people have good ideas. We know  
19 what we want. We are here to serve the public  
20 anyway. Let's serve the public. Take these ideas  
21 and let's create a better school system that  
22 actually serves the public. Thank you.

23                   (Applause.)

24                   MS. SIMMONS: Geraldine Howard. And

1 following Ms. Howard will be Richard Washington.

2 MS. HOWARD: Hi. My name is  
3 Geraldine Howard.

4 I am a little nervous now, so I  
5 might fumble on my question. But what I want to  
6 know is, of all the teachers that were laid off,  
7 as well as the substitute teachers that was laid  
8 off, or terminated, will they be reinstated? I  
9 mean, of the teachers -- first on hand, seeing  
10 teachers being stressed out, I know they need more  
11 substitute teachers. So that is my question.

12 Thank you.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. SIMMONS: Mr. Richard Washington.

15 MR. WASHINGTON: You know a few years  
16 back you used to hear on the news, and on TV, on  
17 the radio a lot about No Child Left Behind. And  
18 it was a program that was supposed to have an  
19 impact all over the country, that our children in  
20 the United States of America would be able to hold  
21 their head up high and compete with any child in  
22 the world.

23 Now, Chicago is called the Jewel of  
24 the Midwest. But on my way to work this morning,

1 I heard that there are only three other places in  
2 the United States that graduate a lower number of  
3 African-American males. Three places. That means  
4 that Chicago is the fourth lowest place in the  
5 United States of America for the graduation of  
6 African-American males.

7 Here is the question. If folks are  
8 just falling out of school, then are the rest of  
9 the kids even able to compete? Probably not.

10 Now, everybody has been impacted by the  
11 global economic situation. Everyone in this room  
12 has had to make some sort of adjustment in their  
13 personal financial picture. But if you have a  
14 home, you can't stop paying your mortgage. If you  
15 have a car with an active loan, you can't stop  
16 paying the car loan, because your budget is not  
17 working out.

18 In the city of Chicago there are  
19 certain things you absolutely can't cut. You  
20 can't cut the police. I think that all the  
21 murders that we see day after day after day proves  
22 that. You can't cut the emergency personnel,  
23 because there are fires, and there are floods, and  
24 there are accidents and there are injuries. And

1 you can't cut the educators, because we are  
2 talking about the future.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. WASHINGTON: We are not just  
5 talking about a budget. We are talking about  
6 lives.

7 How can America stand up and say,  
8 we are going to compete, if we turn around and say  
9 oh, no, we have to cut these positions? 35, 40  
10 kids in a classroom. Many of them from improvised  
11 neighborhoods. Some of them just show up to  
12 school to get a meal and heat.

13 (Applause.)

14 MR. WASHINGTON: But we are going to  
15 cut teachers. It doesn't add up. Now, if you  
16 think that these cuts are a good idea here is what  
17 I would like you to do. Go home, talk to your  
18 spouse, talk to your other family members and say,  
19 we are going to stop paying our mortgage right  
20 now. And the outcome of that decision will be the  
21 same as the outcome of this decision. It will be  
22 disastrous. It will be disastrous.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.



1 Deborah Muhammad. And following Deborah Muhammad  
2 is Teresa Daniels.

3 We just want to remind each  
4 speaker, when you come to the mike, please say  
5 your name before you begin speaking.

6 MS. MUHAMMAD: Good evening. I am  
7 Deborah Muhammad.

8 I have a number of things that I  
9 wanted to mention. And one has to do with the  
10 Illinois State Lottery. Some people may recall  
11 that at the inception of the Illinois State  
12 Lottery, the whole con game was that the money was  
13 supposed to go to support education. Did anybody  
14 hear that?

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. MUHAMMAD: Okay. All right. I am  
17 not the only one. With all of the lottery tickets  
18 that are sold in the state of Illinois and  
19 specifically in Chicago, and even to zero in on  
20 certain zip codes, why in the world would anybody  
21 stand before the people and say that there is no  
22 money for education?

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. MUHAMMAD: It is easier -- it is

1 easier to buy a lottery ticket in Chicago than it  
2 is to get a fresh piece of fruit. That is proven,  
3 and the proliferation of the facilities for  
4 lottery has proliferated throughout the poorest  
5 communities.

6                   And I got laid off from O'Toole  
7 Elementary School. We had children, young people  
8 murdered in that community on a ratio at least of  
9 one or two a week this past year. So how dare the  
10 people who make the decision in their ivory tower,  
11 whose children, by the way, don't have to dodge  
12 bullets, don't have to dodge bullets.

13                   (Applause.)

14                   MS. MUHAMMAD: They don't have to worry  
15 about -- they don't have to worry about going from  
16 block A to block B. They don't have to worry  
17 about that. And my point is this -- my point is  
18 this: There should be no taxation without  
19 representation.

20                   (Applause.)

21                   MS. MUHAMMAD: We are being taxed more  
22 than anybody else in Chicago; ten percent.  
23 11 percent. That is the cost of living here in  
24 Chicago. And then we are afraid to go anywhere.

