

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, March 20, 2017
10:15 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

RESOLUTION 170145 - Resolution calling for the City Council Committee on Education to hold hearings to analyze the adequacy of our public schools in preparing African American young men for college, and more importantly to share best practices with regard to improving current rates of college-bound African American young men in Philadelphia.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: This
3 is Jannie Blackwell. We're calling into
4 order the City Council Committee on
5 Education with regard to Resolution
6 170145 today, March 20th, 2017.

7 We will ask the Clerk to read
8 the title of the resolution.

9 THE CLERK: Resolution 170145,
10 calling for the City Council Committee on
11 Education to hold hearings to analyze the
12 adequacy of our public schools in
13 preparing African American young men for
14 college, and more importantly to share
15 best practices with regard to improving
16 current rates of college-bound African
17 American young men in Philadelphia.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
19 you very much.

20 We were going to make a
21 statement, but I've been told I shouldn't
22 try to put people to sleep, because it
23 was long. I was reading it to a friend
24 of mine, and after about the third page,
25 she said, Please. So, therefore, even

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2 though I was impressed with myself, it is
3 your friends who let you know the truth.

4 So we have copies of the
5 resolution, which is really
6 self-explanatory, copies of my statement,
7 and copies of other statements that are
8 available on the table behind me.

9 If someone would like to
10 testify who we did not get or did not
11 call in, Roxanne is sitting right here.
12 Roxanne will be at this -- raise your
13 hand, please.

14 Just let Roxanne know, and
15 we'll certainly add you to the list.

16 Folks are in their offices
17 listening, others will come, but we want
18 to get started so we have an opportunity
19 for everyone to realize that -- during
20 these days, Mr. Williams, who came from
21 New York on press, just told me that the
22 American prison system incarceration rate
23 increased over 700 percent in the last
24 four decades and that taxpayers pay 39
25 million, cost per inmate 14,000 to 16,000

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2 a year. Imagine that.

3 Thank you, Mr. Williams, for
4 your facts. We appreciate it.

5 Any information we have,
6 because we have a stenographer here, all
7 of this certainly will be on record and
8 it will be available for anyone who might
9 like to see it.

10 And let me say before I call on
11 our first panel, we'll ask them to come
12 forward now and be ready to begin: David
13 Hardy, Boys' Latin; Paul Harrington,
14 Drexel University; Eric Grimes, Reaching
15 Out for Brothers Alliance. And two
16 others can come and sit in the leather
17 chairs and as they are empty, you come
18 forward. Mr. Donovan McCargo, Dean of
19 Students, Community College of
20 Philadelphia; Derek Perkins, Director,
21 Center for Male Engagement at Community
22 College of Philadelphia; and Farah
23 Jimenez, Philadelphia Education Fund.
24 This will be our first panel.

25 (Witnesses approached witness

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2 table.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And
4 let me say that it's so important the
5 times we live in. This issue of young
6 black males having an opportunity to go
7 to college fits in exactly with the times
8 we're in.

9 As all of you know, I represent
10 West and Southwest Philadelphia and I
11 have University Sciences, Penn, Drexel.
12 I have the Cira Centre, Wharton. I have
13 all of this that you hear with Brandywine
14 and the \$3.5 billion in their one
15 project. I have the Zoo. We have many,
16 many projects going on, billions of
17 dollars in my area, and we're fighting
18 now when it comes to gentrification, when
19 it comes to inclusion. We've been in a
20 battle to hold up projects until we're
21 sure that we can make neighbors in the
22 area available for jobs and that
23 youngsters in the area can take CTE
24 classes and be able to be apprentices
25 when they leave.

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2 So it's not easy. It's
3 difficult, but we're fighting, and this
4 hearing is part of that agenda, that we
5 must fight to make sure young black men
6 and all races and all communities are
7 involved, and because they are so low on
8 the scale and so high on the prison
9 rates, we've got to deal with this issue
10 and we have to deal with it now.

11 So certainly we will invite you
12 to make your testimony, and thank you
13 again for being here and thank you for
14 all that you did, because David Hardy has
15 been -- we've been working together for
16 years, and had he not come forward with
17 all of this this morning, we would not be
18 here. Thank you.

19 Mr. Hardy.

20 MR. HARDY: Thank you,
21 Councilwoman Blackwell.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you.

24 MR. HARDY: Good morning. Good
25 morning to President Clarke and all the

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2 esteemed members of Council and to all
3 those who have joined us today for this
4 important meeting. My name is David
5 Hardy and it's been my great honor to
6 serve as the Founder and CEO of Boys'
7 Latin of Philadelphia Charter School for
8 the past ten years.

9 Our school was chartered by the
10 SRC in 2006 to address the low rates of
11 high school completion and college
12 matriculation among African American
13 males in our city. In our ten years of
14 operation, we have witnessed our students
15 graduate from high school, matriculate to
16 college, and complete four-year degrees
17 at rates that far exceed those of
18 District students. However, our school
19 serves just 800 students in grades 6
20 through 12. Although our results are
21 substantial, our impact is not
22 significant. We need to do some of the
23 work that we're doing at Boys' Latin at
24 scale.

25 There are approximately 32,000

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2 African American males enrolled in
3 District schools. Their failure
4 represents a crisis for our boys and our
5 city.

6 Our city has a crisis on its
7 hands. Far too few African American boys
8 complete four-year college degrees.

9 Knowing the economic and social
10 implications of not earning a college
11 degree, it is unconscionable that our
12 public schools don't produce better
13 results for these boys, who make up about
14 one-third of the District's student body.

15 When we look at the performance
16 of high school students as they move
17 through post-secondary education
18 programs, a clear pattern emerges. Even
19 when students are academically equal,
20 race, economic status, and gender are
21 factors that can have a major impact on
22 outcomes. Because African American males
23 are at the intersection of all three of
24 these factors, their results are
25 negatively impacted the most.

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2 Boys' Latin is a college
3 preparatory school. Ninety-nine percent
4 of our students are African American
5 males and 100 percent are identified as
6 economically disadvantaged by the
7 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In spite
8 of these demographic traits, we seem to
9 have become -- excuse me; which seem to
10 have become excuses for our District
11 schools. We at Boys' Latin expect our
12 students to earn degrees. We won't lower
13 expectations of our students because
14 they're deemed at risk. We show them
15 that they too are worthy of college
16 degrees.

17 I believe that all high schools
18 in Philadelphia should be measured by
19 their outcomes. What opportunities are
20 available to these schools' students when
21 they graduate? Do they attend college,
22 joining the ranks of the country's most
23 successful citizens? Or do they fail to
24 obtain any post-secondary education,
25 relegating themselves to a life of

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2 limited economic means and higher risk of
3 destabilizing forces like crime and
4 imprisonment? This is why the Chair of
5 Council Education Committee took the
6 unusual step of holding hearings today
7 aimed at a specific subgroup of students
8 attending Philadelphia public schools.

