

**In The Matter Of:**  
*SIMEON HIGH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012 PROPOSED BUDGET*

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*August 12, 2011*

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OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012 PROPOSED BUDGET  
PUBLIC HEARING

FRIDAY  
AUGUST 12, 2011  
7:00 P.M.

Held at  
SIMEON CAREER ACADEMY  
8147 SOUTH VINCENNES AVENUE  
Chicago, Illinois

1   **PRESENT:**

2       **MS. GINGER OSTRO**  
3       **Director**

4       **MR. ARNALDO RIVERA**  
5       **Deputy Director**

6       **MS. MELANIE SHAKER**  
7       **Interim Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer**

8       **MS. JORY SIMMONS**  
9       **Moderator**

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17       **Reported by: LaTanya Allen CSR, RPR**

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1 MS. SIMMONS: Good evening. Welcome to the  
2 Chicago Public Schools 2012 Proposed Budget  
3 Hearings. For the evening, we have provided a  
4 Spanish translator as well as a sign language  
5 interpreter. And if anyone needs assistance,  
6 please raise your hand now.

7 (Spanish interpreter  
8 speaks.)

9 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you. Before we begin, I  
10 would like to recognize the Vice President of the  
11 Board of Education, Jessie Ruiz, as well as  
12 Chief of Schools, Sean Stalin.

13 Our hearing will begin with a few  
14 comments by our senior staff member,  
15 Melanie Shaker. We will have the proposed budget  
16 presented by our director, Ginger Ostro, as well  
17 as our deputy director, Arnaldo Rivera.

18 After the first -- after the comments  
19 from our senior staff, we will ask for the first  
20 speaker of the evening. This evening we would  
21 like to conduct an orderly hearing, and we are  
22 asking that you are courteous to your fellow  
23 speakers. If this cannot happen, Security will  
24 ask you to leave for the evening.

1           When your name or organization is called,  
2     please proceed to the microphone. Each speaker  
3     will be given two minutes. And after the  
4     1 minute 30 second mark, you will be asked to  
5     conclude. We ask that you adhere to the time  
6     limit so that we have the opportunity to hear from  
7     all representatives.

8           All those wishing to speak were asked to  
9     complete a speaker's card. The registration for  
10    speaking is now closed. When multiple speakers  
11    from the same organization or school is called,  
12    only one member per organization will be allowed  
13    to speak regarding the same issue.

14          I will be your moderator for the evening,  
15    and I will indicate when your time is up. This  
16    public hearing is scheduled to conclude at  
17    9:00 p.m. And on behalf of  
18    Chicago Public Schools, we thank you for taking  
19    the time to participate in the hearing.

20          Thank you.

21          MS. SHAKER: Hello. Thanks for coming. Good  
22    evening, everybody. I'm Ms. Shaker. I am the  
23    interim Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer for  
24    Chicago Public Schools. I just wanted to welcome

1 you here tonight to our last budget hearing and  
2 tell you that we are here to listen to your  
3 thoughts. We are dedicated to this process, and  
4 we have been here every night taking notes and  
5 listening to you and what you have to say. So we  
6 want to make sure we get to hear from as many of  
7 you as possible.

8 I do want to mention to you something we  
9 are doing this year that's a little bit  
10 different. We'd like the conversation to continue  
11 over the next week or two, certainly. So we  
12 have -- if you find this agenda, you will see on  
13 there a web site. It's an interactive web site  
14 that we put together that you can give us  
15 comments, and that we can read your feedback if  
16 you don't get a chance to talk tonight or if you  
17 have further things to say.

18 So with that said, I would like to  
19 introduce my fellow members here. We've got  
20 Ginger Ostro to my left. Ginger is the budget  
21 director and grants manager. And then to my right  
22 we have Arnaldo Rivera. Arnie is the  
23 Deputy Director of Budgets, and the three of us  
24 have and the budget team have worked very hard to

1 put this together. So I will hand it off to  
2 Ginger, and she will start with the presentation.

3 MS. OSTRO: Thank you. Let me also welcome  
4 everyone this evening. We are very glad that you  
5 came out. We'd like to begin with just a short  
6 presentation that gives you an overview of the  
7 budget so you have some context -- a little bit  
8 more context, and then we will be happy to take  
9 comments and questions and look forward to that  
10 opportunity.

11 So let me begin by giving some of the key  
12 highlights of we have focused on in this budget.  
13 We came in recognizing that we face daunting  
14 challenges both on the educational side and the  
15 fiscal side. When we looked at what was happening  
16 on the fiscal side, we found a \$712 million  
17 deficit that we had to address in this year, and  
18 that was after already making \$75 million in  
19 administrative reductions. But as we looked at  
20 how we had to close that deficit -- that  
21 \$712 million deficit, we had one core principle in  
22 mind, which is to keep cuts as far away from the  
23 classroom as possible. And we think you'll see  
24 that in the choices we made as we go through the

1 reductions that we made in order get to the \$712  
2 million to close that deficit.

3 But this wasn't just about cutting  
4 budgets, it was also about saying how do we invest  
5 in programs that are important for educational  
6 goals as well as better fiscally responsible. So  
7 you will see that there are reductions in critical  
8 priority areas also reflected in this budget.

9 So some of the things that we are going  
10 to highlight in a little more detail as we go  
11 through this is to focus on what's happening on  
12 our revenue picture, the money that comes in. And  
13 what you see is that in this current year -- we  
14 are on a fiscal year basis, which means it's a  
15 year that runs from July 1 through June 30th --  
16 for the year that started July 1, we actually have  
17 less revenue this year that we had last year. So  
18 we have less money to spend on programs than we  
19 had last year. We will see some detail on that.

20 We have made reductions. You will see  
21 them. They impact a number of different areas  
22 throughout the administration focused on  
23 streamlining and eliminating duplications and  
24 keeping those cuts as far away from the classroom



1 as possible.

2 At the end of the day, we made  
3 reductions. You will see we included a property  
4 tax increase, but we could close our gap by using  
5 money that came in, in the last year that will  
6 help us close the gap this year. Then we'll end  
7 with the long term view of what we see in the out  
8 years.

9 So let's just dive into the big picture,  
10 and what we're seeing. The blue line, which you  
11 see goes up, is the money that comes in -- our  
12 revenues for each of the fiscal years listed  
13 there. That's the July 1st through June 30th  
14 year. And you can see that the money that came in  
15 grew each year until fiscal 2011. That's last  
16 year. And then what happened between last year  
17 and this year is that we expect a big drop in  
18 revenue. That's because federal stimulus money  
19 had run out. We had a number of one-time things  
20 happen. There were some changes made in 2011 that  
21 will only occur once. They won't repeat in fiscal  
22 '12 -- I'm actually going to stand up because --  
23 I'm sorry -- I was behind the projector.

24 So you can see that the blue line goes up

1 and then comes back down. So that's what I was  
2 referring to when I said we have less money this  
3 year than we had last year.

4 The red line shows our spending and how  
5 that has gone up, but it has kept pretty close to  
6 the revenue except for this last year because the  
7 end year -- the red line -- the spending is above  
8 our revenue. So we still have a gap to close.  
9 And that's what we had to use the money from the  
10 last fiscal year to address.

11 So I also mentioned that we weren't just  
12 focused on cutting. We were focusing on where are  
13 we willing to invest our dollars and what are our  
14 critical priorities. So our first priority and  
15 core principle is that we maintain class size in  
16 all the schools throughout the district.

17 Secondly, we maintain funding for all of  
18 our Pre-K programs because of the importance of  
19 early childhood programs. We also expanded -- had  
20 an opportunity to expand for 6,000 students'  
21 opportunities for full-day kindergarten. That's a  
22 \$15 million investment that's included and  
23 reflected in this budget.

24 We have been able to expand magnet

1 programs for 2,300 students, maintain our language  
2 program, and we focused on safety in the school by  
3 continuing our Violence Prevention Initiative and  
4 invested in high definition state of the art  
5 cameras for 14 of our high schools.

6 Let me turn it over to Arnie now to talk  
7 a little bit about the spending side and where the  
8 money goes.

9 MR. RIVERA: So this graph you see where our  
10 5.1 billion budget is allocated based off of a few  
11 additional units. So you will notice that the  
12 biggest chunk of the \$5.1 billion --  
13 75 percent is allocated directly to the school  
14 units.

15 The second biggest piece there is our  
16 city-wide programming. That encompasses programs  
17 such as city-wide physician staffs such as nurses  
18 social workers, speech pathologists who are not  
19 budgeted into the school units themselves, but are  
20 employed and serve numerous schools.

21 You will see 3 percent is the allocation  
22 of the Central Office. And then the last piece is  
23 1 percent at the network level. Those are the  
24 areas -- the networks were previously referred to

1 as area offices.

2 What this graph shows is of the  
3 \$3.6 billion that we allocate for compensation,  
4 how is that allocated out across the district.  
5 And you will see that 84 percent of our  
6 compensation is directly budgeted at the schools,  
7 12 percent at the citywide level, 4 percent at  
8 central office, and 1 percent at the network  
9 level.

10 What this graph shows is the actions that  
11 have been taken to close the \$712 million  
12 deficit. So you will see the first is the  
13 reorganization of the central office and the  
14 network areas. And what this includes is really  
15 making sure that we take a look at the core  
16 functions that the Central Office departments  
17 provide both on the operational side and on the  
18 educational side to ensure that we are not  
19 duplicating resources and that we are able to  
20 streamline the level of services that we provide  
21 directly to the schools.

22 You will see the next bar is the  
23 foregoing of the 4 percent of the cost of living  
24 adjustment for our unionized personnel. Next to

1 that is around \$27 million in operation  
2 deficiencies such as the restructuring of bus  
3 routes. In this year we are really making sure  
4 that we are targeting areas where we are providing  
5 the same level of service from an operation  
6 perspective to our students but just doing more  
7 with less, being smarter streamlining our  
8 services.

9           Unfortunately, because the majority of  
10 our budget is at the school level or in  
11 programmatic resources, we had to identify some  
12 programmatic reductions. We certainly don't want  
13 to downplay them. Any budget reduction that  
14 impacts a program is one budget reduction too  
15 many.

16           But what the strategy here was -- and you  
17 will notice is the term supplement on a lot of  
18 these -- what we wanted to do is, in order to  
19 maintain the core instruction, in order to  
20 maintain class size and other key priorities, we  
21 tried to minimize the programmatic reduction that  
22 really target supplemental programming.

23           On the next bar you'll see the property  
24 tax, which Ginger will talk more in depth about.

1 But even despite all those actions, you will see  
2 that we still have a \$241 million shortfall on the  
3 upcoming fiscal year, which as Ginger alluded to,  
4 we had to use prior year's funds balance to cover.  
5 Ginger will get a little more in detail on the  
6 property tax.