1 We are afraid to do anything. And this is all  
2 because the lip service that is given to education  
3 is not real. America talks about the importance  
4 of education, but where do we put our money?

5 And I want to end on this note. My  
6 beloved passed on to heaven grandmother, who I  
7 loved dearly, she said that you put your money  
8 close to your heart. Meaning, you put your money  
9 where the real priorities are. So are the  
10 priorities on Clark Street or are they on  
11 Damen Street? Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. SIMMONS: Theresa Daniels. And  
14 after Ms. Daniels, Ms. Rusita Chatonda.

15 MS. DANIELS: Theresa Daniels, retired  
16 teacher. And this is a hard act to follow.

17 All the questions I wanted to ask  
18 have been asked. Many of the points made. So, I  
19 am just going to say that there has been skewed  
20 priorities for a long time. And the people who  
21 make us against one another, charter schools  
22 against public schools, have been laughing all  
23 along for decades now.

24 (Applause.)

1 MS. DANIELS: Making the public schools  
2 as miserable as they can be. And this isn't new,  
3 stuffing the classrooms full, overstuffing the  
4 classrooms full of kids, more kids than desks.  
5 Teachers struggling to teach, despite the fact  
6 that every day five new kids come in. You have to  
7 take their program, write down all their  
8 information, find them a seat. And five kids are  
9 being reprogrammed to another classroom. That  
10 takes up the whole period.

11 If you are smart you have some work  
12 ready for the kids that they might see as  
13 meaningful, maybe. But you are doing this for a  
14 whole month, two months. Two months of learning,  
15 one month of learning. More than that. Classes  
16 sitting without a teacher half a year, all year.  
17 A regular teacher, just substitutes, where no  
18 learning can go on. No program of instruction.

19 This is what people who have been  
20 in charge have done for a long time. And these  
21 are the people, I'm sorry to say, that have set up  
22 charter schools. They don't care about democratic  
23 education for everybody.

24 Now, maybe the charter school you

1 are supporting is not that kind of charter school.  
2 But there are charter schools where the people  
3 just take the money that each kid brings, you  
4 know, say 6,000 or 10,000, and they hire cheap  
5 teachers, new teachers that can't teach them.

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. DANIELS: They are promised a hell  
8 of a lot; you got computers, you are going to have  
9 this, you are going to have that. Five years  
10 later there is still no computers for every kid.  
11 But they promise everything.

12 And in the meantime, let's say the  
13 kid brings in 6,000 of public taxpayer money.  
14 They will hire a cheap teacher, they burn her out.  
15 They burn him out. That teacher, the statistics  
16 show, leaves after two or three years. And out of  
17 that 6,000, maybe 4,000 goes into the pocket of  
18 the charter operator. And he wants to get  
19 everybody thinking, oh, the charter schools are  
20 really much better than public schools.

21 And you know we need the public  
22 school system, because the public schools have to  
23 educate everybody. They don't just kick people  
24 out. They can't. And you have to make these

1 public schools better where you have decent  
2 educational situations for kids to really learn.

3                   You know, I think Mayor Daley  
4 really hates teachers. You can tell from the way  
5 he talks. Either he has dyslexia or, you know,  
6 some learning problem the man has. I mean it is  
7 clear, maybe he got it from environment. His  
8 father talked like that, too. There is something  
9 un -- is that is not working right.

10                   (Applause.)

11                   MS. DANIELS: And I think he is private  
12 school oriented anyway from his cultural  
13 background. But he hates teachers. I mean  
14 something happened to him where he hates teachers  
15 and he hates schools. Thank you. Thank you.

16                   (Applause.)

17                   MS. SIMMONS: Rusita Chatonda. And  
18 following Ms. Chatonda will be David Vance.

19                   MS. CHATONDA: Well, that is definitely  
20 a hard act to follow. I am going to try. I am  
21 Rusita Chatonda, and currently organizer for the  
22 Chicago Teachers Union.

23                   And first of all, would like to say to  
24 everyone here, thank you for coming out because

1 this is what it is about.

2 (Applause.)

3 MS. CHATONDA: It is about our  
4 communities coming together. It is about our  
5 students. It is about our parents. It is about  
6 our ESP's that are sitting over there. It is  
7 about our teachers that have been displaced. And  
8 it is about us as a community, finally; not being  
9 duped by CPS, not really being lied to and  
10 believing those lies, by becoming educated and  
11 coming out here to find out what the real issues  
12 were.

13 So, I am just going to say to  
14 everyone, thank you for coming out. To my young  
15 people back here, I really applaud you. I was  
16 once a young mother. I am still a mother, not  
17 that young anymore.

18 (Applause.)

19 MS. CHATONDA: But I remember I have  
20 three sons and I have a daughter. And they were  
21 educated in a variety of schools; public school,  
22 they were educated in -- and some of them went to  
23 the lab school. They went to Mount Carmel. And I  
24 can, honestly, I would not lie when I say this,

1 that my children that went through CPS schools,  
2 with the fantastic wonderful teachers that they  
3 had, they achieved. They have been gifted -- in  
4 the gifted programs at CPS. They both received  
5 scholarships, and we have the best teachers  
6 at CPS.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. CHATONDA: I just wanted you to  
9 know that. Don't be fooled. As Malcolm would  
10 say, don't be bamboozled. And I want to say to  
11 you, I know what you are going through. I know  
12 what you want for your children.