9 I hope that the following three
10 outcomes occur from these hearings:

11 We must conclude this hearing
12 with a clear understanding of the depth
13 and breadth of this problem. The
14 economic necessity of obtaining a college
15 degree in order to fully participate in
16 the labor market has never been stronger.
17 Yet we continue to see black males enroll
18 and complete college at frighteningly low
19 rates. What does the future hold for
20 black men when such a wide disparity
21 exists in educational attainment? Once
22 we all understand the extreme downside
23 risks, we need to attack this problem
24 with a sense of urgency. We need to join
25 the effort to increase successful black

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2 male participation in post-secondary
3 educational programs, especially
4 four-year colleges.

5 Number two, we should annually
6 publish a full dataset for all public
7 high schools' college matriculation,
8 persistence, and complete data
9 disaggregated by race and gender. We
10 must demand the creation of a method for
11 reporting post-secondary success on a
12 consistent basis. The data released
13 should include both rates and numbers.
14 Our city's parents, students, and
15 taxpayers should be aware of student
16 outcomes as a key measure of our school
17 system's success. Not reporting these
18 outcomes publicly seriously compromises
19 our school system's credibility.

20 Number three, we must identify
21 the barriers to college success for black
22 boys. We need to understand what
23 academic preparation is required to
24 succeed in college and determine whether
25 these elements of preparation are equally

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2 available for black males in Philadelphia
3 public K-12 schools. Colleges expect
4 adequate preparation to include four
5 years of math, science, and a foreign
6 language. Do black males have equal
7 access to these required college
8 preparatory classes? What is the black
9 male enrollment in AP and honors classes?
10 How does the selective admission system
11 of high school enrollment affect black
12 males?

13 The ability to receive a
14 publicly funded education meant to
15 prepare you for employment or higher
16 education is one of the wonderful things
17 about our city, state, and our country.
18 Citizens, whether they have children of
19 their own or not, pay taxes to ensure
20 that we educate children for responsible
21 citizenry. When that public education
22 system reports outcomes in disaggregated
23 averages, it is often assumed that all
24 students of all types perform at the City
25 average. Sadly, that is not the case.

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2 Today we will take a look at how lopsided
3 performance outcomes can be. It is my
4 belief that when staring at these
5 painfully undersized results, we will be
6 moved to generate a citywide will to
7 address this stubborn problem.

8 Thank you very much.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
10 you very much.

11 With me is Councilwoman Helen
12 Gym and Councilman David Oh, who are
13 members of this Committee. As we said,
14 everybody will be here. We're grateful
15 for their attendance.

16 Thank you, Mr. Hardy, because
17 this issue -- we are so grateful for your
18 school, for Boys' Latin, and what you've
19 done to show that it is possible and that
20 youngsters from any community can be
21 successful if given the opportunity and
22 with someone who believes in them. Thank
23 you very much.

24 I'll ask my colleagues if
25 either has anything they'd like to say,

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2 otherwise we'll keep going.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Well, thank
4 you very much, Councilwoman Blackwell,
5 colleagues, and to the impressive panels
6 of experts who are here today to talk
7 about how black degrees matter and what
8 we can do to support black male students
9 in Philadelphia.

10 I think that this hearing was
11 incredibly important, for starters. For
12 the great majority of children in the
13 City, there isn't really a pipeline to
14 college that provides the support
15 students need, and we need to be able to
16 fix that and address that for all
17 students.

18 But today it is really
19 important that we focus our attention on
20 the experiences and the obstacles,
21 particularly for black males. The first
22 thing, though, that I want us to kind of
23 debunk is the myth that there are more
24 black men in prison than there are in
25 college. The Howard University

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2 Professor, Ivory Toldson, found in 2013
3 that there are twice as many black men in
4 college as in prison, and that is because
5 of the significant growth in
6 college-going rates for black men since
7 2000. And it's important for us to
8 understand and both support that trend of
9 college-going as an aspirational aspect
10 and not from a standpoint of, how do we
11 say, like a disinvestment or dysfunction
12 within communities. We are seeing an
13 upward trend, and we need to be
14 supportive of that.

15 But it's clear that the college
16 completion rate for recent cohorts of
17 Philadelphia students all across the
18 board is in the teens, and that is
19 completely unacceptable. So the system
20 as a whole is not working, and that's
21 especially true for black male students
22 in our city. And I hope that with the
23 panel that is before us, that we can
24 learn about these systemic obstacles that
25 are in place, the hurdles that actually

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2 throw themselves up to block black male
3 students' success. That includes the
4 decline in our black male teacher
5 population and our black population of
6 teachers in particular. And also learn
7 about promising practices that helped
8 keep many black students in the City on
9 track and in school and going through
10 college. So we want to focus on the
11 positives as well.

12 We're trying to do this work in
13 Pennsylvania, a state that has the
14 biggest funding gap between the richest
15 and poorest districts of any state in the
16 country, a state which sees its public
17 college students graduate with one of the
18 highest debt loads in the country, and
19 the result is that Philadelphia spends
20 \$4,200 less per student than the norm for
21 the surrounding 62 suburban school
22 districts in our state, and that puts
23 Philadelphia students at an enormous
24 disadvantage from the get-go.

25 Also a U.S. DOE report last

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2 year found that Pennsylvania spends only
3 half as much on higher ed versus on
4 prisons. Most states spend far more on
5 colleges, for example, in their state
6 than prisons, because it makes a lot more
7 sense to do that. But paying for college
8 is a huge challenge for Philadelphia
9 students, and we've seen some really
10 troubling stories in the papers about
11 students who are struggling in a high
12 poverty city. We have students who have
13 to choose between paying tuition or
14 buying food. So a critical part of our
15 work is to reverse the state policies
16 that are in place that severely limit the
17 opportunities for black male students,
18 and we're going to have to mount a big
19 fight to beat back republicans who want
20 to slash federal programs this year in
21 particular. The President has proposed
22 cutting education funding by 13 percent,
23 and in particular he's targeted college
24 access and after-school programs like
25 TRIO, GEAR UP, 21st Century Learning

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2 Grants and more.

3 And we need to make sure that
4 we are not speaking of this from the
5 perspective of a negative picture for
6 black male student achievement. We want
7 to uplift our black boys and our young
8 men in this city. That kind of thinking,
9 the negativity that has surrounded that,
10 has been toxic, and it's been around for
11 a really long time. And so one thing
12 that we're hoping to do today is, for me
13 I'm very interested in supporting trends
14 for improvement of college-going,
15 supporting black male students and their
16 achievement in schools, rebuilding the
17 percentage of black teachers working in
18 the District. We've already started a
19 good conversation with the District on
20 this issue, and we're looking at new
21 ventures like community schools and
22 whether they can boost the students on
23 the path to college and other promising
24 examples and initiatives that we hope
25 that these panel of experts will bring

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2 out.