7 MS. OSTRO: So as you can see from what Arnie  
8 went through, there are a number of steps that we  
9 took to close the deficit. We focused on  
10 streamlining, reorganization, cutting bureaucracy,  
11 and finding ways that we could reduce spending.  
12 And then we looked and we said, okay. What's  
13 next? We still aren't far enough. We haven't  
14 closed the deficit.

15 So we looked at some things that really  
16 did not align with our core principles that  
17 actually were really devastating including  
18 increasing class size, eliminating rather than  
19 adding to full-day kindergarten programs, making  
20 cuts with 20 percent in early childhood education,  
21 eliminating those supplemental positions with the  
22 magnet schools -- and you can see the other deep,  
23 deep cuts we would have had to make if we went to  
24 the next round -- if we did try to balance this

1 budget through cuts. And we decided this did not  
2 -- this was not consistent with how we wanted to  
3 operate the district. This is not consistent with  
4 the areas we wanted to invest in. And then we  
5 said, no, we cannot make these cuts. Instead we  
6 are going to ask for a property tax increase so  
7 that we don't have to make these further  
8 reductions.

9           So let's just talk a little bit about  
10 what that proposal reflects. It reflects being  
11 taxed about \$84 on an average home owner of a  
12 \$250,000 home. Because the average property  
13 taxes, the CPS portion, is about \$1776, it would  
14 go up \$84 to \$1,860. And that would mean overall  
15 on the property tax bill about a 2.4 percent  
16 increase. We think this is an important  
17 investment to make so that we can continue to fund  
18 those important programs and not make the deep  
19 cuts that we just alluded to or we had said we  
20 couldn't.

21           So let me take you to the big picture of  
22 what the overall budget looks like. So what you  
23 see in the bold on the top where it says:  
24 Total Revenue, it's a picture of what's happening,

1 and what I mentioned before how our year over  
2 revenue is declining. So you can see that in  
3 every one of our major categories. We have less  
4 money this year to spend than we had last year,  
5 and our local revenue to include the property tax  
6 increase, we are still down \$25 million. And  
7 that's because there were a number of things that  
8 I mentioned that happened just once last year that  
9 won't recur.

10 In particular, we received about  
11 \$140 million from a TIF that we received most of  
12 it in last year and will receive only about  
13 17 million this year. So that's a big reason that  
14 declined. On the State revenue side you see that,  
15 in fact, because of the impact of what's going on  
16 in Springfield in the State financial situation  
17 that we have seen less revenue from Springfield.

18 On the federal revenue side, you see  
19 that's done. And that's primarily because the  
20 federal stimulus money has gone away. So we have  
21 \$256 million less to spend this year than we did  
22 last year.

23 Then if you look on our spending side,  
24 when we talked about all those reductions that we



1 have made, yet, you do see that the budget goes up  
2 by about \$163 million. The main reasons why it is  
3 going up are because we do have mandatory costs to  
4 pay, like, what we refer to as step and lane  
5 increases for teachers for longevity in  
6 educational attainment. We have health care costs  
7 that increase that are about \$25 million. We have  
8 a modest increase in our pensions -- we'll talk  
9 more about pensions in a moment -- that we have to  
10 have covered and other costs have increased as  
11 well -- for food, for example, in our food  
12 programs and other areas.

13           So those are the major costs that have  
14 gone up. So the bottom line is you see in fiscal  
15 2012 is the negative \$241.1 million. That's the  
16 gap that remains. So when we look at that and  
17 compare it to the year before where we had  
18 \$288 million because we had those one-time  
19 revenues that occurred because we refinanced some  
20 bonds and got some money in last year that was  
21 just available to us one time we ended up with  
22 more money than we had to spend that year. So  
23 that gave us a bit of a surplus. And that surplus  
24 is what we'll use to close the remaining

1     \$241 million gap.

2             So we have to use those revenues in order  
3     to address the final shortfall in this budget. So  
4     really when you look at it over two years, we  
5     balanced the budget.

6             Now, let me just take you to a view of a  
7     little bit longer term because we know that the  
8     choices that we had to make in this budget were  
9     very difficult and challenging. And you see that  
10    here if you look at the fiscal 2011 bar, that's  
11    the \$288 million that we spoke about and then the  
12    241, but those will basically offset each other.  
13    But then as you look into the long run into 2013  
14    and 2014, you see that our deficit grows. And why  
15    is it growing? It's growing primarily because of  
16    obligations that we have to pay bond holders for  
17    money for debt service bonds that we've already  
18    issued in order to pay for renovations of schools  
19    and things. That money grows and because of the  
20    pensions that I spoke about.

21            We were very fortunate to receive three  
22    years of relief through the general assembly --  
23    Through legislation that passed that kept our  
24    pension payments flat for about three years. That

1 expires in 2013. So by 2014 our pension will go  
2 from about \$200 million a year to  
3 \$671 million a year. It will more than triple.  
4 So we are facing some very long-term challenges  
5 here, and we wanted to lay them out now because  
6 these are the things that we're looking at. So  
7 while we made these difficult choices in this  
8 budget, we know that we have some big challenges  
9 ahead.

10 So let me just share with you what we  
11 hope you will take away from this overview tonight  
12 and hopefully from our discussion:

13 That we did have very difficult fiscal  
14 choices to make, but that the choices we made were  
15 to keep cuts as far away from the classroom as  
16 possible, and that we did focus on administration  
17 and central office and bureaucracy and programs  
18 that, while they do have an educational impact,  
19 are supplemental and not the core instructional  
20 program;

21 That we did continue to invest in  
22 important areas, like, magnet school programs,  
23 world language programs, and full-day kindergarten  
24 expansion;

7 (Applause.)

16 Lamont Christmas, Maxine Gladny,  
17 Phyllis E. Palmer, LaTanya Hines, and  
18 Josephine Hamilton. When you come to the mic  
19 also, please, say your name for the  
20 court reporter.

24 What do you know about the school

1 breakfast programs? Well, as a janitor I know all  
2 about this program. Every day every student in  
3 the Chicago Public Schools eats breakfast in the  
4 classroom. Imagine all the spilled milk and food  
5 that is needed to be cleaned up in every classroom  
6 in this city every morning. But there are usually  
7 only one or two janitors on staff per school  
8 during -- to clean up after breakfast. This means  
9 teachers have to take time away from instruction  
10 to clean up their classrooms. We are proud to  
11 work in our schools to keep the schools safe and  
12 clean for our kids. However, if you keep cutting,  
13 we cannot provide the best service and the kids  
14 will suffer.

15 It is sad to see our kids suffer when we  
16 have our tax money going to big banks and big  
17 corporations. And it just doesn't make any sense.

18 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. GLADNY: Hello. My name is  
21 Maxine Gladny. I have lived in Chicago all of my  
22 life. I have six grandchildren, whatever their  
23 ages. I worked at Bushay (phonetic) School. My  
24 question is: Why are you raising my taxes and

1 giving all my money to big corporations through  
2 TIF, T-I-F, while cutting jobs and increasing my  
3 work load. We all know that the City has the  
4 money to pay for enough janitors to clean our  
5 schools, but you have decided to cut more than 200  
6 positions. Every year you ask for more and more  
7 of our money and hard work while hundreds and  
8 millions of our dollars go to big banks and big  
9 corporations. There is something very wrong with  
10 the system. The City is not broke. The system is  
11 broken.

12 The recent cuts you have made to the  
13 janitor's staff has gone too far. CPS needs to  
14 fight to get our money out of the TIF system.  
15 This money is our money, and it should go back to  
16 our schools to keep them clean, keep our children  
17 learning. Our tax dollars should not go to big  
18 corporations that don't need it like our children  
19 do.

20 (Applause.)

21 MS. HINES: Hi. I'm LaTanya Hines, and I  
22 have one child to go to Hyde Park Career Academy.  
23 I'd like to start by saying I am not here with a  
24 union, and I'm not here with CPS. I am here for

1 our children. So many speakers at these hearings  
2 spend time talking about their jobs and looking  
3 out for only themselves. Don't you think we  
4 should be talking about our children and what's  
5 best for them?

6 Here on the South Side our students need  
7 even more attention. Neighborhood after  
8 neighborhood is filled with failing schools. For  
9 example, there is not a single in Roseland not on  
10 probation. We need to focus on solutions for our  
11 children, and we need to do it now.

12 One thing we can do is lengthen the  
13 school day and school year so our children spend  
14 more time in the classroom and less time on the  
15 street. There is no reason Chicago should have  
16 the shortest school day and school year of any  
17 major city.

18 We also need to hold teachers, CPS, and  
19 the elected officials accountable when they are  
20 failing our children. We have tolerated failure  
21 for too long, especially on the South Side. Let's  
22 put our self interests aside and come together for  
23 our children. If we don't, nobody else will.

24 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

1 (Applause.)

2 MS. HAMILTON: I am Josephine Hamilton. I am  
3 the mother of three generations of college grads,  
4 three grandchildren, one who is a  
5 fourth-generation college student. I am a voting  
6 resident of the sixth ward and first congressional  
7 district. I have worked in education for more  
8 30 years. I was recently laid off from  
9 Henry O. Tanner elementary school because of  
10 reallocation of budget. I am here speaking on the  
11 proposed budget tonight. I do trust that our  
12 voices will be considered. I speak as a wife, a  
13 parent, and a grandmother and a graduate of the  
14 Chicago Public Schools.

15 Let me begin by saying children plus  
16 teachers equals success. You listed the following  
17 as your district funding highlights: Maintaining,  
18 and enhancing classroom resources. The greatest  
19 resource in the classroom is the teacher. A  
20 student will remember a teacher before he will  
21 remember resources in the classroom. I remember  
22 my very -- I remember very little about the  
23 resources in my classroom during my schooling, but  
24 I can tell you something about every teacher.



1           It is impossible to maintain and use  
2   classroom resources when you have a classroom full  
3   of struggling students and only one teacher and no  
4   aid providing instructional options and enrichment  
5   opportunities. Each year the Board provides  
6   instructional options and enrichment opportunities  
7   to teachers and students --

8           MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker --

9           MS. HAMILTON: -- publishers provide  
10 these options and opportunities--

11          MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please conclude.

12          MS. HAMILTON: -- if there isn't sufficient  
13 staff to provide these instructional opportunities  
14 and enrichment opportunities to students, where is  
15 the good? I have other comments, and I will  
16 submit them to your web site.

17                 But I am here to say that according to  
18 budget you are going to shift an  
19 \$8 million budget from our -- for the Chicago  
20 Police Department security has been 8 million.  
21 Now it's going to go up to 80 million. My comment  
22 here is that if we could have more teachers in our  
23 classrooms direct instructional services, security  
24 would not be needed.

1 (Applause.)

2 MS. HAMILTON: To put 14 cameras in a  
3 prevailing system --

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. HAMILTON: -- into Chicago Public Schools  
6 is absurd. It's going to fuel more arrests for  
7 our students. It's going to create more  
8 distractions on a day-to-day basis. We don't need  
9 the security. We need teachers, smaller classroom  
10 services. And I will submit this to the web site.