13 Come out to some of our organizer  
14 events and let's get educated on this issue.

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. CHATONDA: I do want to ask a few  
17 questions, because funding public education is  
18 personal for me. It is about the opportunities  
19 that our children, not only my children  
20 personally, because I have taught for years and I  
21 call all of them my children. I have taught  
22 thousands of children. And I want to say that it  
23 is about them. It is about the budget. It is  
24 about the children, and first the children. And



1 then it is about the teachers and the children.

2           Mr. Huberman and everybody else -- and  
3 I don't want to say what they are doing, I am  
4 going to be nice today, but what I am going to  
5 say, to put children and teachers first. This is  
6 what education is about. Everyone else is kind of  
7 riding in on the party or the program. We have to  
8 fund schools so that children can be educated, so  
9 that teachers -- and it is not just about  
10 teachers' jobs, because ultimately teachers and  
11 children will always be tied together and we want  
12 our parents to realize that. That we go into  
13 schools with love and caring for our children, all  
14 of our children. And it isn't a personal "my  
15 child." We are working together.

16           We have some of our teachers --  
17 every Tuesday night we host a forum at Operations  
18 Push for some of the most dedicated people that I  
19 have met. I have nothing but the utmost respect  
20 for these teachers. And they have been cut. They  
21 don't have jobs. And these are teachers that  
22 don't deserve what is happening to them.

23           MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please  
24 conclude.

1 MS. CHATONDA: I will.

2 I am going to ask that public  
3 education be about children and teachers. But I  
4 am also going to ask, I would like for all of our  
5 teachers who come out to Push, our ESPs, would you  
6 please stand for a moment, because this is the  
7 human casualty of what is going on with our  
8 community.

9 Would you please give them a round  
10 of applause?

11 Thank you very much, teachers, for  
12 the service that you give.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. SIMMONS: David Vance. And  
15 following David Vance is Anna Ware.

16 MR. VANCE: Good evening, ladies and  
17 gentlemen. Dave Vance. That was another hard act  
18 to follow. And I really salute Chatonda for the  
19 struggle that she has been upholding here for the  
20 teachers of Chicago.

21 I am a parent. I am an LSC member  
22 at J. N. Thorpe Elementary School.

23 And here is another issue. It is  
24 wasting -- if I can save a million dollars of our

1 public money that is being wasted by CPS, would  
2 you listen? Would you give me the page number on  
3 your budget of where that money is being spent on  
4 a total facelift to J.N. Thorpe for the charter  
5 school that is coming in?

6 What page? And what page can you  
7 show me? I understand it is a dollar a year. Oh,  
8 that is our public schools you are giving away for  
9 a dollar a year. What page?

10 Okay. And so this is where we are  
11 coming from, to fight for our public schools. And  
12 what it looks like is a lot of promises. Oh, they  
13 are not going to close Thorpe. But they are doing  
14 everything they can do to do it.

15 So my question is, you know, giving  
16 away the newer section of our school to the  
17 charter school, oh, it is going to make them look  
18 good while they put us in the old school, over  
19 with the poor kids from south Chicago.

20 Stop it. Stop wasting our money.  
21 We want good education for our kids. Give us  
22 after-school programs. And really put children  
23 first. I really like that part about put your  
24 money close to your heart. I want to stop there.

1                   You guys should be ashamed. And we  
2 are fighting for public schools. And we are  
3 fighting for everybody to have a decent education.

4                   Thank you.

5                   (Applause.)

6                   MS. SIMMONS: Anna Ware. And following  
7 Anna Ware will be George Schmidt.

8                   MS. WARE: Hi. My name is Anna Ware.  
9 And I am a parent of a CPS high school student and  
10 a parent of a former Corliss graduate.

11                   And I am here tonight because when  
12 we talk about budgets, budgets are supposed to  
13 represent your programmatic goals, your  
14 objectives. A budget is supposed to be flexible.  
15 We make budgets seems as if they are scary. We  
16 will just break it down.

17                   It is just like your checkbook;  
18 income, the money you have coming in. Expenses,  
19 the money you have going out. Real simple. That  
20 is a budget.

21                   And the reality is, is that we say  
22 that we value children, but we don't put our money  
23 where our mouth is. Because if you really value  
24 and finance -- when we talk about value, value is

1 something that you feel is very important. And we  
2 always talk about educate the children. It takes  
3 a village. But then on the down side you are not  
4 funding the village. So it is hypocritical. Then  
5 you wonder about crime.

6 But I guarantee you, if you do a  
7 correlational study, there is a direct link to the  
8 crimes that you see, which is really to me just  
9 terrorism. It is terrorism. And we are sitting  
10 around here tolerating this crap, all this  
11 violence, but I bet you it is a direct link to  
12 education.

