

1 CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2 PUBLIC HEARING

3 FISCAL YEAR 2016 BUDGET PRESENTATION

4 held on

5 Tuesday, August 18, 2015

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

11  
12 PRESENT:

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

15 MS. JENNIE HUANG BENNETT, Facilitator

16 MR. FORREST CLAYPOOL, CEO

17 MS. KATE FOLEY, Diverse Learners

18 MR. PAUL OSLAND, Facilities

19 MR. PHIL SALEMI, Deputy Chief, Network 2

20 MS. ANNA ALVARADO, Network Chief, Network 1

21  
22  
23 Reported By: Karen Fatigato, CSR

24 License No.: 084-004072



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

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

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

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

24 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Thank you. We also



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

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

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

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

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

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

24 The sign-up period to speak was from 5



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

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

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

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

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

21 Let me introduce the members of our  
22 panel.

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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



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

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

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



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

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

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





1 district.

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

8 The next challenge is even bigger.  
9 This slide -- again, let me show you, this is  
10 hundreds of millions of dollars in the years  
11 across the bottom. This slide shows our pension  
12 expenditures every year. And as you can see  
13 back in 2005 when the pension was over 90  
14 percent funded the State contributed in the dark  
15 purple down here about \$65 million into the  
16 Teacher's Pension Fund. And the district didn't  
17 have to contribute anything, again because the  
18 funding was -- the pension was fully funded.  
19 But now as you go forward you could see that the  
20 district was required to make a contribution and  
21 that's the light purple on this graph. In the  
22 beginning it started off \$37 million and it  
23 gradually went up, meanwhile the State continued  
24 to make a contribution of around \$75 million.



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

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

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



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

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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



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

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



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

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

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



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

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

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

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





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

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



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

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

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



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

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



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

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



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

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

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



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

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



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

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

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



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

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





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



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

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



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

7 MR. ESTVAN: We're ready?

8 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Yes.

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

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

24 MS. VELAZQUEZ: My name is Jennifer



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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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





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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

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



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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

4 MR. PHELAN: What's up?

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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





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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

8 MS. HUANG BENNETT: Thank you.

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

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



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

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



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

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

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



1 your situation.

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

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

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



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

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

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



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

9           MS. HUANG BENNETT: Please conclude.

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

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

24          This budget is about as dishonest as





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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

10 Thank you.

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

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



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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

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





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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

8 CEO CLAYPOOL: Go ahead.

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

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

24 I was going to ask if a lack of revenue



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

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

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



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

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

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

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

*Karen Fatigato*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Karen Fatigato, CSR  
LIC. NO. 084-004072



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