11 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. PALMER: Good evening. My name is  
14 Phyllis Palmer. I am a local school counselor. I  
15 am also part of the tag team which brings charter  
16 schools to the community. I'm a community  
17 activist, and I'm a business manager for  
18 Golden Gate Community.

19 For so long the far South Side of the  
20 City of Chicago, which is city limits -- I'm not  
21 speaking of Roseland -- I'm not speaking of 134th  
22 Street, 131st Street -- have been ignored when it  
23 comes to capital improvement funding, when it  
24 comes to special programs, when it comes to

1 funding for books and technical supplies and  
2 supports and everything.

3 I spent the past summer shuffling kids  
4 from one park to another trying to teach continued  
5 reading last summer because we didn't have a  
6 library. We don't even have a library. These  
7 kids have pumped into the library, but there are  
8 other things that they need inside the school.

9 I don't have a child in this school. My  
10 child had to go to -- my great-nephew had to go to  
11 the suburbs to get what he needed because he's  
12 dyslexic, you know. It's a shame that he could  
13 not get what he needed here. I paid for him to be  
14 helped, and then he must move to the suburbs to  
15 get the proper support. But I don't mind paying  
16 high taxes, you know. I don't mind paying them as  
17 long as I know those taxes are going to go to my  
18 community, to my kids in my community.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. PALMER: I am tired of feeding -- I am  
21 tired of paying your bills for CPS --

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. PALMER: I am tired of the high income.  
24 I want that income that you brought back into my

1 community. I am looking at the foreclosures, and  
2 now you state that you want to increase the  
3 taxes. My poor niece lost her house because she  
4 could not afford the taxes. She could afford the  
5 mortgage payment, but she could not afford the  
6 taxes that you put on her through this economy.

7 Now, if it was possible for her to pay  
8 the taxes, she would have. You know what I mean?  
9 She lost her home. But the thing about it is she  
10 wouldn't have minded getting a second or third job  
11 had she seen that go into the public schools. And  
12 since, she had to move to the suburbs to get what  
13 her child needed to be properly educated. And  
14 that's kind of sad. Like I said, I am very tired  
15 of pumping up your salaries and paying your bills.

16 MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please conclude.

17 MS. PALMER: I want to pay and educate my  
18 kids here in the City of Chicago.

19 Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 MS. SIMMONS: Dominique Rose,  
22 Michael Brunson, Tyrone Harrington, Clovia  
23 Lockridge, Reverend Michael Simmons.

24 MR. HARRINGTON: Hello. My name is

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. HARRINGTON: If we can spend \$7 million  
23 to watch our children, surely we can spend  
24 \$2.5 million to help teach our children.

1 (Applause.)

2 MR. HARRINGTON: All we are asking is that  
3 when you consider our budget consider our plea --  
4 consider that we won't stand for this. This is  
5 the second meeting, and we are promised -- we are  
6 here as parents. We are here as community  
7 leaders. We are here as pastors. We are here as  
8 churches. We are here as constituents. We are  
9 here --

10 (Applause.)

11 MS. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker --

12 MR. HARRINGTON: I'm almost done.

13 We're here as the City of Chicago to say  
14 that we are going wherever CPS is going to let or  
15 voices be heard, that we will not tolerate this.  
16 We will not stand for this, but we want more for  
17 our community.

18 Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. ROSE: I am Dominique Rose and speaking  
21 on behalf of the Safe Haven program also. I am  
22 proud to say that I really appreciate the Safe  
23 Haven program as far as the food, the field trips,  
24 the computer time, and just being able to have

1 somewhere to go. All of the people that I have  
2 come across were nice and kind and caring. I am a  
3 strong believer of the phrase "It takes a Village  
4 to raise a child." I prefer my child to be  
5 surrounded by positive people such as those  
6 involved in the Safe Haven program.

7 So I would like you-all to think about  
8 not leaving any kids behind so the CPS slogan  
9 goes.

10 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. BRUNSON: Hello. My name is  
13 Michael Brunson. I am a parent of two CPS  
14 students. I am a Teacher in an elementary school,  
15 and I am currently the recording secretary of the  
16 Chicago Teachers Union.

17 The budget is essentially a moral and  
18 political document which expresses the values and  
19 priorities of its authors. And with that said,  
20 the budget for the Chicago Public Schools ideally  
21 expresses the values and quality of a world class  
22 education that we want for our children in the  
23 neighborhoods that they live in. The Chicago  
24 Teachers Union is the leading voice for public

1 educators in this city. We believe our children  
2 deserve a 21st century education, but that it  
3 cannot be supported by a 19th century  
4 infrastructure.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. BRUNSON: Therefore, it is imperative  
7 that we, the Board, labor, parents, educators, and  
8 community stakeholders have a real partnership  
9 that works to create the type of learning and  
10 labor environment where our students and employees  
11 can thrive. A teacher's working conditions are a  
12 child's learning conditions. And we need to stop  
13 taking the money out of these classrooms.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. BRUNSON: Now, I saw that you had  
16 something up there saying that if we don't raise  
17 the taxes then we are to going have to raise the  
18 classroom limit up to 31. Raise it from where?  
19 It's already up to 38, 40 in the classroom.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. BRUNSON: I'm asking that you present us  
22 with a real and accurate budget. And I am giving  
23 you some advice: Open it up. Be transparent and  
24 accountable like you say you are. Let other



1 stakeholders come in. We have already went  
2 through -- some people have actually read this  
3 budget and found a number of inaccuracies in it.  
4 We've pointed them out, and we've made  
5 corrections.

6 MS. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, please conclude.

7 MR. BRUNSON: I will conclude.

8 What I suggest you do the next time at  
9 the beginning of this process, bring in other  
10 stakeholders. We have people from the Chicago  
11 Teachers Union. We have people in the local  
12 school counsels. We have parents and community  
13 members that are stakeholders who have children in  
14 these schools. Let us all be part of this process  
15 so that it is actually transparent and something  
16 that we can have that will do good for our  
17 students.

18 Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. OSTRO: We were having a little technical  
21 problem with the microphone, which is why we were  
22 going back and forth. So we're trying to get that  
23 resolved. That's why we keep handing the  
24 microphone back and forth. I apologize.

1           MR. SIMMONS: My name is Michael Simmons. I  
2 am a concerned citizen for education. Also I am a  
3 father of five children enrolled in the  
4 Chicago Public School system. We are sick and  
5 tired of all of the failing schools on the  
6 South Side. As Pastor Harrington alluded to,  
7 there are more than 300 failing schools in Chicago  
8 and many of them are in our neighborhoods.

9           Some South Side neighborhoods, like  
10 Roseland and Englewood and others, do not have a  
11 single school that is not failing. Every school  
12 in those communities are on probation. We need to  
13 come together to fight for our children and demand  
14 change from CPS who has ignored us far too long.

15           Chicago has the shortest school day of  
16 any major city in America. We demand that CPS  
17 lengthen the school day and the school year  
18 immediately so our children can spend more time in  
19 the classroom and less time on the streets.

20           CPS public schools have 5.13 hours of  
21 instruction time, and high schools have 5.6 hours  
22 of instructional time -- high schools. An  
23 elementary school day lasts only from 9:00 a.m. to  
24 2:45 p.m., while the high school day lasts only

1 about 15 minutes longer. There are currently only  
2 180 instructional days in the CPS calendar.

3 Chicago Public School students spend 914 annual  
4 hours in the classroom. Equal to approximately  
5 25 percent less time than the other nine largest  
6 districts, which average 1,217 students.

7 A student in Houston will spend 250 more  
8 hours in the classroom per year than a student in  
9 Chicago or the equivalent of three years  
10 instructional time from first through twelfth  
11 grade. CPS needs to lengthen the school day by at  
12 least 90 minutes, the school year by at least  
13 10 days. Our children need more instructional  
14 time. Longer school days mean more time in the  
15 classroom focused on reading, math, and science.  
16 Studies show students who spend more time in the  
17 classroom --

18 MS. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, please conclude.

19 MR. SIMMONS: -- are likely to improve scores  
20 in reading, math, and science and are more likely  
21 to graduate. Some CPS neighborhood and charter  
22 schools start this week or have already started.  
23 Why not every school in Chicago? Too often in  
24 recent years CPS has not done right by everyone,

1 especially our kids. No more. It is time we do  
2 right by them. Parents deserve to know if their  
3 school is failing. And we demand more  
4 communication from CPS on --

5 MS. OSTRO: I just want to make sure we can  
6 hear everybody. I'm hearing you loud and clear on  
7 the length of the school day. And I just wanted  
8 to tell you that it's also very much a concern of  
9 ours. And it's a concern I think of the mayor  
10 because he has been pretty explicit about it. So  
11 I hear you loud and clear on it, and it's  
12 something that we are concerned about too. And we  
13 are looking into -- we have created a task  
14 force to investigate it as soon as possible.

15 MR. SIMMONS: Thank you. We demand more  
16 communication from CPS on failure and what is  
17 being done to improve education on the South Side.

18 Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. LOCKRIDGE: Hi. My name is  
21 Clovia Lockridge, and I brought my sons. They  
22 attend Chicago Public Schools, and I also brought  
23 my niece. She was part of the Safe Haven program  
24 this year.

1 (Applause.)

2 MS. LOCKRIDGE: We're going to let her start  
3 off. She just has something to say. I want  
4 you-all to hear from -- she is actually 12 -- from  
5 a twelve-year old's point of view of how  
6 Safe Haven has helped her.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Every since I went to  
8 Safe Haven, I met new people. I have learned new  
9 things and I have fun. I have learned about anger  
10 management, bullying, and conflict resolution.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. LOCKRIDGE: I wanted you to hear directly  
13 from her because conflict resolution, bullying --  
14 these are things that we witness every day when we  
15 open the newspapers and hear of a child getting  
16 killed. I feel like you-all should not cut the  
17 budget for Safe Haven. That's something that  
18 needs to stay in place.

19 We also do need longer school days in our  
20 school year. Yes, I do believe the students  
21 should go year-round. To me I'm a little upset  
22 right now because this is a touchy situation,  
23 especially when it comes to kids because I'm  
24 grown. I have my education. This is our future.

1 I feel like those that are higher up in the school  
2 board they need to take a pay cut, the mayor.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. LOCKRIDGE: I understand that you said  
5 the mayor is aware of this situation and that he  
6 is doing all that he can; but yet in still, we  
7 have to look at it from both ways. This is a man  
8 that sent his kids to private school.

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. LOCKRIDGE: So with that being said, I'm  
11 a little upset about that. You're the mayor of  
12 Chicago. You need to send your kids to  
13 Chicago Public Schools. Let your kids see what  
14 our kids are going through, and then you fix the  
15 school system because now you have an example of  
16 your kids not learning what they should learn with  
17 these other kids in other states. You have some  
18 classrooms that don't even have computers, not  
19 enough for kids to even learn.