13 And my point is, when it comes to  
14 transportation, that is why I am here. When you  
15 go to the new schools fair at McCormick Inn for  
16 high schools, and you talk about all these new  
17 schools you have, and what CPS is offering and  
18 this and that, you don't tell the parent that on a  
19 high school level if it is a new school, that they  
20 are going to a co-share environment because you  
21 are not building anymore new schools, because you  
22 say you don't have enough capital money, or all  
23 the capital money for building new schools have  
24 been spent.

1                   So you don't tell the new parent  
2 looking for the best opportunity for their  
3 children that they have a choice. If you go to a  
4 new school to either go into a co-share situation  
5 in which you are sharing with a high school, or  
6 you are sharing with an elementary school, which  
7 is to me key information that you should tell  
8 these parents at the high school there. But you  
9 don't say that.

10                  Then you don't want to spend money.  
11 And that is my appeal here, is that if you are  
12 forcing parents to send their kids across avenue A  
13 going to block B, they are going through different  
14 territory, you need to increase your line item on  
15 transportation and provide those high school  
16 students buses. Buses to take them from here to  
17 there.

18                  Now, you say you value education.  
19 Start showing it by increasing the line item under  
20 transportation and bus the children to the  
21 schools, because you know that they are in  
22 different territories, different neighborhoods,  
23 but you want to keep on just sacrificing our kids.  
24 You are sacrificing our kids. We are burying our

1 kids. And I guarantee you if it was changed with  
2 the kind of kids that they are burying, we would  
3 tear the roof off of here.

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. SIMMONS: George Schmidt. And  
6 following George Schmidt will be  
7 Mary Ellen Sanchez.

8 MR. SCHMIDT: Good evening. My name is  
9 George Schmidt.

10 And for 28 years I taught in  
11 Chicago's high schools proudly. You heard of  
12 names like Dusable, Marshall, Manley and so forth.  
13 And I taught all those places. And I did so  
14 proudly.

15 I won't talk about how I departed  
16 from Chicago Public Schools tonight because it  
17 would be a waste of the little time we have. But  
18 now I am working both as a reporter at Substance  
19 News, which is at [substancenews.net](http://substancenews.net), and for the  
20 Chicago Teachers Union as a consultant.

21 And I can assure you, those of you  
22 who think a charter school is your salvation, that  
23 is not true.

24 For the first time this year, the

1 Board of Education has published all the data on  
2 the financials of the charter schools in the  
3 budgets. And if you go to those pages, starting I  
4 believe page 283 in this budget, if you can get a  
5 copy of it, because it is not in your public  
6 library, it is not in your local school, it is not  
7 in your alderman's office, but you should be able  
8 to get a copy. Read those.

9                   You will find that most of the  
10 charter schools that have been in business for a  
11 few years wound up settling down into about the  
12 same performance as the rest of us. Because the  
13 problem is not with the public schools. The  
14 problem is with the society. And the problem is,  
15 as everybody said, with the way society functions.  
16 And the problem is the priorities that come out of  
17 something like this budget.

18                   If I wanted to demagogue this like  
19 some people have, I could look around this room  
20 and name ten people who are making over a \$100,000  
21 a year working for CPS.

22                   UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can you point  
23 them out?

24                   MR. SCHMIDT: I am not going to do



1 that.

2                   You know who you are. You know  
3 that in one case, the person stood up when my  
4 friend Terry was teaching, and your position got a  
5 raise from 115 to \$150,000 a year in last year's  
6 budget, when you assumed the title that was once  
7 held by somebody else. That is the way the  
8 priorities are actually set and that is what has  
9 to be talked about.

10                  First of all, everybody in this town  
11 should have a copy of this. The proposed budget.  
12 It should not have been restricted, like water in  
13 a desert, like you had to go to the oasis and  
14 fight with everybody else to get one cup of water.  
15 But that is what happened. And the reason is  
16 because they don't want you to read this, but we  
17 have been reading this.

18                  In fact, some of us have read all  
19 2,100 pages of it. Because this book is 400 pages  
20 in print, and another 1,500 pages on the CD. And  
21 every one of those pages bespeaking of priority  
22 like, why did we decide to pay a man \$150,000 for  
23 a job that was being done for 115. There is a  
24 great answer for that. And I am going to be

1 publishing that answer.

2           The proposed budget should have  
3 been in everyone's hands. But finally every year  
4 we do get the truth, or at least close to it. It  
5 is a book called The Audited Financial Reports,  
6 which comes out in December.

7           Everyone sitting here knows the  
8 budget, knows that every year for the past  
9 15 years, Chicago has announced a deficit sometime  
10 between January and March. This year it was a  
11 little more pornographically exaggerated.

12           Mr. Huberman said 900 million in  
13 January, knowing that it was going to be rounded  
14 up to a billion by the morons who run --

15           MS. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, please  
16 conclude.

17           MR. SCHMIDT: No. But I will try.

18           Who writes for the other press in  
19 this town. The fact is when this fiscal year  
20 ends, the audited financial statements will show  
21 that those words of deficit were a lie.