3 But, Councilwoman Blackwell, I
4 want to thank you for this very important
5 dialogue and discussion, and I look
6 forward to hearing from all of our
7 panelists today.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
9 you very much.

10 Mr. Paul Harrington from
11 Drexel.

12 DR. HARRINGTON: Thank you,
13 Madam Chairwoman.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
15 you.

16 DR. HARRINGTON: I appreciate
17 your giving me the opportunity to speak
18 before this panel today.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you.

21 DR. HARRINGTON: I handed out
22 a -- I hope you all have this little
23 handout, which is a copy of my testimony,
24 because in it is just some data about
25 some of the outcomes for teenagers that

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2 graduate from the School District of
3 Philadelphia.

4 The findings that you have
5 before you are part of a larger study
6 that I conducted for Project U-Turn and
7 Philadelphia Youth Network called "From
8 Diplomas to Degrees," and this study was
9 a longitudinal study of a cohort -- of an
10 entire cohort of entering 9th graders in
11 the Philadelphia School District who
12 entered the 9th grade back in 2003-2004
13 and who are expected to graduate from
14 high school in 2007. And with this data
15 file, we were able to track these
16 youngsters over the next seven years
17 after their expected date from graduation
18 from high school to get an understanding
19 about what the chances were of these kids
20 earning a college degree over the next
21 seven-year period of time, but also to
22 understand the factors that influence the
23 outcomes for these teens and young
24 adults.

25 So if you take a look and flip

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2 over the first page of this study, this
3 tells a story about the outcomes of the
4 set of youngsters, young African American
5 men, young guys, who graduated from high
6 school from that entering cohort of
7 2003-2004 who are expected to graduate in
8 2007. Some of these guys graduated later
9 on; others didn't.

10 So we start with this group of
11 2,967 young African American guys and we
12 track these guys over the next seven
13 years. And what you see is sort of the
14 pathway to a college completion, and of
15 equal significance is where we lose
16 youngsters over this period.

17 And you could see that, first
18 of all, is that out of these 2,700 young
19 guys, only half ever enroll in college
20 over the next seven years. So 50 percent
21 of all African American young men who
22 graduated from high school in the City
23 never touch a post-secondary education
24 system. They never enroll in any kind of
25 two-year or four-year college. They

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2 never enroll in any certificate program
3 that's funded that receives Title IV
4 funds under the U.S. Higher Education
5 Act. So only one out of two young guys
6 will ever touch the higher education
7 system.

8 Of those youngsters who do
9 enroll in the higher education system,
10 what you'll see is about two-thirds --
11 I'm sorry. Of those youngsters who do
12 enroll in the higher education system,
13 those young guys, we lose a bunch of
14 them. We actually lose about 40 percent
15 to 45 percent over the next first year
16 of -- the freshman year. So by the end
17 of the first year of college, we're down
18 to only 750 young African American men
19 still enrolled in college.

20 So we tracked these guys over
21 the next seven years, and you can see on
22 the table, you see out of that total of
23 2,700 guys, only 340 actually earned any
24 kind of degree or certificate. That's
25 about 13 percent. At the Bachelor's

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2 degree level, only 8 percent of those
3 guys will earn a Bachelor's degree.

4 So only basically one in ten
5 guys who graduate from the School
6 District of Philadelphia, African
7 American guys who graduate from the
8 School District of Philadelphia high
9 school, will actually end up earning a
10 Bachelor's degree and another 3
11 percentage points, or about 80 guys, will
12 earn a certificate. And about 41 guys
13 will earn an Associate's degree.

14 So overall, we have a degree or
15 certificate-earning rate, award rate, of
16 only about 12, 13 percent for young
17 African American males.

18 If you flip over to the second
19 page, we just kind of calculate the
20 gender differences, and this is just --
21 African American females, by the way, I
22 won't go through the whole testimony, but
23 the findings for all race-ethnic groups
24 are available within this testimony.

25 And what you see is that at the

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2 high school level, we actually lose a lot
3 of young black African American guys in
4 high school. So at the time we grant the
5 degree, there's 124 young women earning a
6 high school diploma from the School
7 District of Philadelphia per hundred
8 guys. Then we lose a bunch of guys in
9 the college enrollment decision. There's
10 a big difference in the fraction of kids
11 we send to college who are female,
12 African American kids who are female,
13 relative to male. So we actually send
14 158 females, black women, to college for
15 every hundred guys.

16 Persistence through the
17 freshman year, again, a gulf arises.
18 There's 162 women make it through the
19 freshman year per hundred guys. Then
20 when you get to the earning a degree, any
21 kind of degree, it's 171. At the
22 Bachelor's degree level for the School
23 District of Philadelphia, there are 208
24 awards to African American women per
25 hundred awards to African American guys.

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2 So there's very large deficits
3 for African American guys. And when we
4 look at the overall race-ethnic data, you
5 see that African American boys and
6 Hispanic boys really have the toughest
7 time enrolling and completing a college.
8 Hispanic guys actually do a little bit
9 worse than the African American guys, but
10 they're both really, really low relative
11 to white and Asian kids. There are very,
12 very large gulfs across race-ethnic
13 groups and there's very large gender
14 gulfs for these groups.

15 So what's underneath this? Why
16 are we getting such poor or what I view
17 as poor results for kids coming out of
18 the School District of Philadelphia and,
19 more importantly, what can we do about
20 it? And when I take a look at this
21 data -- and we've analyzed this as
22 carefully as we can -- what we basically
23 find is that race-ethnicity itself
24 independent of kids' basic skill scores,
25 their PSSA scores, their high school GPA,

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2 their average daily attendance, things
3 that you think matter about a kid's
4 success in high school or going to
5 college, once we even account for that,
6 we still just find a gender gap and a
7 race-ethnic gap. We just find boys with
8 the same basic skills, the same PSSA
9 scores, the same daily attendance. Boys
10 are just likely to go to college than
11 girls are. And we need to understand a
12 little bit more why that's the case.

13 The second thing is, we also
14 just find this African American gap, that
15 African American kids are a little bit
16 less likely to go to college than our
17 other kids, and we need to understand
18 that. That's a more complicated question
19 that I'd like to talk to you all about
20 sometime when you get a chance.

21 But the context of the high
22 school itself matters a lot. One of the
23 things you find is that high schools that
24 have high turnover rates, lots and lots
25 of kids moving through that high school

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2 itself, has an independent negative
3 effect on the outcomes of kids, and
4 sometimes that high school churn rate is
5 really viewed -- it's sometimes referred
6 to as mobility rate. It's viewed as kind
7 of a measure of the high school culture.