20 This year the upper classman in my son's  
21 school, they asked for IPODs.

22 MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please conclude.

23 MS. LOCKRIDGE: I will conclude.

24 Who can afford an IPOD in this type of

1 economy? So if you-all can at least get computers  
2 for each and every student in the classroom at  
3 least let them get up and learn how to use the  
4 Internet for educational purposes, if that's the  
5 way you want to go. Find a way to donate more  
6 supplies to the school. I am looking at a school  
7 list this year that was asking for more things for  
8 the teacher because she couldn't really afford it  
9 and that we as parents had to pick up for her.

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

11 MS. LOCKRIDGE: Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. SIMMONS: Broderick Harvey,  
14 Rodney Pruitt, Ronald Jackson, Ovella Anreas --  
15 if, I'm not pronouncing that correctly, please  
16 again say your name when you come to the speaker  
17 stand -- Alix Gonzalez Guevara, Alex Wiesendanger.

18 MR. HARVEY: My name is Broderick Harvey. I  
19 come as a concerned parent and community leader.  
20 I have two children, one 12, one 6. I am a  
21 product of Chicago Public Schools, graduated in  
22 '96 from Morgan Park. However, nowadays it's not  
23 the same when I was going to school. It's more  
24 trials and tribulations that our kids go through.

1           My question is: What programs that you  
2     can add to the curriculum? Such as life skills,  
3     like they said, anger management. Because I  
4     volunteered this year with Safe Haven and some of  
5     the things that we went through, I feel like it  
6     could be taught in the Chicago Public Schools  
7     because that's where it started. What about  
8     trades, like, construction, automotive?

9                               (Applause.)

10          MR. HARVEY: What about the type of skills  
11     that the kids can get that's not at the college  
12     level but at the second level, which is high  
13     school because our kids are not even getting past  
14     eighth grade. The goal should be college, but the  
15     goal is just surviving. What about the kids that  
16     have to travel far to go to a better school  
17     outside of our community? Why can't they get the  
18     same education in the community where they can  
19     walk instead of having to travel.

20                           (Applause.)

21          MR. HARVEY: You-all talk about cutting  
22     dollars and trying to budget, but we are losing  
23     our kids. We are losing our community. We are  
24     losing our future because it's an obstacle just to



1 get to school. Then you got to pass that  
2 obstacle. Then you got to try to learn with 30 to  
3 40 other people that got the same type of  
4 problems, struggles, issues that you're going  
5 through.

6 So I'm trying to figure out what type of  
7 curriculum can you add? What type of programs can  
8 you add to help get a child a chance to have other  
9 alternatives besides athletics because everybody  
10 can't shoot a jump shot.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

13 MR. PRUITT: You are going to have to excuse  
14 me for my height differences. My name is  
15 Rodney Pruitt. Before I became a honorably  
16 terminated teacher, I specialized in dealing with  
17 budgets in the corporate sector. And I am also  
18 professionally, academically trained on the  
19 graduate level. And when I look at some of the  
20 numbers -- I did not go over it all -- I have to  
21 say, Wow. And what -- certain things come to mind  
22 because we were told on how to create budgets and  
23 how you create budgets to make a statement. And  
24 when I look at things considering your budget

1 overview for today as opposed to the one from  
2 August 5th, there are some slight differences.  
3 But let's get away from that one.

4           When a budget is made, you make breakouts  
5 on certain things. I want to know where is  
6 information broke out for expenditures for the  
7 charter schools? When you look at the budget in a  
8 breakout, when you compare public to charter  
9 schools, can you tell me why some information  
10 seems kind of vague? And where they list test  
11 scores, some are missing or they list N/A as I  
12 guess not applicable. Okay. I'm just kind of  
13 curious: Is there a formula? Are there certain  
14 metrics that you are using to compare different  
15 institutions where you have differences in teacher  
16 pay structures, disciplinary measures, and  
17 selective enrollments that cause discrepancies in  
18 performance? Because quite frankly, if I was a  
19 principal of a school and you gave me a selective  
20 enrollment, I would probably produce you higher  
21 test scores also.

22   (Applause.)

23           MR. JACKSON: Hello. My name is  
24 Ronald Jackson. I'm a LSC member at

1 Simeon Career Academy High School. As I was  
2 reading, you are saying that your budget is \$712.  
3 You say you cut \$400 million, but never once have  
4 you said about the \$150 million that you got from  
5 the government. Where is that money at?

6           Number two, neither one of you has said  
7 how much money that you are going get from the TIF  
8 to balance this budget. My understanding it's  
9 either close to 500 million or a billion that is  
10 in the TIF. I see none of the Board members are  
11 here to say we are going to ask Huberman for the  
12 TIF money back to balance out that budget. Now if  
13 you go to TIF and get that money back from  
14 Huberman, we wouldn't even be up here now. These  
15 teachers wouldn't be laid off. But yet I don't  
16 see no one saying nothing about the TIF. All  
17 you're saying is, well, we are going to cut this.

18           Each year I hear you keep using students  
19 and kids as scapegoats to scare parents to go the  
20 way you want to go. And not once did anyone up  
21 here say that \$800 million came from the State  
22 because I listened to the lady standing up here  
23 saying she had to send her kid to the suburbs to  
24 get the services he needed. No one said           \$800

1 million came from the State for special education  
2 alone. The State cut that down to 600 million.  
3 No one up here told no one about that. But see  
4 none of y'all is telling the people about that  
5 money that the State -- the State took that money  
6 from y'all because y'all mismanaged that money.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. PRUITT: And they took that money from  
9 y'all. Now y'all have to do paperwork to be  
10 approved for any money from the State besides that  
11 6 million. Now that 6 million is not counted into  
12 the budget. That money right there is especially  
13 for special ed kids. Well, essentially y'all are  
14 not using it for them.

15 Number two, y'all said that everyone  
16 wants their schools to be technology. At my  
17 school, the principal removed computer technology  
18 from my school. I went there and I asked them how  
19 is that you are saying that this is a career  
20 academy high school when there is no technology in  
21 this school.

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, please conclude.

24 MR. JACKSON: Yeah, I guess it's time to

1 conclude now.

2 (Applause.)

3 MR. JACKSON: A principal removed technology  
4 from the school, but yet no one from here is  
5 saying, well, we are going to put that back. I am  
6 over here fighting for technology to get back in  
7 my school. But yet, I don't see na'an one of  
8 these people calling me saying, Well, Mr. Jackson,  
9 we're going to put technology back in your school  
10 so these kids will have a fighting chance. I  
11 don't see technology taken out of Walter Payton.  
12 I don't see it taken out of none of the schools on  
13 the North Side --

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. JACKSON: -- but when you come down here  
16 to the South Side you take --

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. JACKSON: This is not about race. This  
19 is about education. Not one time did I --

20 MS. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, please conclude.

21 MR. JACKSON: Yeah, it's time to conclude  
22 because when it's time to pay up, y'all want us to  
23 shut up.

24 (Applause.)

1           MR. JACKSON: It's not going on. As a  
2           parent, as a taxpayer, I'm demanding -- I'm not  
3           asking -- put the computer technology back in the  
4           schools so these kids can learn. If you're not  
5           going to do it, then don't stand up there and say  
6           what you're going to do.

7           MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

8                     We would like to respond to some of the  
9           comments as well, but again, we are not trying to  
10          cut you off to be short; but we do have a long  
11          speakers and you-all would like to speak, and we  
12          would like to hear you-all.

13          MS. OSTRO: There was a lot in that speaker's  
14          comments, but I will try to talk about a couple of  
15          things that I want to clarify. One is that we're  
16          absolutely clear that the State owes us at the  
17          time of this budget \$176 million. So that's on  
18          page I believe 14. You are absolutely right that  
19          he have had issue with State payment delays, and  
20          it has hurt us.

21                    Another thing I wanted to mention to you  
22          was the TIF money that was brought up in the  
23          speaker's comments. There is a couple of  
24          different kinds of TIF money. We do receive TIF

1 money every year that we have to use for capital  
2 purposes. That's for building schools and doing  
3 renovations. So we get that every year. That  
4 cannot be used for operating purposes.

5 Last year though the City Counsel did  
6 declare a TIF surplus. So we were able to take  
7 those funds and it was about 142 million I think  
8 in total. We were able to apply that to the  
9 deficit, and we did. So you will see discussion  
10 about the TIF surplus. It was in some of the  
11 walkdown charts that you saw there. So we did get  
12 TIF revenue from the City.

13 We have to use the annual TIF for capital  
14 purposes, which plowed back into the schools. We  
15 did get a one-time -- and by that we mean, you  
16 know, just once. We've only gotten it I think  
17 twice ever. And we used it to work down the  
18 deficit.

19 There is one other thing too. The mayor  
20 has created a task force on TIF. I know it's a  
21 concern. I think they're concerned about it too,  
22 and they're investigating it. So we are waiting  
23 to hear what that task force comes up with as  
24 well.

1 MR. JACKSON: (Inaudible response.)

2 MS. SIMMONS: Next speaker, please.

3 MS. OSTRO: I have to mention, too, when you  
4 yell out the question, we can't record them. We  
5 are trying to record all of this so we can respond  
6 to some of the questions. We can't record them if  
7 you're not at the microphone.

8 MS. GUEVARA: My name is Alix Guevara, and  
9 I'm a special education teacher with CPS and a  
10 parent, South Side resident. I honestly believe  
11 that three meetings is not enough. It's not  
12 transparent. The public needs more dialogue about  
13 the budget, about the spending priorities.

14 In specific I really feel like the  
15 public, parents, community, and teachers -- we  
16 need more transparency about how much money is  
17 being spent on testing mandates. If you look at  
18 how many times your children are tested, it's  
19 every five weeks. It's every month. It's every  
20 three months. There is so much instructional time  
21 lost.

22 I want to know how much money is spent on  
23 these testing mandates, and I would actually  
24 really encourage people to really ask the hard



1 questions of what's really being tested. What are  
2 your children being tested on? Are they tested to  
3 be a critical thinker? Are they tested to know  
4 about the community and their culture and their  
5 history? Because the word failing schools has  
6 been thrown around here and there, you know,  
7 failing teachers failing students; but we really  
8 need to know what's in testing mandates. Bring  
9 them companies down. Let's know how much we're  
10 spending on that and what's in these tests before  
11 we go and say failing school because I'm a special  
12 ed teacher and I can bring a student up 3, 4 from  
13 a non-reader to reading at a fourth grade level,  
14 but they're going call that student a failing  
15 student because they don't test right on that  
16 state test -- on that entrance test.