22           The problem is that fiscal 2011,  
23 which we talked about tonight, will not have an  
24 exposure of financial statements until December of

1 2011. And by then the amnesia that dominates  
2 public affairs in this city will be listening to  
3 the next lie about the next deficit, while the  
4 next patronage person will be getting the next  
5 \$150,000 a year job. Because for a lot of  
6 reasons, some of which have to do with family ties  
7 and nothing to do with qualifications, while  
8 teachers --

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. SCHMIDT: -- while teachers are  
11 being laid off, while schools are being destroyed  
12 and undermined. While 20 or \$30 million, like was  
13 spent at Austin High School so it could become a  
14 charter or Calumet High School, so it could become  
15 a charter. That money gets put in now at Thorpe.  
16 There is a vicious thing going on here that we are  
17 going to continue to write about until more than  
18 the 440 people who set history these three days by  
19 coming to these hearings, until there is a  
20 thousand people every night, and then 10,000.  
21 Because everybody has to know the truth.

22 One last thing, thank you for the  
23 time. Earlier the speaker asked about the  
24 salaries that were budgeted \$2 million. That

1 document I published and it is still online.  
2 Because I got that document from the Board of  
3 Education under the Freedom of Information Act.  
4 That was an example of how the Board was lying in  
5 the fiscal 2010 budget.

6                   They created over a hundred  
7 positions. And they randomly inserted in the  
8 budgeted salaries between 1 and \$15 million to  
9 fill the hole they had to do to cover the lie and  
10 the exaggerations they had told in talking about  
11 the deficit.

12                   So I got that information called  
13 the Position File under the Freedom of Information  
14 Act. I published it. After calling two of the  
15 people whose names were on the list for those  
16 million dollar salaries, I said, are you getting  
17 paid a million dollars?

18                   I mean, it was ridiculous. One of  
19 them is John Butterfield, who works for the  
20 principals' association, retired principal.

21                   Now, I am not going to go on  
22 because I can see you getting nervous and I know  
23 they come in here after working --

24                   MS. SHAKER: I just want to make sure

1 everyone can speak.

2 MR. SCHMIDT: Working at Fitch ratings  
3 was an interesting transition. Believe me, we are  
4 going to make it more interesting. But I am also  
5 counting on more integrity.

6 And so I will end with this: For  
7 the past nine months I have been waiting for an  
8 updated Position File, not that piece of nonsense  
9 that has been posted on the Board's website called  
10 the Position Roster. That is not the budget  
11 document that lists all the employees.

12 Since November we have been waiting  
13 for that document because it is fundamental to  
14 understanding the priorities of this system. It  
15 tells you that the chief of security and safety is  
16 now budgeted \$150,000 a year. His predecessor was  
17 budgeted 115. You have to look back and forward  
18 to see what is going on.

19 It tells you how much the CFO is  
20 budgeted for. Tells you that we didn't have the  
21 Deputy CFO until a couple of weeks ago. And I  
22 think actually some things we need. But we sure  
23 as heck need to get accurate information.  
24 Especially now. And it has to come through the

1 Board without fun and games, without a promise  
2 saying we are going to be more transparent, and  
3 then another lie on the Board's website, like the  
4 position roster, like the consultant's list.

5                   So let's get these numbers  
6 straightened out so that next year, instead of  
7 hearing this deficient pornography from January  
8 through June, we can have some real numbers to  
9 talk about and real priorities to discuss.

10                   Thank you.

11                   (Applause.)

12                   MS. SIMMONS: Mary Ellen Sanchez. And  
13 following Mary Ellen Sanchez is Renee Riley.

14                   MS. SANCHEZ: Mary Ellen Sanchez, Byrne  
15 Elementary School.

16                   First of all, thank you very much  
17 for giving up your evening to be here. I'm sorry  
18 you have to get a taste of what it is like to be a  
19 teacher, where we have to give up your evenings  
20 every day grading papers, preparing lessons and  
21 reading book reports.

22                   Please know that we in the trenches  
23 do appreciate your time. You are looking for  
24 waste in the budget and some things came up.

1                   First of all, I would like to  
2 propose that we eliminate some of these area  
3 platforms, all these area offices, the personnel  
4 and the buildings.

5                   Last January my principal returned  
6 from an Area 11 field trip to a school in Austin,  
7 Texas. Returned with photos of word walls. That  
8 is it. My question is: How much did we taxpayers  
9 pay for round trip airfare, meals and hotels for  
10 these administrators, who could have taken  
11 photographs of our own schools?

12                   Last spring our teachers were  
13 pulled away from our students on a nonprofessional  
14 development day so that we could be in-serviced on  
15 guided reading. My question is: How much did we  
16 taxpayers pay for a hundred substitute teachers,  
17 round trip airfare, hotels, meals and supplies for  
18 two Boston consultants to teach a program that we  
19 have been using by Board of Ed mandates for the  
20 past five years?