8 I've been a teacher for 35
9 years. One of the most important things
10 I find about teaching is getting to know
11 who your students are, and if you got a
12 lot of churn in your class, that's hard
13 to do. So there is this kind of churn
14 effect that diminishes -- that has an
15 independent effect of diminishing a kid's
16 chances for enrolling, persisting, and
17 completing in college.

18 Student behavior in high school
19 really matters tremendously. One of the
20 most important determinants, one of the
21 most powerful determinants of your
22 chances of enrolling in college, being
23 retained in college, completing college
24 is high school attendance. Kids that
25 attend high school on a regular basis

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2 just do much, much better. We find that
3 for every one percentage point gain in
4 average daily attendance -- remember, it
5 only takes two days of attendance --
6 actually less than two days of attendance
7 to get a one point gain in average daily
8 attendance. It raises your chance of
9 enrolling in college by six-tenths of a
10 percentage point. It raises your chance
11 of completing college by seven-tenths of
12 a percentage point. These are very
13 powerful effects. So getting kids to
14 show up every day has this powerful
15 independent effect.

16 Very unsurprising to anybody
17 here, kids' grade point average is a very
18 powerful predictor of how well they're
19 going to do in school. Kids with higher
20 grade point averages just do really well.
21 Kids who don't do well -- if we raise a
22 kid's grade point average from B minus to
23 B plus, it increases the chance of
24 completing college by 11 percentage
25 points. So this is a very, very large

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2 swing in the probability of kids

3 completing school.

4 Basic skill scores, reading,
5 writing, and math, are the sine qua non
6 for college success. Kids that have
7 strong PSSA scores are much more likely
8 to enroll in college, be retained in
9 college, and complete college. Basic
10 skills, reading, writing, and math
11 efficiencies, are really powerful
12 determinants of college success.

13 And the last thing that matters
14 about college is where you go to school,
15 that there are very powerful independent
16 effects for kids depending on the level
17 of college they go to and the sector of
18 college to go to. Kids who enroll
19 immediately in college have much better
20 outcomes than kids who delay their
21 enrollment in college. Kids that enroll
22 in four-year schools have much, much
23 better outcomes than kids who enroll in
24 two-year schools, and that's once you
25 account for academic ability, behavioral

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2 characteristics, and the school and
3 social economic backgrounds of these
4 youngsters.

5 So overall when you take a look
6 at these findings and you ask yourself
7 what does this mean, it means that there
8 are some things we could do to raise the
9 proficiencies of kids to increase their
10 chances of going to college and
11 completing college. But the consequences
12 of kids not completing college are really
13 quite extraordinary.

14 In a separate paper that I
15 prepared, it's called "The Human Capital
16 Deficit of Disconnected Youth in
17 Philadelphia," this paper analyzes
18 findings from the American Community
19 Survey and asks a very simple question.
20 Of kids age 16 to 24, what fraction are
21 disconnected from human capital
22 development activities? Not in school,
23 not in work, not in a military. When you
24 think about that age of 16 to 24, these
25 are the most important ages for kids to

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2 be making these decisions. This is where
3 the bulk of life's human capital
4 acquisition occurred.

5 We have a quarter of the 16- to
6 24-year-old population in the City
7 disengaged from education, school or the
8 military, and what this then means is is
9 the chances of life success for these
10 youngsters are just radically reduced.
11 So to try and figure out some strategies
12 that can bolster kids' access into the
13 post-secondary system, the retention into
14 it, and completion is essential,
15 particularly for African American kids,
16 because they're increasingly finding
17 themselves left behind.

18 Thanks so much for your
19 attention. I appreciate it.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you,
21 Professor Harrington. I know that there
22 are lots of questions, but I think we're
23 going to proceed with the members of the
24 first panel first, if that's all right
25 with everybody. So, Mr. Grimes, is that

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2 correct? And if you could just introduce
3 yourself and your title.

4 MR. GRIMES: Okay. Today my
5 name is Eric Grimes, also known as
6 Brother Shomari, and today I'm here
7 representing Reaching Out for the
8 Brothers Alliance. I'll talk a little
9 bit more about that, but background-wise
10 I'm a product of the Philadelphia public
11 school systems, and I really want to kind
12 of paint that picture. I attended
13 elementary -- well, actually Get Set at
14 John Commodore Barry Elementary School.
15 I went there until 5th grade. Then we
16 moved to Wynnefield, so I did my 6th
17 grade year at Samuel Gompers Elementary
18 School. Considered going to Alexander
19 Hamilton back when Alexander Hamilton was
20 actually a magnet middle school in the
21 City of Philadelphia. I don't know how
22 many people remember way back then, but
23 that little school there on Spruce Street
24 actually used to be one of the better and
25 best schools in the City. Graduated from

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2 Beeber. They had a program called the
3 Beeber Wynnefield Alternative Program,
4 otherwise known as BWAP. Then went from
5 there to Central High School, Morehouse
6 College and then a new school.

7 I have a son who is 23 years
8 old. He is a product of Gompers. He
9 spent some time in The Haverford School.
10 He graduated and got his diploma from
11 Overbrook, but not traditional Overbrook,
12 the kind of programs that we invest in
13 now that are petty much makeshift,
14 package something together so that
15 students can get a certificate that
16 doesn't mean anything in the real world.
17 That's where he graduated from. He's now
18 at the University of the District of
19 Columbia working on his Associate's
20 degree.

21 And I have a seven-year-old son
22 who is now home-schooled, and he is
23 home-schooled because I made a decision
24 that I will not trust my children's
25 academic, social, cognitive well-being to

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2 a district that is content producing slop
3 year after year. We have made a decision
4 not to be outraged about decades of the
5 systematic production of particularly
6 black students, particularly black male
7 students, being systematically
8 disadvantaged to compete in the world.
9 We are not having an educational
10 conversation today, even though it's
11 being held by the Education Committee.
12 And I'm holding my thanks for
13 Councilwoman Blackwell for when she comes
14 back, so remind me to circle around and
15 express my appreciation. But for me,
16 this conversation is about the past, the
17 present, and the future of Philadelphia
18 and the role that people who lead this
19 city envision black people in general and
20 black males in particular are playing.

21 You know, we're from
22 Philadelphia, so I have three
23 Shomari-isms that I want to share that
24 I'm hoping make sense here. One of them
25 is called -- overall is called Watch the

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2 Process, right? The process is that
3 thing that the Sixers are doing where
4 they, over the last five years or so,
5 have made it a covenant that they want to
6 lose because there's a reward for losing,
7 and that in losing, if they lose enough,
8 maybe they can get the right things in
9 place in order to get better.