17 The other thing is the curriculum  
18 mandates. Teachers in many instances are mandated  
19 to teach curriculum -- these contracts. I want to  
20 know how much money is spent on these contracts on  
21 these curriculum companies. They get big money  
22 from CPS. So let's figure how much that is. What  
23 are they teaching our children? Are they teaching  
24 them about our history, our culture? And we need

1 for the local school counsel, for parents, for  
2 teachers, for communities to have access to this  
3 information. How much money is being spent on all  
4 these various contracts? And it can't just be  
5 three meetings a year that we're able to do this.  
6 We need to be doing this at the school level all  
7 the time.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

10 MS. ANDREAS: My name is Ovella Andreas, and  
11 I'm the founder of the United Communities of  
12 American. I just happened to be visiting Chicago  
13 this weekend. I am actually a resident of  
14 Detroit.

15 My concern is the violence that is taking  
16 place in all of our schools and the budget on  
17 security. We have a program in Detroit that we  
18 would like to share with you that we are confident  
19 can reduce violence in your schools. We have  
20 absolutely ceased violence for two schools for one  
21 month. And we would like to present that. Maybe  
22 you can reduce some of your budget for security  
23 and put it back into places like Safe Haven.

24 (Applause.)

1 MS. ANDREAS: We don't know exactly who to  
2 speak to. So actually while I'm visiting, I  
3 decided to take my Friday to visit with the  
4 Chicago School Board to share with you we are  
5 confident we can help to reduce some spending on  
6 security issues, and you can replace it in some of  
7 the Safe Haven programs.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. ANDREAS: And we have a program that has  
10 reduced violence. We have actually stopped it on  
11 the 22nd at two schools in Detroit that there were  
12 no -- totally no incidents of violence reported.  
13 Even the principle said she was able to get work  
14 done on this day. So we'll be happy to share with  
15 you.

16 God bless you.

17 MS. OSTRO: Thank you very much. We do have  
18 some staff in the back that would be happy to take  
19 your information if you would share with them.  
20 Maybe somebody could raise their hand where our  
21 staff are in the corner there.

22 MR. WIESENDANGER: Good evening. My name is  
23 Alex Wiesendanger. I am the lead organizer at the  
24 Community (indiscernible) Society, which is a

1 network of 70 congregations all around the Chicago  
2 metro area.

3 I appreciate you guys holding these  
4 hearings; but I would say keeping with what Alex  
5 Gueavara said, if you want public comment, maybe  
6 not a Friday night at seven o'clock. I mean, I  
7 don't have a social life, but other people might.  
8 I'm just saying.

9 But as I looked at the budget, I just  
10 kept thinking that Albert Einstein said that:  
11 Insanity is doing the same thing over and over  
12 again and expecting different results. For years  
13 and years and years we have been funding security  
14 guards, security cameras, and police in our  
15 schools.

16 And what we have gotten is the highest  
17 rate of suspension and expulsions in the nation,  
18 the highest rate of push-out of students, and the  
19 largest disparity in terms of achievement by  
20 racial category in the nation. What's driving  
21 that is more than 43,000 suspensions in  
22 Chicago Public Schools last year, 1 for every 10  
23 students. And yet this year, we are cutting  
24 supplemental programs. We are cutting restorative

1 justice programs that when we did them in Dyett,  
2 they reduced violence. They reduced write-ups.  
3 They reduced suspensions. They improved school  
4 performance.

5 When we did them at Fenger last year,  
6 they worked again. But we call them  
7 supplemental. You cannot educate a child who is  
8 not in the classroom. When you suspend 43,000  
9 students, it doesn't work.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. WIESENDANGER: You are spending 7 million  
12 on new security cameras. The only thing that  
13 those can do is give clearer pictures of students  
14 that you are going to punish and arrest.

15 (Applause.)

16 MR. WIESENDANGER: That's not high school.  
17 Instead that \$7 million could provide the Cadillac  
18 of restorative justice programs in 100 CPS  
19 schools. So we are here to ask you don't do the  
20 same thing over and over again. The budget right  
21 now represents an insane approach. Let's fund the  
22 programs that create true calm, real change, keep  
23 our students in the school, and treat them like  
24 students who can learn, not like criminals.

1                   Thank you.

2                                   (Applause.)

3           MS. SIMMONS:   Quabeene Daniels,   Reverend  
4   Larry Roberts, Marie Kielty, Sandra Patterson, and  
5   Allen Fluharty.

6           MR. DANIELS:   Hello.   My name is  
7   Quabeene Daniels.   I'm a youth organizer and a  
8   student at Gage Park High School.   First of all, I  
9   want to thank CPS for stating in the Student Code  
10   of Conduct that suspension and expulsion should be  
11   the last result.

12                   But, however, I want to talk about what I  
13   see in my school on too many occasions.   For  
14   example, my sister Michelle on some occasions was  
15   late for class because of issues at home and other  
16   minor infractions.   Those instances resulted in  
17   write-ups.   One day my sister came to school and  
18   found out that she was suspended.   She got three  
19   days for minor write-ups that didn't harm anybody  
20   or put anyone's life in danger.   The bad part  
21   about it is that it was near finals time.   The  
22   result of that is that she failed two classes and  
23   remains demote freshman until she pays to take  
24   those classes up.   If there was any type of

1 restorative justice, my sister would have been a  
2 complete sophomore and less money out of an  
3 already struggling household.

4 Michelle is not alone. Last year there  
5 were over 43,000 CPS suspensions. How can we  
6 learn if we are constantly getting pushed out of  
7 school? CPS should put their money where their  
8 mouth is.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. DANIELS: Stop spending money on cameras,  
11 security guards, and police in schools who are  
12 ineffective and sometimes display negative  
13 behavior. Instead of cutting \$87 million in  
14 supplemental programs, invest in restorative  
15 justice strategies that keep us in school and a  
16 safe environment.

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. ROBERTS: My name is  
20 Reverend Larry Roberts, and I'm here just to make  
21 a plea out to our counsel on tonight. I'm from  
22 the faith base. You-all invited us in the schools  
23 after you had shut the doors on us for many years  
24 to say separate the church and the State. And now

8                   What happens at the most vulnerable time  
9   when the children are out of school from  
10   3:00 to 6:00, 7:00, when they can get a snack,  
11   when they get some words of comfort, where they  
12   can get a place to go off into for some shelter  
13   while their parents might be working -- and what a  
14   greater place if they're able to walk to no longer  
15   community centers, no longer the YMCA, no longer  
16   the swimming pools, but to the church that's on a  
17   corner.

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. ROBERTS: What if every church in the  
20 City of Chicago was able to open up their doors  
21 after school, before school and allow these  
22 children to come in to get a meal, to get some  
23 kind words. Now that you have asked us to open  
24 our doors, let your hearts and your mind be



1 serious and your heart have the sincerity to what  
2 we have done, created throughout the  
3 City of Chicago. If we do not catch our children  
4 now, we will not have them next.

5 So do not -- we have our doors open.  
6 Don't ask us to shut them because of crumbs that  
7 we were getting in the first place for us to open  
8 up our facility. It takes our mouth to make  
9 arrangements, but it takes money to do business.  
10 You-all say make the cuts. Make the cuts. But as  
11 we make the cuts, everything else has increased  
12 and it's trickling down to the poor people. When  
13 the politrickins (sic) get in --

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. ROBERTS: -- and the first thing they  
16 say, they are not going raise the taxes. And  
17 always wait until the last minute when the budget  
18 has already been passed and say, we are going to  
19 raise the taxes --

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. ROBERTS: -- but our vote will matter  
22 next time around --

23 (Applause.)

24 MR. ROBERTS: -- stop this chaos in our

1 community. We are bussing the children out of our  
2 schools. We need to walk to schools.

3 (Audience Chanting.)

4 MR. ROBERTS: You are bussing the children  
5 out. Don't bus them away from the church.

6 Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. KIELTY: My name Marie Kielty. I'm a  
9 resident of Chicago, a retired CPS teacher. And  
10 after my retirement, I was an early childhood  
11 mathematic consultant for the office of early  
12 childhood in 2006, 2007. The short amount of time  
13 between the release of the proposed budget and the  
14 budget hearings makes it difficult for ones to  
15 prepare ones testimony. I would have liked to  
16 have a paper copy available of each of these cuts  
17 so we presenters can get to read them ahead of  
18 time.

19 I am concerned that if cuts are to be  
20 made in your power point, quote, they he will  
21 include early childhood programs affecting  
22 between 11,000 and 12,000 children. There was  
23 research published in 2007 by a major university  
24 in the United States, Canada, and England

1 including Northwestern, Colombia, and Princeton.  
2 The research was titled School Readiness and Later  
3 Achievement. It followed children from infants  
4 through kindergarten. In other words, what  
5 children could do at the end of preschool until  
6 age 10, fifth and sixth grade.

7           The greatest predicator of school success  
8 was mathematics at the beginning of kindergarten.  
9 In view of this international emphasis on math and  
10 science, we need to be strengthening math  
11 professional development for teachers in grade  
12 kindergartens through third grade. These five  
13 grade levels are early childhood as defined by the  
14 National Association of Boards of Education.

15           In addition, the kindergarten readiness  
16 test, which was administered to pre-kindergarten  
17 children has an error and confusing question. The  
18 error is in identifying a four-sided shape that  
19 has equal sides and no right angles. The correct  
20 answer according to the answer sheet is diamond.  
21 This is the common term. The correct mathematical  
22 term is rhombus. Yet children who give this  
23 answer are marked wrong. And teachers have begun  
24 using the correct term with children.

1           Also a question on patterns have five  
2 shapes. The first one and the last one are the  
3 same. The question is: Is this a four pattern  
4 shape at the beginning of the next group of shapes  
5 or is it a five pattern --

6           MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please conclude.

7           Ms. KIELTY: -- two repetitions before it can  
8 be recognized as a pattern.

9           Thank you.

10          MS. OSTRO: Before the next speaker, I just  
11 wanted to say thank you very much. We do invest  
12 very heavily in early childhood and do believe  
13 it's one of our core principles. We carry it as  
14 one of our core principles to invest in early  
15 childhood. And so we didn't make any reductions  
16 in the early childhood program. What we were  
17 trying to emphasize there was if we don't get the  
18 property tax, if we don't get the revenues that we  
19 need, that we might have to make those reductions.  
20 That's why we make the recommendation to go for  
21 the property taxes because investing in young  
22 children is such a core principle. So we thank  
23 you.

24          MS. PATTERSON: My name is Sandra Patterson.

1 I am the president of the High School Community  
2 Coalition, very active in our local school I live  
3 right across the street from an elementary school,  
4 and I am also a concerned citizen of the  
5 City of Chicago and a product of the public school  
6 system.

7 On the South Side of Chicago, for far so  
8 long our kids have been failing in school. What  
9 does the budget do to help children in failing  
10 schools? Why don't I see anything about longer  
11 school days and longer school years?

12 You said there would be a task force. I  
13 would surely like to be on that task force. And  
14 I'm sure that many others because you heard this  
15 comment many times tonight, and it's because it's  
16 a concern of ours. If our kids had things to do  
17 when they get out of schools, like we did, you  
18 know, they could channel that energy in different  
19 ways. So you will continue to hear us. And the  
20 only way it's going to stop is to let us be a part  
21 of that task force to make sure it happens now  
22 instead of later.