21                   Now, at the same in-service I  
22 observed was held in a CPS building that was  
23 utilized for nothing more than area staff and  
24 storage. So, my question is: How many such

1 buildings are presently owned, operated, heated,  
2 cooled and maintained by CPS? Do we actually  
3 still own Pershing Road? Please provide this list  
4 of all CPS buildings and note which are actually  
5 used by students on your website.

6 I also ask that you stop giving to  
7 the charter schools because at the hearings held  
8 at last January at Clark Street a parent described  
9 how her baby had to sit through asbestos removal  
10 and then watch air conditioning being installed in  
11 her building, only to then be told that her school  
12 was being closed.

13 So my question is: Does the Board  
14 have that kind of extra money to throw away, or  
15 are they actually spending this money on a  
16 building to improve it, because then they turn  
17 around and give that building to a private  
18 corporation for a charter school?

19 Equal treatment under the law. I  
20 am asking for this.

21 While attending these hearings on  
22 Clark Street I observed actual toilet paper in  
23 each bathroom stall. My question is: Why do  
24 people, your people downtown, have such luxuries



1 while our students have to request a few sheets at  
2 a time? And those of us who actually do have  
3 rolls of toilet paper, it disintegrates on contact  
4 and we end up with rashes.

5                   Speaking of paper, who rations out  
6 your paper? Because my question is: Why is it  
7 that you all downtown have access to as much paper  
8 and photocopying as needed, but I have to request  
9 actual sheets of construction paper, 25 at the  
10 most for a classroom of 31 students. It is --  
11 that doesn't mesh.

12                   In Chicago Public Schools we are  
13 separate and we are unequal. We don't have the  
14 luxuries of paper and air conditioning that you  
15 all have in central office. Yet, thanks to state  
16 mandates, we do have excellent credentials.

17                   I would bet that the number of  
18 master's degrees and Ph.D's, as well as years of  
19 experience held by those of us in the trenches,  
20 outnumbers the degrees at central office.

21                   (Applause.)

22                   MS. SANCHEZ: And then you call in Arne  
23 Duncan, who came in with nothing more than a BA in  
24 Sociology. Yet, downtown continues to treat our

1 female dominant profession as if citizens from a  
2 third world country. We aren't even paid on time.

3           The Board seems to think that we  
4 can't budget our own money, so they hold onto it.  
5 They collect interest. And then they dole it out  
6 to us over the summer. So here is my next  
7 question; how much interest does the Board of Ed  
8 make off of my money?

9           (Applause.)

10           MS. SANCHEZ: I ask you as people who  
11 actually do hold positions of authority to say no  
12 to Mr. Huberman. You are the financial officer.  
13 You are the budget director. I respect those  
14 positions. And you actually do hold the purse  
15 strings so you have the power to say no to him.  
16 You can tell him that there is no money for his  
17 cohorts. There is no money for reams of paper on  
18 data. There is no money for after school data  
19 meetings. Because that money has to be budgeted  
20 for the students, so they can be in after school  
21 classes. That money should be budgeted for truant  
22 officers to get the students back into the  
23 classrooms.

24           (Applause.)

1 MS. SANCHEZ: And that money is  
2 budgeted for teacher to actually spend teaching  
3 those students and not waste it on filling out  
4 more paperwork for those cohorts who are using  
5 areas administrators trying to justify their  
6 positions.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. SANCHEZ: Please utilize your  
9 authority to put children first. Please look  
10 Huberman in the eye and just say no.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. SIMMONS: Ursula Whitfield.  
13 Whitfield, maybe? Please say your name again.

14 MS. RILEY: Good evening. My name is  
15 Renee Riley. And I have a question that  
16 Mayor Daley asked, the first Mayor Daley asked  
17 44 years ago when the Chicago Teachers Union was  
18 on strike. He said, "What about the little kids?"  
19 And he asked that question. They have played that  
20 over and over and over again on the news. "What  
21 about the little kids?"

22 Well, I ask that same question  
23 today. Because if you don't care about  
24 children -- I mean if you don't care about the

1 teachers, then you can't possibly care about the  
2 children either.

3                   They are cutting all the teachers,  
4 cutting all the jobs, closing down positions all  
5 over in the schools, overcrowding the classrooms.  
6 But the area offices are remaining opened. And I  
7 can't understand why there is money for  
8 administrative jobs if there is not enough money  
9 for the teachers.

10                   The area offices have not been able  
11 to solve any of the problems that I have gone  
12 there with. I have gone there and I told them  
13 that the principal closed down the computer lab at  
14 my school and the children will not having a level  
15 playing field. They will not be able to compete  
16 in this 21st century.

17                   Everybody has to have technology.  
18 And they can't just learn it from themselves.  
19 They couldn't just cut and paste and type around  
20 with two fingers, and think that they are going to  
21 be able to make it in this world. Well, the area  
22 office did absolutely nothing about it.

23                   I went to the area office and I  
24 told them that the principal was underreporting

1 tardies. Three tardies turns into an absence. So  
2 she was in fact stealing money from the state.  
3 God knows the state has no money to be stolen, but  
4 they are stealing money from the state. They did  
5 absolutely nothing about it.