10 The problem is for us in
11 education, there is no reward for losing,
12 right?

13 So I have three Shomari-isms
14 that I just want to share. Number one is
15 that we must remember that the growl is
16 by design. If we look at a Lamborghini,
17 Lamborghini is one of the best cars in
18 the world, but it has its very
19 distinctive growling sound, and most
20 people, if you're not familiar with the
21 Lamborghini, you hear the growl and you
22 think that the car is broken. What I
23 want us to remember is that we're trying
24 to fix a system that is not broken. The
25 educational system is not broken. It is

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2 designed not to work for our people, so
3 we can't fix that.

4 So if the growl is by design,
5 then the answer must be redesign, not
6 reform. And as long as we're having a
7 reform conversation, we're not fixing a
8 daggone thing.

9 Number two, back to the
10 process. If you consistently reward
11 failure, then failure must be your
12 reward. And I want us to let that settle
13 in, because year after year we're
14 renewing contracts and giving people
15 billions of dollars who clearly don't
16 know what the hell they're doing. And if
17 it was any other population that we
18 actually cared about, those people would
19 not be in play. So clearly if they're
20 getting raises and rewards and people are
21 coming in with ideas decade after decade
22 and failure is still the product, then we
23 must want failure. And until we no
24 longer are content with the systematic
25 failure of black people and black males

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2 in particular, we won't change this
3 conversation. That's why this room is
4 not crowded, because at the core, most
5 people don't give a damn about black men.
6 Even some black people. That's another
7 testimony.

8 Last, but not last, we must not
9 continue to volunteer to fix up what
10 others get paid billions to fuck up. And
11 I just -- I didn't even want to bleep
12 that, because I want to say it very
13 clear. We're playing a game here.
14 People are getting a lot of money to
15 create failure, and then those of us who
16 know what we're doing are asked to come
17 in and provide happenstance
18 after-the-fact advice at a volunteer
19 rate. The lucky thing is that many of us
20 do that. That is why we even are here
21 now, we even have a conversation now,
22 because people have held their nose and
23 their foot and their shoulder to the
24 grindstone to make this moment happen.
25 But I really want us to raise it to a

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2 level.

3 So the thing I want to add,
4 because I could do a litany of statistics
5 to supplement what Dr. Harrington has
6 already -- and my thing is, we can end up
7 in this just kind of litany of failure
8 conversation.

9 Back in 2006-2007, I had the
10 privilege of working with a group of
11 brothers called the College Ambassadors,
12 and they came about as a result of a
13 great project that a friend of mine,
14 Benjamin Herold, had done back in the day
15 called the "First Person Documentary,"
16 where Ben followed six students, who were
17 good students, by the way. All of these
18 students, what they had in common is that
19 they were a part of the college
20 preparatory program that Temple
21 University used to run and then withdrew
22 the funding from. And I want to be very
23 clear, because we have a -- we can name
24 the names, we know that Temple almost 10
25 to 15 years ago made a conscientious

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2 decision to change the face of its
3 campus. We know that.

4 We know that the University of
5 Pennsylvania, they have principals in
6 play that make it such that -- we're not
7 even talking about double-digit
8 representation of black male students
9 from public high schools that are on any
10 of these campuses in our city, except
11 maybe CCP. We got to really grapple with
12 what that means. We got to grapple with
13 the fact that even when we say a school
14 like Penn has an 8 percent graduation
15 rate for black males, that most of that
16 percentage is comprised of students who
17 came to them from outside of
18 Philadelphia, from outside of this
19 nation; i.e., the Caribbean and other
20 islands, and from Africa, right? So even
21 the numbers we're talking about are much
22 more dire than the conversation we're
23 even having right now.

24 The other thing I want to add
25 is that we know what works. Our people

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2 coming out of reconstruction within a
3 generation had gained historic levels at
4 the level of literacy, going from
5 illiterate people to levels of literacy
6 that have not been replicated in the
7 world for a group of people.

8 When this country was at war in
9 World War II and they decided that the
10 white men were across the seas fighting
11 and they needed some bodies to fill the
12 industrial job base, overnight training
13 for work -- they trained formerly
14 sharecroppers and people who were
15 victimized by Jim Crow overnight. When
16 they were needed in the factories,
17 somehow this country figured out how to
18 train millions of black people, millions
19 of women for those positions.

20 When brothers were in the
21 streets rioting in the '60s and early
22 '70s, overnight all the sudden people
23 realized education, jobs matter. Let's
24 get these people on campus. I contend
25 that that's why I was able to go through

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2 my schooling and not have to pay a dime.
3 It's not because I was super smart. It's
4 because this country realized that if
5 those brothers don't have opportunities,
6 things happen, and we don't want to
7 repeat that.

8 But since that time, it seems
9 that there has been a systematic
10 retrenchment from the idea that black
11 people matter in this country. It's not
12 a surprise to me, because I've known
13 that. It's becoming a surprise to many
14 disenfranchised and disillusioned black
15 people who are now coming into a
16 consciousness that maybe this is not
17 about education or employment or
18 healthcare.

19 The list could go on, because
20 the same conversation we're having about
21 these numbers that Dr. Harrington just
22 shared, if this was the Economic
23 Development Committee, if this was the
24 Health and Wellness Committee, if this
25 was the Entrepreneurial Development

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2 Committee, if this was the Marriage and
3 Family Formation Committee, the same
4 daggone statistics would be shared. We'd
5 still be at the bottom. So until we
6 begin to have that conversation, nothing
7 else is going to matter.

8 That's not what I wanted to
9 testify today about, but I felt like it
10 needed to be said. One of the things I
11 will add going back to the First Person
12 College Ambassadors Project, 2006,
13 because it says something about
14 commitment to me, a group of my brothers,
15 young boys, who amazingly to me every
16 time we have these conversations, they
17 are never in the place. I don't
18 understand it. We know that it matters
19 that they're here. I don't know why
20 teachers across this District didn't make
21 it a field trip for their students to be
22 here today. I don't know why many of the
23 people who are testifying don't have
24 their students here today to hear this
25 moment. It talks about whether we're

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2 serious or not about what's in front of
3 us, and we're signaling that we're not
4 serious. We're signaling that we're not
5 serious.

6 My young brothers did a report
7 card on the City about this very
8 question, about how it goes about
9 preparing young black males for
10 post-secondary education, and they graded
11 all of the factors that Dr. Harrington
12 has brought to you, all of the factors
13 that many of which we're not even
14 considering. One of the factors that
15 they graded, though, was what they called
16 neighborhood and political leadership on
17 this issue, and they gave it a D minus.
18 You know why they added that? Because
19 they understood 10, 11 years ago what
20 we're coming to understand today, that
21 there is a systematic political cultural
22 attack on the well-being of black males,
23 and that even those of them, those of us
24 who go to school with the best of
25 intentions, we show up every day, like my

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2 brother over here was talking about, but
3 somehow, some way even when they do the
4 right thing, the opportunity pipeline is
5 blocked for them and opened for others.
6 And they understood that that's a fight
7 that they can't win if they're not in
8 allegiance with the neighborhood and
9 political leaders whose job it is to open
10 up those pathways, whose job it is --
11 they should be sitting up there with you
12 all today, particularly the ones who say
13 they care about the black community.
14 Your job is to open up pathways that are
15 systematically blocked for certain groups
16 of people.