23 I'm glad CPS has decided to add more  
24 classrooms to the good magnet schools. This is

1 the right decision. Now it's time to make sure  
2 that all children have the same opportunities.  
3 That's what we all want. Everybody is paying  
4 taxes. That means we all have to sacrifice. The  
5 parents are sacrificing, the teachers are  
6 sacrificing, administrators are, community leaders  
7 are sacrificing, and our ministers and elected  
8 officials. We all have to come to the table clean  
9 and play the cards correctly so that everybody  
10 will win. And the only way it will be fair is if  
11 we all feel like that we were a part of that  
12 process.

13 So children on the South Side are still  
14 waiting for solutions. So I'm saying let's work  
15 together to make sure that we stop our schools  
16 from failing. And again that means that everybody  
17 has to sacrifice, and it's time for us all to step  
18 up and put -- I used to say children first, but I  
19 am saying all children because all children -- we  
20 are not going to select magnet schools. We're  
21 going to say all children.

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. OSTRO: Thank you very much. I do want  
24 to emphasize how much we do value a longer school

1 day and longer year. And that is something we are  
2 working actively to move forward. That's a really  
3 important priority for us as well.

4 So thank you.

5 MR. FLUHARTY: Good evening. My name is  
6 Allen Fluharty. I am a science teacher at  
7 Prosser Career Academy. Several years ago I was  
8 at the end of my two-year probationary period. So  
9 the next year I would get tenure, and I would have  
10 some job protection. I wasn't sure whether I was  
11 going to get it. It came to June and towards the  
12 end of June. I still hadn't heard. So being a  
13 teacher I decided, well, I had better be proactive  
14 and go out and look around and look for another  
15 job. I have a family. I have a mortgage. And  
16 one of the places that I looked was at a charter  
17 school. And I would have had to take a 10 percent  
18 cut in salary, my benefits would have been  
19 significantly reduced. And as a chemistry  
20 teacher, I looked at their chemistry lab, and  
21 basically there was no chemistry lab. It was a  
22 classroom that did have a closet while a lot of  
23 the other classrooms did not.

24 So thank goodness I was brought back.

1 And I did get tenure and the next year this  
2 charter school went out of business. So my  
3 comment is: In your budget I don't see where  
4 there's the charter schools. I see this line  
5 item that says tuition. And I see that -- I'm  
6 assuming that's where you are putting the charter  
7 schools. It shows that it's going by about  
8 10 percent. So from what I see it's probably a  
9 high priority for this budget to -- a critical  
10 priority for this budget to increase funding for  
11 charter schools. That's the impression I get. In  
12 fact, I thought I saw a power point presentation  
13 that did have that in as a line item as a critical  
14 part of it. So I don't know. Maybe you changed  
15 your power point. Anyway, I don't understand this  
16 movement to privatize public education. I also  
17 want to know how many of these charter schools are  
18 for profit organizations versus not for profit.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. FLUHARTY: Nowhere does it say or does it  
21 break that up. Anyway my question is: Why are  
22 the charter schools and turnaround schools  
23 considered off the table when other programs have  
24 been subjected to severe cuts? Will CPS be



1 willing to place a moratorium on these costly  
2 experiment charter schools and get back to public  
3 education versus private education?

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. SHAKER: Thank you for your comments. I  
6 want to point out that charter schools are CPS  
7 schools. Those our are kids too and that we have  
8 a dedication to the kids that are part of charter  
9 schools as well. So we do consider them to be  
10 part of ours. There simply are more children  
11 going to charter schools. So that is part of the  
12 issue there.

13 MS. SIMMONS: Rosalia Griller,  
14 Valencia Rias-Winstead, Robert Douglas,  
15 Reverend J. Leon Thorn, Candace Coleman, and  
16 James Washington.

17 MS. GRILLER: Good afternoon. My name is  
18 Rosalia Griller. I am a member of the citywide  
19 counsel of PowerPac. I am also a community  
20 organizer, citywide but predominantly in the  
21 Englewood community. I am also with the High  
22 Hopes Coalition.

23 First of all, let me begin by  
24 complimenting CPS for the strides that you have

1 made and the work that you have done with the  
2 revisions to the Student Code of Conduct and your  
3 announcements with recess. Those are positive  
4 steps. They're in the right direction. However,  
5 when you talk about a budget, it's my thought that  
6 the first thought would be investment. It would  
7 be to get the best bang for your buck. It would  
8 be to make sure that you are successful in the  
9 main effort and that main effort is educating  
10 children.

11           So then that brings a question to my  
12 mind. And that question is: How on earth can you  
13 educate children in an environment that is not  
14 education friendly? And my answer was: It can't  
15 be done. And I notice that you have made so many  
16 investments in security cameras, in police  
17 presence, in security officers -- who it's been my  
18 experience -- and I work in schools all across the  
19 city -- they sleep and argue more than they secure  
20 our children. And so to that point, 1 percent of  
21 this entire budget could put restorative justice  
22 in every school. In every school, 1 percent. And  
23 I am repeating that even though I only have  
24 two minutes. Because I want it to resonate to

1 understand that if we can teach our children  
2 academically as well as socially -- most of our  
3 children are coming from impoverished situations  
4 and their only thought is how will I survive, how  
5 will I eat, where will I live --

6 MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please conclude.

7 MS. GRILLER: -- and all of these things  
8 have to be in consideration. So if you consider  
9 these things, then they have to have an affect on  
10 how they learn. If we can create an environment  
11 that is safe for children, that they feel  
12 comfortable, and that they're engaged to learn, we  
13 can surely educate our children.

14 So please reconsider that you're cutting  
15 the things that can make this whole thing work and  
16 that you're implementing things that will put our  
17 children in prison. And maybe that's the plan, I  
18 don't know. But it's not acceptable to us. So on  
19 today we're just asking you to take another look  
20 and help our children be educated well.

21 Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. DOUGLAS: Good evening. My name is  
24 Robert Douglas, and I'm from the Roseland

1 Community. I just wanted to start by saying I am  
2 a parent, community activist and currently I spend  
3 \$150 a week in gasoline to take my children out of  
4 the community to Providence Englewood Charter  
5 School and Metcalfe.

6 What is in the plan for Roseland in the  
7 budget to do professional development? Because  
8 all schools can't be charter -- all schools can't  
9 be contract -- to bridge the academic gap that's  
10 going on in our community that are taking families  
11 out of the communities that live in the community  
12 to get a quality education. That's one question.  
13 And me, I did have a wicked jump shot. And I  
14 believe that sports is education. And it's a way  
15 for children to release energy -- negative energy  
16 in a positive and structured environment where  
17 they don't have now.

18 Inside of the schools in Roseland that  
19 are on probation or in Track E, there is no PE.  
20 They don't do jumping jacks. They don't do  
21 pushups. So I have organized -- because my  
22 children are out of the community getting an  
23 education -- I'm organizing elementary tackle  
24 football programs at Gwendolyn Brooks High School

1 so that my children can participate in the  
2 community kids' activities so that they can build  
3 relationships. But there is nothing in place to  
4 bridge the reading gap. There is nothing in place  
5 to bridge the mathematical gap that's going on in  
6 the communities that's failing. So I didn't see  
7 that professional development.

8           You want to strengthen the day. I am for  
9 school options. I believe that everybody deserves  
10 an equal opportunity for education, but not at the  
11 cost of family. You took truancy out, but you  
12 added police. No one is there -- Bill Cosby, he  
13 said, what was Brown versus the Board of Education  
14 if don't nobody want it. You don't want to  
15 educate them and sometimes you say that the  
16 parents don't want their kids to get educated --

17       MS. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, please conclude.

18       MR. DOUGLAS: So in conclusion, what is the  
19 plan to bridge the academic gap financially on  
20 everybody that's at the table?

21       MR. THORN: My name is  
22 Reverend J. Leon Thorn. I am a pastor. First of  
23 all, I just want to say thanks to you for the  
24 opportunity for us to have the comments that we

1 are now having. However, as I sat and I listened,  
2 I was made to know that I am so far removed from  
3 what is really going on in the educational  
4 system. I came from Lowndes County Alabama.  
5 That's where I was educated. And there in the  
6 country with teachers who hardly got two years of  
7 college, our opportunities were so far greater  
8 than what I see here and now.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. THORN: When I hear that there are 300  
11 failing schools, 43,000 Students suspended,  
12 7 million being spent on cameras and security, and  
13 then you want to increase our taxes while you are  
14 holding it before us unless you pay me more taxes  
15 we are going to cut out education for kindergarten  
16 for those early years, the formative years.

17 You know, I cannot understand how people  
18 in positions such as those in the Board of  
19 Education, our mayor, and the rest of you can do  
20 such a perfect job of messing up the system.

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. THORN: You could not do more to make  
23 education any worse. You have written the book on  
24 how to destroy our children. Now you want to cut

1 out Safe Haven. We only get pennies to do the  
2 program. I am insulted that these kind of things  
3 are happening to our children and adults are  
4 allowing it to happen.

5 MS. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, please conclude.

6 MR. THORN: I will conclude. But I will say  
7 to you in my conclusion that this is  
8 unacceptable. We cannot -- we have come too far  
9 to give up on our children now. They are our  
10 investment. And we refuse to continue to let this  
11 go on. Now you either have to change or we'll  
12 have to see you later.

13 (Applause.)

14 MR. THORN: But I thank God -- but we cannot  
15 do this. We can't stand here and see our children  
16 be used as fodder for the mill for somebody else  
17 to get the profit. This is totally unacceptable.

18 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. WASHINGTON: Good evening my name is  
21 James. I am a concerned parent from the Englewood  
22 area. I would just like to say that our kids are  
23 definitely our future. If we don't provide them  
24 with the proper life skills and the proper

1 learning skills, then we are definitely going to  
2 lose our future. I just want to say that this  
3 budget is a good start, but I really don't think  
4 that it's going to do enough to fix our failing  
5 schools because -- I mean, it's plenty of things  
6 that we could do to help our schools, but I don't  
7 see it in the budget. One of the things that we  
8 do need is a longer school day and a longer school  
9 year because that provides the children with more  
10 time to have -- time to do productive things  
11 instead of finding time to do bad things on the  
12 street and et cetera. That's all I'm going to  
13 say.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

16 MS. COLEMAN: Good evening. My name is  
17 Candace Coleman. I represent an organization  
18 called the AYOP Initiative, which focuses solely  
19 on youths with disabilities. I have a question  
20 concerning the Special Ed budget. I know that in  
21 the budget you-all made many cuts to that end. In  
22 terms of how a student is supposed to learn in  
23 CPS, how do you see that they can learn from a  
24 budget that's being cut?



8 MR. REVERA: Thank you for your time. There  
9 are no reductions in regards to the Special Ed  
10 services that's required by IEP. Those are state  
11 mandated. And despite areas where other  
12 reductions are being made, we are making sure that  
13 whatever resources are mandated per the IEP are  
14 indeed being provided within this budget.