6                   There has been several problems  
7 that has not been resolved at the area offices,  
8 but these people continue to have their jobs. So  
9 I can't understand what is the purpose. If you  
10 want to cut back, cut back on some more  
11 administrative positions, not the classroom  
12 teachers.

13                   Keep in mind, there is one big  
14 question that we have to always remember: "What  
15 about the little kids?"

16                   Thank you.

17                   (Applause.)

18                   MS. WHITEFIELD: Good evening. My name  
19 is Ursula Whitfield. And I have worked in  
20 Englewood as well as now I have just been laid off  
21 from Roseland community where, you know, we have  
22 the violence and the shootings in both.

23                   But my questions are: Is it true  
24 that the cuts came from downtown by position

1 numbers personally, or were the cuts made by  
2 principals according to the anticipated budget?

3                   And my next question is: Will we  
4 have to reapply for our jobs or will we be  
5 reinstated? And why is cuts being made in special  
6 ed, when I know personally that there is still a  
7 great need for children to learn in special ed.  
8 Because I had students just last year that totally  
9 didn't want to leave me because she continually,  
10 continuously need the help.

11                   This child is very, very special  
12 ed. and I am working with her down at Roseland.  
13 Now I have been laid off, so when school starts  
14 back in September, she has not me to look forward  
15 to, but now she's got to cling onto someone else  
16 who is already helping five other students. So  
17 now there goes my special ed. position that I  
18 have worked so hard for.

19                   And next Wednesday when the budget  
20 is set, what percentage of teachers and TA's,  
21 including myself, will be getting back to work?  
22 Because when September come I am really ready to  
23 go back to work.

24                   I have had children and my children

1 are in college now, and I am trying to keep them  
2 going so they can become something. I have had a  
3 child graduate from Northern with -- one of them,  
4 associate in hospital administrator, and the other  
5 one is a social worker. And I have one going down  
6 in Normal, Illinois, now that I am trying to keep  
7 in school.

8 And I really do not have time to be  
9 trying to figure out when am I going back to work.  
10 And my child need a computer and she needs to be  
11 in school.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. WHITEFIELD: And this is college  
14 that is going to prepare us for our future. Not  
15 only for now, but when I get 70 or 60, and when  
16 you guys retire. I have great children; A, B  
17 students, great status, all college. And this is  
18 what -- they are going to work for us, and I need  
19 to work for them now in order for them to be a  
20 success for us later.

21 And charter schools are fine. But  
22 a lot of our children, I am telling you right now,  
23 will not make it in a charter school. Because I  
24 go to work in Roseland and Englewood, and five

1 fights jump out before I get to the door. You  
2 can't tell me nothing about what these kids is  
3 doing at CPS versus a charter school. Yes, we  
4 have a lot of problems at CPS, but these children  
5 are still children and they need to learn.

6 But the children that is in these  
7 charter schools, they are more disciplined and  
8 willing to sit down. We work hard in these CPS  
9 schools trying to get these kids to sit down, and  
10 trying to get them to listen, and trying to get  
11 the three that couldn't make it into a charter  
12 school, or whose name hasn't been called yet, to  
13 try to sit down with Johnny and Johnny won't sit  
14 still, and he is pulling and cutting on people's  
15 hair.

16 And then we got the special ed.  
17 children, who are trying to -- when we go off into  
18 these regular ed classrooms with these special ed.  
19 children, because I am following them around  
20 trying to help with their studies all day, they're  
21 already being challenged within the regular ed.  
22 classroom. They are having a very hard time in  
23 these classrooms. They are not learning enough.

24 The children won't sit down. They



1 got one teacher in there and they're steady  
2 hollering, and I am in there with her. And there  
3 is another person in there trying to come in  
4 there. Then they have got to call the principal.  
5 And they don't respect nobody but the principal,  
6 because by the time you get through talking to  
7 them you have already reached your limit.

8 We work very, very, very hard in  
9 these CPS schools trying to get these children to  
10 sit it down. And what would we do with the  
11 children who won't make it in these charter  
12 schools? They got to learn. What we going to do  
13 with them?

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. HERZOG: Are there any more  
16 speakers?

17 MS. SIMMONS: Yeah. I think we have  
18 covered all the speakers.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: In anticipation  
20 of a night when everyone is here, I was just  
21 concerned about why there is only 20 copies of the  
22 budget? If you are inviting people from the  
23 community, why is it that it wasn't at least a  
24 hundred copies of the budget? That really has

1 bothered me since I have been here.

2 MS. SHAKER: I think we understand and  
3 that is something we are going to need to address.

4 MS. HERZOG: It is posted online. So  
5 it is posted online. And we brought CD's. And if  
6 you need a budget book, if you give us your  
7 address --

8 MS. SHAKER: We have already offered to  
9 send it to you as well, which we can do.

10 MS. SIMMONS: We have Terry Wilford.

11 MS. WILFORD: Good evening. I am  
12 Terry Wilford. I am a teacher. I am a parent.  
13 And I would like to say to the young ladies in the  
14 back, I also taught at charter schools. And I  
15 taught at a charter school. And I also am a  
16 teacher at a public school today.