17 My young brothers who were high
18 schoolers then understood that, and
19 that's why they put on their report card
20 a grade for neighborhood leadership and
21 their grade was D minus. I see why they
22 gave it a D minus, and in that vein, I
23 want to thank Councilwoman Blackwell for
24 at least modeling what they were saying,
25 that somebody who cares about them, who

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2 has influence, who has access, who has
3 privilege needs to get on the front line
4 of this agenda, because it does not
5 matter whether they wear a suit and tie,
6 show up at Boys' Latin, Simon Gratz,
7 Haverford School. It does not matter.
8 The issue is bigger than their individual
9 acumen, and that we have to take it upon
10 ourselves as leaders, political,
11 cultural, financial leaders to create the
12 pipeline, to make the pipeline, and to
13 break the disadvantaging pipeline that
14 leads to the statistics that
15 Dr. Harrington just shared.

16 So thank you, Councilwoman
17 Blackwell, for modeling that and leading
18 the charge.

19 (Applause.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We
21 want to thank you, Brother Grimes, for
22 saying these important things. There are
23 many of us who realize that blacks and
24 other minorities don't get a chance.
25 Many of us see. I work a lot with the

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2 African community since 2000, that they
3 do better scholarly, adults, and they
4 seem to have a better opportunity in
5 ways, although we're really going through
6 it now with this immigration issue this
7 President has raised.

8 We realize that, and we want to
9 work closely with you and the others who
10 are here, Mr. Harrington, Mr. Hardy,
11 because we want to know what it is we
12 specifically can do to let the School
13 District know and the SRC know that we
14 just can't live with this issue of young
15 black men and others being left out of
16 the system, being left out of the
17 opportunity for success.

18 I know that you've traveled all
19 over the country, so we really -- we
20 appreciate your testimony and would
21 appreciate your help in what it is we can
22 actively be about to make life change.

23 MR. GRIMES: And I appreciate
24 that. I worked for an organization
25 called Root Cause and we work in

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2 alignment with an initiative called the
3 Campaign for Black Male Achievement, and
4 the Campaign for Black Male Achievement
5 has launched what's called the High
6 School Excellence Framework, which I had
7 the privilege of actually being the
8 primary designer of. So we're going all
9 across the country working with cities,
10 because this is not a Philadelphia issue,
11 right? I think that we're all clear that
12 we're having a Philadelphia conversation
13 about what is a national issue, a
14 national crisis. Every year the Schott
15 Foundation puts out a report.

16 Philadelphia is in many ways at
17 the forefront of the type of data
18 analysis that Dr. Harrington is doing. I
19 remember Mr. Socolar and the Notebook
20 back in the day. We used to be very
21 public about promoting the data that drew
22 attention to this conversation. That's
23 something we have to return to.

24 I even remember -- I wasn't the
25 biggest fan of Safe and Sound, but one of

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2 the things I did appreciate was those
3 yearly report cards community by
4 community that they used to do.

5 The challenge we have right now
6 is that unless you get the contract or
7 you're the designated principal
8 investigator, the real data is very hard
9 to get, and particularly at a
10 disaggregated level that's functional for
11 people. We got to figure out how we make
12 the data process more communal, number
13 one.

14 I say that number two is,
15 Philadelphia has some treasures here that
16 we need to begin to weave together. I
17 appreciate, Councilwoman Gym, about
18 looking at the positive side of this, and
19 I don't want to over-positivize this,
20 because I think that even as we talk
21 about the pushback against the statistics
22 and about more black men in prison than
23 in jail, that depends on your lens,
24 because for certain neighborhoods, there
25 are more black men in jail than in

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2 college campuses, right? If you expand
3 the definition of jail to include prison,
4 under corrections control, then those
5 numbers change. So we can't ever become
6 content with the fact that prima facie
7 that statement is not true, because
8 underneath it there are some dynamics
9 that go on that we need to pay attention
10 to.

11 But Philadelphia has a track
12 record of producing some excellent work
13 and workers in this venue. I just want
14 to name a few, because we're one of the
15 only cities that every year has a black
16 male development symposium where hundreds
17 of young brothers are coming from across
18 this region to be in this city to hear
19 conversations like this.

20 I'm looking at this room
21 because on May 11th, if Jack Drummond
22 does what I'm hoping he does, we're going
23 to have a celebration called Black Caps
24 Philly, which is a celebration of all the
25 brothers who are products of Philadelphia

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2 public schools who managed to graduate
3 from post-secondary education. We did
4 that back in 2013 right out in the
5 courtyard. Councilwoman Blackwell, I
6 want to give her commendation. She gave
7 us the City certificate that acknowledged
8 Black Caps Day in the City of
9 Philadelphia.

10 So we want to have our
11 celebration right here, and unfortunately
12 by the numbers that Dr. Harrington
13 shared, we might not even be able to fill
14 up this room with the number of black
15 males who actually get to the level of a
16 certification. But this is where we want
17 to have that celebration because we want
18 to symbolize the City's commitment to
19 doing something about this issue.

20 We had on March 22nd a good
21 brother, Dr. Howard Stevenson, who should
22 be in these conversations, they're
23 launching the Forward Promise national
24 headquarters office, which is now located
25 at the University of Pennsylvania.

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2 There's somebody at -- there's
3 a book -- we have information --
4 Advancing Black Male Student Success from
5 Preschool Through Ph.D. The list could
6 go on, and actually I do want to go on,
7 because I want to make sure. There are
8 people who are national leaders in this
9 conversation who emanate from
10 Philadelphia. Dr. Warren Simmons, who
11 used to be Director of the Annenberg
12 Institute for School Reform, used to be
13 the Director when I worked for the
14 Philadelphia Education Fund and their
15 College Access program, which is a model
16 for access getting formerly disadvantaged
17 students into the college pipeline.

18 Unfortunately, one of the
19 things that -- and Mr. Hardy might check
20 me here, but I work and am familiar with
21 the work of Urban Prep, with the work of
22 COSEBOC, with the work of Mastery, with
23 the work of Boys' Latin, and those
24 schools, among many others, are doing
25 great things in getting these populations

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2 onto campuses. The real issue is, as
3 Dr. Harrington shared, getting off of the
4 campus is a whole other conversation.
5 And so we're producing young men who are
6 coming onto campuses, needing to take
7 remedial classes. So they're paying for
8 classes, but they're not getting credits
9 for them, and by the first or second
10 year, they're dropping out. And not only
11 do they not have a degree, they also have
12 debt. So it creates a whole other cycle
13 of agency and urgency that has to go on
14 as a result of that issue.