15 MS. SHAKER: Just to mention too that what we  
16 spend on special education is far exceeding what  
17 we get from the State. We do supplement as much  
18 as possible to meet those IEPs.

19 MS. RIAS-WINSTEAD: Good evening. My name is  
20 Valencia Rias-Winstead. I am a resident of  
21 South Shore. I am a parent of five students that  
22 have gone to Chicago Public Schools and  
23 graduated. I sit on the South Shore School of  
24 Leadership, local school counsel, the Chicago

1 Education for Facilities Task Force that just  
2 recently got legislation passed that addresses  
3 many of the issues here today. I also sit as the  
4 chair person for the NAACP South Side Branch  
5 Education Committee.

6 And this is a travesty. I can hardly  
7 speak today because of the fact that what so many  
8 people have echoed and what I have done for and  
9 lived for the last five years of my life in trying  
10 to bring transparency, inclusion, and assistance  
11 to the residents, the parents, the teachers, and  
12 the students of Chicago. And I will say first and  
13 foremost that on the South Side to hold a hearing  
14 at -- well we don't have much of a life as you can  
15 see -- but at seven o'clock is not very good  
16 because there are lots of other people who would  
17 probably like to be here. So we should have done  
18 this on a Monday or a Tuesday. That would have  
19 been better. That would be my first comment.

20 My next comment would be that we need to  
21 have a campaign to do business with Chicago. When  
22 I look at the board reports for the last several  
23 months all of the money, all of the contracts,  
24 have been mainly outside of Chicago. We are doing

1 business with everybody else in the suburban  
2 communities --

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. RIAS-WINSTEAD: -- but you want the  
5 residents of Chicago, which I am in South Shore --  
6 you want us to increase taxes and pay for you to  
7 pay other people who don't even live in the  
8 city --

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. RIAS-WINSTEAD: -- starting with your  
11 boss, the management, the head person who does not  
12 live in Chicago and just out of contract, he  
13 should be volunteering to help us. The  
14 (indiscernible) subs gets more schools and, of  
15 course, all of the Board of Directors, everybody  
16 stands to gain more. And on the backs of whom?  
17 Our children. Our children in these schools where  
18 we don't have enough resources. We don't have  
19 enough children.

20 You have heard today that this budget  
21 process should be going on all year long. As a  
22 local school counselor, facilitator, and teacher  
23 that teaches local school counsels, we teach them  
24 put your money where your mouth is. If you're

1 putting your money where your mouth is, it's on  
2 the cameras. Yes, we want safety; but we don't  
3 need a transmission or a pipeline from public  
4 schools to prison.

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. RIAS-WINSTED: If you put your money  
7 where your mouth is, then the security officers  
8 and these police officers and whatnot -- instead  
9 of having them policing the students and arresting  
10 and suspending more and more students, they should  
11 be in the classrooms teaching the students.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please conclude.

14 MS. RIAS-WINSTEAD: Yes, I will conclude.

15 We need transparency. That is what the  
16 Chicago Educational Facility Task Force has pushed  
17 for, transparency.

18 Before you decide to close schools, we  
19 don't want you building magnet schools on the  
20 backs of our property tax increase because our  
21 children aren't going to them. You're not  
22 building like they have in the West Loop, five --  
23 Jackson Language Academy over five or six top  
24 magnets or selective enrollment schools. How many

1 do we have on the South Side? You can't hardly  
2 find them on the South Side.

3 So in conclusion, put your money where  
4 your mouth is. If you want to educate our  
5 children, put teachers in the classroom. If you  
6 want to educate our children, pay our parents  
7 because you pay them in other places. If you want  
8 to put more into our classrooms and not raise our  
9 taxes, stop doing business with companies outside  
10 of Chicago.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. RIAS-WINSTEAD: Bring the business here.  
13 We need jobs. Our children need to matriculate  
14 through a school system that will allow them to  
15 have a job when they get out. Not a hand out, but  
16 a hand up.

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 MS. SIMMONS: Candace Coleman,  
20 Maurice Gaiter, Dave Vance, Rosita -- I wasn't  
21 able to read the last name, but she's from  
22 C.A.U.S.E., Lizvette Gonzalez, and Richard  
23 Washington.

24 MR. GAITER: My name is Maurice Gaiter. I'm

1 a concerned parent and grandparent of children  
2 inside the City of Chicago Public School system.

3 At the beginning of your statement, you  
4 said something that struck me. You said that  
5 there were critical times and critical decisions  
6 that had to be made in order to make this budget  
7 more efficient and more effective for all parties  
8 involved. But as a concerned parent when I think  
9 about the hours between 1:45 and maybe 5:00 p.m.  
10 when most of you-all are probably getting ready to  
11 drive home to your good, nice, safe neighborhoods  
12 in areas where your children are comfortable, I  
13 want you-all to send a message to Mayor Emanuel,  
14 to Mr. Brizard and Mr. Vitale that when they're  
15 driving home in those after-school hours, there  
16 are many of our children who are out in the  
17 City of Chicago who would love to continue to have  
18 a place where they can just go and lay some of  
19 their burdens and their struggles aside.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. GAITER: So I'm urging you in the name of  
22 peace and protection to please continue to return  
23 the initial budget of the Safe Haven program back  
24 where it initially was --

1 (Applause.)

2 MR. GAITER: -- because the truth of the  
3 matter is that we are tired of burying our  
4 children, worrying about them. We do understand  
5 that it's the parents' job to keep our children  
6 safe. But you-all are also obligated by the taxes  
7 that we pay to give us some of the money back.

8 The mayor did say that there would be  
9 some shared sacrifices. Well, we want our  
10 sacrifices back that you have already taken from  
11 us. So we need to send this loud cry to you and  
12 the City tonight, that wherever you have a  
13 meeting, we're going to be there. Wherever there  
14 is a voice to cry for our children, we will be  
15 there to let you-all know as I ask them to repeat  
16 tonight to save Safe Haven. Save Safe Haven.  
17 Save Safe Haven. Save safe Haven. Save  
18 Safe Haven.

19 (Audience chanting.)

20 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

21 MS. GONZALEZ: Actually I would like to thank  
22 you for having us here and giving us the floor.  
23 My name is Lizvett Gonzalez. I would just like to  
24 show you -- can you stand please? Stand up and

1 show them how beautiful you are.

2 (Applause.)

3 MS. GONZALEZ: Those are my girls. I would  
4 like you to see all of my young ladies. Those are  
5 young ladies that I see grow up, develop. It's  
6 beautiful what we have here. Okay. This is  
7 Safe Haven. I don't know if you are aware. I  
8 don't know even if your CEO or if you have stepped  
9 into one of our rooms. But I would like to have  
10 you guys -- if you guys -- can you see what we do  
11 on a day-to-day to basis. Okay.

12 First up, some of these young ladies have  
13 gone through a lot of trauma. Some of these kids  
14 that you see here standing before you do not have  
15 a place to go after school hours. I understand.  
16 We understand. We are all well aware you have a  
17 budget to comply with. Okay. That's not the  
18 problem. The problem here is that we are not  
19 coming up with a solution that is going to be an  
20 equal compromise.

21 See, Safe Haven is an alternative to  
22 extending the school day, saving you budget,  
23 saving you payment for teachers, and saving you  
24 materials. Because you know what? What we did



1 with our money, we made a computer lab for my  
2 children. And we have them applying for jobs, and  
3 we have them applying for schools, and we have  
4 them applying for scholarships on a constant  
5 basis. That's what we're doing in our program.

6 Now in our program you can see every  
7 single one of these kids, they came out  
8 voluntarily. All I said was, you know what? I am  
9 going to a hearing. I'm going to be here. Would  
10 you guys like to come? Yes, teacher. You know  
11 what? We're here. And look at their signs.  
12 They're here voluntarily.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. GONZALEZ: We are asking for you to find  
15 a solution for -- you know what? Funds and what  
16 are the alternatives that you have. We're  
17 offering the alternative. You have the answer to  
18 your questions, and you are turning the back on  
19 those answers. These children are asking you to  
20 give them Safe Haven back because that's what they  
21 need (Crying).

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. GONZALEZ: You're wondering what your  
24 youths need. You're wondering what your youth

1 needs to be a better youth, to stop the violence,  
2 to grow and become parents? Look at where they're  
3 at. They are telling you Safe Haven.

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. GONZALEZ: There is no answer to that but  
6 Safe Haven. We tutor them. We lecture them. We  
7 give them counseling. Some of them have a regular  
8 school, but they're not comfortable with a  
9 stranger. They're not comfortable with somebody  
10 who is providing -- we are going to call your  
11 parents. It's okay.

12 MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please conclude.

13 MS. GONZALEZ: They are comfortable with us.  
14 They open up to us voluntarily. They come to our  
15 program voluntarily. Some of these children --  
16 this is the sad part -- okay -- our school is not  
17 the best in quality. Some of the children --  
18 because they have no place to go -- because I have  
19 witnessed that they don't have a place to go and  
20 their waiting outside their homes because their  
21 parents aren't there -- are grateful and thank us  
22 on a constant basis for the food that we provide  
23 to them. They say, man, I love coming to the  
24 program because of the food that's being

1 provided. And it's mediocre food.

2 MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please conclude.

3 MS. GONZALEZ: Save Haven is your answer.

4 And I would hope that you would reconsider. I

5 know and I am well aware that's a budget for it.

6 I would like for you guys to provide that funding

7 because the children are giving you the answers.

8 And if you are going to turn your backs on that

9 answer then this is pointless.

10 Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

13 (Audience chanting.)

14 MS. CHATI: My name is Rosita Chati. I'm from

15 the Englewood neighborhood. I have nieces and

16 nephews that attend Paul Robeson High School. We

17 need more accountability from our schools. CPS

18 has protected bad teachers and failing schools for

19 too long. It's about time for all of us to make

20 sacrifices for our children. Does this budget

21 demand more accountability from the teachers,

22 parents, and administrators? Where does it do

23 this? The budget is well intended, but it doesn't

24 do enough. We must do more to fix our failing

1 schools. Our children are counting on us.

2 Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

5 MR. VANCE: Hello. My name is Dave Vance. I  
6 am on the local school counsel at J.N. Thorp  
7 Elementary School. I am here, but I really don't  
8 know what to say. I feel like what I've seen from  
9 CPS, it's all a scam at this point. A scam. And  
10 you're up here with nice faces. You look like  
11 you're taking notes. They are going in the  
12 garbage. There is no one from the Board here.  
13 They've made their decision. This money -- this  
14 budget is public money, and that's why we are  
15 here. We demand accountability with our money.  
16 We demand accountability from the mayor and from  
17 J.C. Brizard. We want accountability. But, you  
18 know, all we are getting is a scam.