17 And what I want to say about that,  
18 too. I want to take the first note to say that my  
19 children attend public school. One thing is, my  
20 children attend school all over the city. I have  
21 a daughter at Walter Payton. I have a son at  
22 Kenwood Academy. I also have another son at  
23 Marcus Garvey Elementary School.

24 And as an parent, I am going to say

1 this: School, public education is so unequal here  
2 in Chicago. I really can't even explain it. To  
3 go to Walter Payton on the north side, to go to  
4 Kenwood Academy on the south side, to go to Marcus  
5 Garvey Elementary School on the west side, it is  
6 totally different.

7 Parents, we have to tell them what  
8 we want. They do not dictate to us what they are  
9 going to give us.

10 (Applause.)

11 MS. WILFORD: You all have it  
12 backwards. We are the taxpayers. We pay their  
13 salaries. We have to demand what we need that is  
14 necessary. Because the bottom line, our children  
15 are in these schools. I don't care if it is  
16 charter. I don't care if it is public. You have  
17 to wake up. Because they are not interested in  
18 educating our children.

19 Let me tell you something. The  
20 playing field is like this. And it is going to  
21 get wider. And it is not going to change until  
22 parents are more responsible in going to these  
23 schools and knowing what is going on, because I  
24 take that responsibility. I expect that from

1 myself and other parents, because I teach their  
2 children. I want to see you in a school. I want  
3 to see why so-and-so didn't do their homework. No  
4 one in these schools are going to do that. The  
5 parents have to do that. You have to demand that  
6 you have qualified teachers in the classrooms.  
7 That is the bottom line.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. WILFORD: And most of us, I am  
10 going to tell you the truth, because of the  
11 qualifications for CPS, most of us have master  
12 degrees, maybe two master degrees. But we are  
13 overwhelmed. We need parents back in the school.  
14 They don't want you in the school. They don't  
15 want you in the school. But it is your right as a  
16 taxpayer to come out to these schools and see what  
17 is going on. And matter of fact, they need to  
18 open the schools to have the parents, show them  
19 the curriculum and teach them as well. Because we  
20 have to get this together, people.

21 This is not going to change because  
22 the economy is worse. The working people --

23 MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please  
24 conclude.

1 MS. WILFORD: I will.

2 The working are working harder,  
3 then losing their jobs. We all have bills, but  
4 our salaries are not increasing \$50,000 every  
5 year, they are laying us off. Now, these are the  
6 people who are educated. So what is going to  
7 happen? You think about it.

8 Demand what you want from these  
9 people. We pay them. And if they don't give us  
10 what we want, then they don't keep our children  
11 because they get money for our children attending  
12 these schools. That's the bottom line.

13 Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Price. Ms. Price  
16 will be our last speaker for the evening.

17 MS. PRICE: My name is Willette Price.  
18 You are looking at a face of an honorably  
19 dismissed highly qualified teacher.

20 I want to know when will you place  
21 these highly qualified, great, displaced teachers  
22 back in front of students?

23 I have a friend here with me  
24 tonight. She is a great teacher. She can't find

1 a job. Many of my friends can't find jobs. Many  
2 of my colleagues can't find jobs. You are looking  
3 in the face of a highly qualified teacher, and  
4 there are many more out here out of work.

5 I am asking the Board, the  
6 budgeters to take it to Ron Huberman to please  
7 reinstate these great teachers for our students.  
8 You are leaving -- you are leaving other teachers  
9 who are not as qualified as we are to be teaching  
10 these students. Teaching and learning needs to  
11 exist on a lot higher level.

12 Thank you.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. SHAKER: Okay. I think that was  
15 our last speaker. I just want to reiterate again  
16 that we really appreciate your presence here. We  
17 are taking note of everything that you are saying.  
18 And we are going to translate this internally to  
19 our team. And that, you know, your questions are  
20 serious and are of the utmost concern.

21 So thank you for coming.

22 MS. HERZOG: Also, thank you. But I do  
23 want to make sure that -- there are no more cards  
24 up front, so if you write down your address and

1 your name, we will get more and we will send it to  
2 your address. Laurie is going to hand them out to  
3 you.

4 So thank you, everyone. I  
5 appreciate the feedback.


6 (Which were all the proceedings  
7 had in the above-entitled  
8 matter.)

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I, Janice Smith, being first duly sworn,  
on oath says that she is a Registered Professional  
Reporter, License No. 084-001346, and Notary  
Public in and for the County of Cook, State of  
Illinois, and that she reported in shorthand the  
foregoing report of proceedings, and that the  
aforementioned proceedings are a true and correct  
transcript of her shorthand notes so taken as  
aforesaid, and contains the proceedings given at  
said hearing.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Janice Smith, RPR  
LIC. NO. 084-001346



	<b>11: 4</b>	<b>11: 8,11</b>	<b>actually (14)</b>	<b>Alyson (3)</b>
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**2010-2011 PROPOSED BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING  
AT CORLISS HIGH SCHOOL**

**August 19, 2010**

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