15 This is a real issue. It's
16 bigger than the School District, though
17 the School District plays a seminal role.
18 I want to acknowledge the work, though.
19 Dr. Simmons, people like Rochelle
20 Nichols-Solomon. We have thinkers here,
21 people like Ron Walker, who is the head
22 of COSEBOC, who comes from Philadelphia;
23 Deidre Farmbry. There is great work and
24 workers here. Again, we're the ones who
25 have been volunteering or working for low

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2 income when others have gotten billions
3 to mess it up.

4 I want to clean up my language
5 a little bit.

6 We got to pull those people
7 into this conversation, though. And I
8 think that sometimes we keep having the
9 same conversations with the same people.
10 And we know one thing about winning
11 culture. If I want to win and I've been
12 losing, I got to trade out my leadership.
13 I got to trade out my star players and
14 get a new energy in the game. It's time
15 for a new energy in this conversation.

16 (Applause.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
18 you, Mr. Grimes.

19 Let me note that Councilman
20 Mark Squilla is here. Thank you,
21 Councilman.

22 I see that Councilwoman Gym has
23 her light on.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yes. Just a
25 brief statement, and I really appreciate

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2 the work that Mr. Grimes has done in
3 particular. We had the chance to screen
4 obviously First Person when I was on the
5 Board of the Notebook, and among the
6 things that I think was pointed out was
7 the complexity of this beyond education
8 in particular, beyond schools to some
9 extent, but I think part of it is there's
10 no way that you can counter negativity
11 with positivity and flip numbers and
12 statistics and throw them up in the air
13 and try to make whatever things move.

14 But I think that what I
15 appreciate -- what I want to be
16 thoughtful about is the ways that we
17 don't -- and I'm sure you're very clear
18 on this too -- is that we don't
19 pathologize black men, their experiences,
20 that we put them in a fixed -- an unfixed
21 state of individual agency when we know
22 that there are larger forces that are
23 motivated by racism as well. So racism
24 unpacks itself not just by racial slurs
25 and all these kinds of overt factors that

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2 folks may associate with it, but the much
3 more insidious and toxic ways in which
4 racism unpacks itself through
5 institutional factors. And I think that
6 what First Person did effectively and
7 what I'm sure I'm going to be asking
8 Dr. Harrington and others a little bit
9 later is, First Person really made it
10 very clear about stability both in the
11 home and in the school. It talked about
12 support networks, mentorship, leadership
13 in particular that we have been falling
14 down on and have taken far too lightly.
15 And I think that those are areas where,
16 if we can see some of those factors come
17 into play, we can see improvement
18 actually occur.

19 And it's not that -- our young
20 men and our communities have to overcome
21 staggering hurdles around poverty,
22 dislocation, evictions, utilities being
23 shut off. I mean, these are the
24 realities of race and poverty in
25 Philadelphia in 2017. But we have to be

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2 able to figure out from our own aspects
3 how we're going to unpack those things.

4 And I also appreciate your name
5 checking some of our really great allies
6 in this city who have been around for a
7 long time. I'm also with you, we need a
8 lot of new energy in the conversation,
9 but we also need a little bit of
10 longevity. It's not like people need to
11 be star struck from the first time or
12 need to come in recklessly and say, Well,
13 I forgot the solution, when we have to be
14 thoughtful about this process, because
15 we're dealing with young people's lives
16 in the most fragile state.

17 So thank you very much.
18 Appreciate it.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you very much. We had questions, but we
21 won't ask them.

22 Councilman Oh.

23 COUNCILMAN OH: Yes. Thank you
24 very much, Chairwoman.

25 I appreciate everyone's

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2 testimony. I just wanted to say at least
3 on my part that I've been texting because
4 I'm asking my staff to bring up an
5 education bill that I introduced about
6 the reform of public schools in
7 Philadelphia, and that's a result of
8 hearings that we held, Councilwoman
9 Jannie Blackwell as Chair, where, as you
10 had testified, we talked to different
11 experts, including President Obama's
12 former Chair of his Education Transition
13 Team, Professor Linda Darling-Hammond,
14 who graduated from Temple, as you know,
15 and experts from Finland, South Korea,
16 Hong Kong in invocational and career,
17 Switzerland, Austria, Germany. And as
18 you said, particularly Brother Shomari,
19 that when this country has wanted
20 education to work, when it has wanted
21 vocational training to work, it has
22 worked.

23 One of the things that is of
24 great concern to me is the politicization
25 of education. I will say outright that I

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2 tried to have a conversation with
3 Governor Corbett over the four years that
4 he was in. I did not get a minute to
5 talk to him about Philadelphia schools.
6 I'm a Philadelphia Councilman and a
7 republican. I tried to talk with him in
8 many different ways that I could just get
9 a minute, two minutes, five minutes, ten
10 minutes. Could not get a minute with
11 Governor Corbett to talk about the public
12 schools of Philadelphia.

13 I will say the same for
14 Governor Wolf, who -- you know, I sent my
15 team up on Friday, just last week, to
16 talk with folks there, and basically what
17 we heard -- and I'm saying it publicly.
18 They could correct me if I'm wrong. We
19 could meet and talk about it -- that the
20 issues of education in the state do not
21 include as a priority the issues of
22 Philadelphia. And when we look at who is
23 de-funding our city and its education, it
24 becomes an issue of the Commonwealth
25 versus the City of Philadelphia, and I

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2 understand that. I understand the
3 problems in rural Pennsylvania, but I do
4 believe that it is important to identify
5 who we need to talk to in order to make
6 these types of corrections.

7 MR. GRIMES: I don't want to
8 hog the panel, but I do want to --
9 because I agree with you, and I would
10 also add and why I appreciate this
11 conversation today is just as much as it
12 is a state issue, a lot of that money
13 comes from there, but the other reset
14 that needs to happen is how we as a city
15 are imagining the space and place for
16 black people and black males in
17 particular in the future; i.e., 2035,
18 right? Because as much as we want to say
19 that, 2035 and other plans are driving
20 how we envision the future in the City 20
21 years from now. And all of us understand
22 the idea of reverse engineering, right,
23 the idea of looking at the product and
24 then backtracking and redesigning based
25 on the outcome that you want.

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2 So like I go back to Temple.

3 If Temple decides 15 years ago that we no
4 longer want to be known as an honorary
5 HBCU because we got 30-plus percent of
6 our student population is black and
7 coming from inner city Philadelphia,
8 whatever the case may be, and they
9 reverse engineer to whiten their campus
10 and become more attractive to suburban
11 white people, then what happens is those
12 black students who were there get
13 displaced.