19 So my school, J.N. Thorp, is forced to  
20 share it's new building with a charter school.  
21 They got \$7 million to renovate this building with  
22 our public money. And the first week the charter  
23 school opened, a million dollars from Arnie Duncan  
24 and a million dollars from Oprah Winfrey; but

1 there is nothing for the public school. I had to  
2 demand that they put the marquee so they could  
3 know where the entrance to the school was. This  
4 is a poor neighborhood. So I challenged -- well,  
5 this was the previous board member -- I said, you  
6 know, drive around the school. Try to find the  
7 front door.

8 So anyway, here we are. We are demanding  
9 that our money be spent, and we want no cuts in  
10 our schools. We want better schools for all the  
11 kids.

12 Thank you.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

15 MR. WASHINGTON: My name is  
16 Mitchell Washington, and I work in manufacturing.  
17 So the budget that you showed up here, I get it.  
18 I get it. In manufacturing we call it downsizing.  
19 And what you do in downsizing is you take all your  
20 most experienced workers and fire them. What you  
21 do is you replace them with assembly robots.  
22 They're cheaper. Now you get the same number of  
23 units out the back door, but the quality is  
24 garbage. It's just garbage.

What you have to understand -- and I feel sorry for you guys because I know what you're trying to do. And you really think that you are working it out, but who should really be sitting here is Jean-Claude Brizard, the Board, and Rahm Emanuel --

MR. WASHINGTON: -- because you guys are going to have the unique experience of being part of that big group of people that 10 years from now, we'll say: They destroyed Chicago Public Schools. They came and sat down

1 three times a summer and it didn't even matter  
2 because Rahm had already told you guys what you're  
3 going to show, and what you're going to say, and  
4 what's it going to be --

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. WASHINGTON: -- and if they don't like  
7 it, too bad. Give them two minutes to speak. I  
8 feel sorry for you guys. Just take this message  
9 back to Mr. Brizard for me, Mitchell Washington,  
10 tell him that his legacy as a CEO of  
11 Chicago Public Schools is going to be one of  
12 ruin. And that when he gets ready to leave,  
13 whether we run him out on a rail or he just gets  
14 tired of all the complaints, he is going to get  
15 another vote of no confidence just like he did in  
16 Rochester, New York.

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you. Angela Williams,  
20 Jean-Claude Jones, Pamela Bean, Nona Burney, and  
21 Cleve Washington.

22 MS. WILLIAMS: Hello. My name is  
23 Angela Williams, and I'm a parent for an educated  
24 nation.

1           And first of all, I just want to say at  
2     the last board meeting I told Mr. Brizard that I  
3     was tired of his power point presentations. I am  
4     tired of looking at them. What I want to see is  
5     solutions. And the mayor also said in one of his  
6     campaign promises that he would not raise taxes.  
7     And with all of the other property tax increase in  
8     special service areas that's going to hit  
9     taxpayers later on this year, it's really going to  
10    be detrimental. I really don't know how you-all  
11    are going to pull it off.

12           But what I want to say is I am in support  
13    of the longer school day, which should have been  
14    part of the budget. I don't know -- I kind of  
15    missed the earlier presentation about the -- I  
16    caught the end of it about the budget. But I just  
17    want to know is the longer school day part of the  
18    budget? And also at the last board meeting  
19    CEO Brizard created a new position, a chief  
20    education officer. I really hope that those taxes  
21    aren't going to support another six figure salary  
22    that isn't really going to do anything. What I  
23    want to see them do is come to our community.  
24    Just like Mr. Washington said, Brizard and Mayor



1 Emanuel should have been here tonight. I do  
2 understand you-all have a job to do, but I really  
3 don't think it's your concern. I think it's the  
4 people that put you here as far as the Board,  
5 Mr. Vitale, and Penny Pritzker -- I really don't  
6 understand her role in anything. She's over at  
7 the Hyatt Hotel. So what experience does she have  
8 in education?

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. WILLIAMS: So my concern is holding  
11 you-all accountable since you-all are here. She  
12 is just the court reporter. She's just the  
13 stenographer. She's not part of it, but the four  
14 of you are here representing Chicago Public  
15 Schools. And I really don't want to see you-all  
16 as the fall guys. But what I want to see is and  
17 what I to hear and what I want to feel is  
18 something about our kids. It's not about your  
19 budget. It's not about Brizard. And they really  
20 do need to send him back to New York because he  
21 doesn't know anything about Chicago.

22 So what I want to see is some  
23 accountability. I want to be a part of the task  
24 force that you mentioned. I'm glad to see he

1 finally woke up because I thought he was asleep at  
2 first because he hadn't said anything.

3 I'm not here to do that, but what I'm  
4 saying is, I want to be part of that task force.  
5 And I know that according to the Open Meetings Act  
6 that that is a public meeting, and I am entitled  
7 to be there. So I do want to know when the next  
8 meeting is. So my friend, Sandra Patterson, and I  
9 can attend.

10 Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

13 MS. BEAN: Good evening. My name is  
14 Pamela Bean. And I am a parent, a product of  
15 Chicago Public Schools, and a teacher. I'm  
16 retired now for 35 years. I am so proud of the  
17 people who have come here to speak because in the  
18 35 years that I have been working, I've missed a  
19 lot. I missed a lot and I did not have an idea of  
20 what parents felt about what was going on in the  
21 school. I'm so proud to have some people -- to  
22 know that there were people behind me that were  
23 looking at what was going on while I was working  
24 for 35 years.

1           I thank you tonight for allowing us to  
2   come and listen to what we have to say. I came  
3   here to ask a question, and I thought I would get  
4   answers. It looks like maybe it's going to be  
5   answered later.

6           I'm here for tech administrators. I was  
7   told by one of my students that our tech  
8   administrator -- and I am concerned about CVS High  
9   School -- had been displaced. There was not money  
10  for him to be there. I don't understand how any  
11  high school could operate without a tech  
12  administrator that works for the computer labs,  
13  the labs in the library, the science labs. And I  
14  want to know are tech administrators required in  
15  all public schools -- all public high schools?

16           I don't understand high schools not  
17  having tech administrators and computer labs in  
18  every high school. I don't understand how our  
19  children are supposed to function and compete with  
20  other kids in other schools and young people  
21  everywhere.

22           So that was my concern. I want to know  
23  if a tech administrator is funded. Is that a  
24  regular funded position or is that discretionary

1 funds for the principal? It should be mandatory.

2 I also have just one comment concerning  
3 the longer school days. I have seen a lot of  
4 discussion on that. If the longer school day is  
5 not going to be instructional, our children are  
6 not going to benefit from it. If it's just going  
7 to be social, then I think that's like a waste of  
8 good time and money. Thank you.

9 Last comment. I had a boy in high school  
10 on the North Side who was mischievous. And many  
11 playful acts came up, and my boy was written up as  
12 if he was leaving -- going to leave that high  
13 school and go to 26th and California --

14 MS. SIMMONS: Ms. Speaker, please conclude.

15 MS. BEAN: Yes, I will.

16 And I was wondering from what I'm hearing  
17 tonight it seems like it's citywide. Cameras in  
18 our schools can be used for testimony against  
19 students. I'm very concerned about our children  
20 leaving high school and going straight to jails  
21 and prison.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 MR. RIVERA: Thank you for your comments. In

1 regard to specific questions about schools, please  
2 make sure that you speak to someone from our  
3 department in the back. We will definitely make  
4 sure that we respond individually to those  
5 questions.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. BURNEY: My name is Nona Burney. I am  
8 representing the Bronzeville Community Action  
9 Counsel tonight. This is my 40th year as an  
10 educator including time as a high school  
11 administrator. So I am unfortunately in many  
12 ways -- I should apologize, but I come from  
13 another city.

14 Let me start off by sharing with you what  
15 our counsel wants to see happen. As you probably  
16 know, the City of Chicago has started a process  
17 that has asked all of us -- all the skilled people  
18 in our communities to build a plan -- a strategic  
19 plan in order to include the schools on our  
20 South Side neighborhood of Bronzeville.  
21 Unfortunately some of what has been recommended in  
22 the budget undercuts what we're planning. So we  
23 really want to share with you not only our  
24 recommendations, but our concerns.

1           The first one is this: We need to change  
2 the surveillance cameras and police for more  
3 restorative justice programs. You heard that  
4 once. You are hearing it now from the Bronzeville  
5 captain.

6           The second thing is that we know that  
7 there are going to be new magnet schools. My  
8 question is: Which communities get them? Will it  
9 be us?

10           The third thing: We recommend is that  
11 there be more mentoring programs in each of the  
12 schools.

13           The fourth thing: That we are all for is  
14 all-day kindergarten. We want to know if it's  
15 going to be in Bronzeville? If you are planning  
16 to eliminate the extracurricular clubs in math and  
17 science, if you are going to reduce the amount of  
18 money that community schools, which, in fact, stay  
19 open longer -- so that there are activities and  
20 learning experiments for children and their  
21 parents, if you are going to cut the academic  
22 achievement academies, which are intended to catch  
23 up and catch those young people who would be  
24 dropping out, then we want to know how this budget

1 is really helping us do what we all believe in and  
2 claim to be the primary focus, which is to better  
3 educate the children of Chicago. So understand we  
4 are concerned about that.

5 We have a real good question about how  
6 this budget was constructed because, in fact, we  
7 found some strange information about enrollment in  
8 schools.

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

10 MS. BURNEY: -- on Page 508 and 511 -- look  
11 at the number of the enrollment. So could you  
12 please check that?

13 In conclusion, Alex Wiesendanger talked  
14 about insanity. It is insane to have a longer  
15 school day or a longer school if the same things  
16 are done to children. All right. So anyone who  
17 is thinking about that, think about what that will  
18 be made up of. Some of the things like Safe Haven  
19 and other projects that are already extending the  
20 day for children so that they are kept safe and  
21 instructed and supported and nurtured are about to  
22 be cut.

23 So my question is: You already have  
24 models of what a longer day means. Let me suggest

1 that you keep funding those things.

2 Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you.

5 MS. OSTRO: Just one comment on your direct  
6 question. We are aware that there was a problem  
7 with the numbers in the late pages of the budget,  
8 but we had a technical glitch that did double all  
9 of the numbers. It is now corrected in the budget  
10 book on the web site. We apologize for that. It  
11 didn't impact any of the budget numbers. It was  
12 just the enrollment and faculty numbers. We  
13 apologize. And, of course, we appreciate that you  
14 did such a careful review. And again we apologize  
15 for that technical error.

16 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you. That was our last  
17 speaker for the evening, and we will be adjourning  
18 the meeting now.

19 Thank you so much on behalf of  
20 Chicago Public Schools for attending our hearing.

21 (Concluded at 9:00 p.m.)  
22  
23  
24



**SIMEON HIGH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012 PROPOSED BUDGET**

**August 12, 2011**

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**SIMEON HIGH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012 PROPOSED BUDGET**

**August 12, 2011**

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**SIMEON HIGH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012 PROPOSED BUDGET**

**August 12, 2011**

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