14 So what makes the 2035 plan any
15 different from Temple's plan 15 years
16 ago? That's what we have to deal with,
17 because once you have the will to do it
18 and redesign it, then we know what to do.

19 See, the issue is, there's not
20 many people who are going to come before
21 you and give you a-ha, eureka moments
22 about how to do this thing right. The
23 question is, do we want to do it right
24 for that group of people? That's the
25 answer that I think -- right now I don't

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2 think the answer to that is an
3 affirmative yes, and that's what we got
4 to get to.

5 COUNCILMAN OH: And I agree
6 with you. In fact, I agree with just
7 about everything that you said, and I
8 appreciate the other panelists as well.
9 What I would say is this, that all across
10 our city, a five-year-old or six-year-old
11 given a smart phone and a computer will
12 do just about the same thing. Given
13 crayons, paint, clay, they'll do just
14 about the same thing. Given
15 opportunities to interface with each
16 other regardless of race or socioeconomic
17 status, they will do wonderful things,
18 some better in music, some better in
19 arts, some better in literacy, but equity
20 is the big problem.

21 And, you know, when we raise
22 these issues, I'm sorry to say, when we
23 raise these issues with the School
24 District and its leadership, many times,
25 not all the times, what I get back is the

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2 problem with Philadelphia is the
3 diversity. In other words, you're
4 telling me about South Korea, you're
5 telling me about a school district which
6 is homogenous like Finland and/or
7 something, and I said, I didn't
8 understand that diversity was the
9 problem. I thought it was the asset and
10 the benefit, and we have seen it work.
11 We have seen it work, but now you're
12 telling me because we have different
13 races and different socioeconomic
14 statuses, that education, public
15 schooling somehow does not work.

16 And the second thing that I'd
17 like to really emphasize in this
18 discussion is, there was a news report
19 that came out that said Philadelphia
20 suburbs are among the richest in the
21 nation. Philadelphia is the poorest
22 large city in the country. So let's just
23 take Philadelphia. How is it that we
24 have in one singular school district, not
25 in the counties, just in our school

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2 district, such a huge disparity in
3 resources and material and opportunity
4 between one public school and the next
5 public school based on neighborhood? And
6 as I think everybody in this room can
7 surmise, the poorer communities have
8 poorer schools and poorer opportunities.

9 So the effort to try to make
10 the schools equal so that wherever you
11 are born, you could go to a good quality
12 education system, but at this point in
13 time, depending on where you are born and
14 raised, your educational opportunities
15 are so dramatically different.

16 MR. HARDY: Councilman, can I
17 ask a question?

18 COUNCILMAN OH: Yes.

19 MR. HARDY: Does that mean
20 you're against neighborhood schools?

21 COUNCILMAN OH: I'm very much
22 for neighborhood schools, and I think it
23 leads to an important point that you're
24 probably going to raise and, that is, I
25 do support charter schools as an answer

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2 where there has been a failure of the
3 public schools, but I don't support the
4 idea that we're going to have charter
5 schools all over the City for this
6 problem.

7 MR. HARDY: Nobody said that,
8 but what I'm saying is, do you support
9 people being able to go to a better
10 school --

11 COUNCILMAN OH: Sure, in their
12 neighborhood.

13 MR. HARDY: -- outside of their
14 neighborhood, whether it's charter,
15 whether it's the District? I mean,
16 there's better District schools out there
17 than neighborhood sometime too. But when
18 we lock people in based on their
19 neighborhood, you get what you just
20 described.

21 COUNCILMAN OH: Well, here's
22 the problem that I have with what you're
23 saying, because I do like Boys' Latin.
24 The problem is --

25 MR. HARDY: It's not about

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2 Boys' Latin.

3 COUNCILMAN OH: The problem for
4 me is this, that there are some great
5 charter schools, but typically you have
6 to hit the lottery.

7 MR. HARDY: I didn't say
8 charter schools. Any school, Councilman.

9 COUNCILMAN OH: Any
10 neighborhood school.

11 MR. HARDY: Any school outside
12 the neighborhood. Can you leave your
13 neighborhood?

14 COUNCILMAN OH: Sure.

15 MR. HARDY: Are you for that?

16 COUNCILMAN OH: Not in the way
17 you're describing. Absolutely not. Let
18 me tell you why.

19 MR. HARDY: You're not for
20 leaving the neighborhood when they have a
21 bad school?

22 COUNCILMAN OH: Listen, you
23 have a neighborhood where you can walk to
24 school or you can send your kids to
25 school within your vicinity. The idea

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2 that you would have to go, take a train
3 and a bus to go to a better school is
4 problematic. Most of what we're talking
5 about, people can't do it. In Southwest
6 Philly where I live at 58th and Cobbs
7 Creek, there aren't many charter school
8 options, and public school options are
9 limited.

10 MR. HARDY: Keep repeating.
11 I'm not talking about charter schools.
12 I'm saying if you have a bad school in
13 your neighborhood, can you leave your
14 neighborhood and go to a better school?

15 COUNCILMAN OH: Why should we
16 do that?

17 MR. HARDY: Are you for that?

18 COUNCILMAN OH: Why should we
19 do that? Why don't we fix the schools in
20 the neighborhood --

21 MR. HARDY: Because the school
22 in the neighborhood is not good, so you
23 don't want to go there.

24 COUNCILMAN OH: No. No. So we
25 have a fundamental disagreement in that

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2 case. I would like to see that we focus
3 our time on fixing the schools in the
4 neighborhoods, and if you have an
5 opportunity -- I went to Central High
6 School. I hopped on the train --

7 MR. HARDY: So you didn't go to
8 school in your neighborhood?

9 COUNCILMAN OH: I went to a
10 magnet school. I went to --

11 MR. HARDY: So you didn't go to
12 school in your neighborhood, Councilman?

13 COUNCILMAN OH: Not high
14 school. I went to Longstreth Elementary,
15 Turner Middle School. I would have gone
16 to Bartram --

17 MR. HARDY: Then you went
18 out -- because you didn't want to go to
19 Bartram. You went to a better school
20 outside of your neighborhood.

21 This is really simple, and this
22 is -- we're not going to get anywhere
23 here today --

24 COUNCILMAN OH: So no, no --

25 MR. HARDY: -- if you keep

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2 talking like this.

3 COUNCILMAN OH: No. We can.

4 MR. HARDY: People should be
5 allowed to go outside of their
6 neighborhood.

7 COUNCILMAN OH: We can. Your
8 solution then is that everyone in the
9 neighborhood should go outside of their
10 neighborhood to go to a good school? Is
11 that your solution?

12 MR. HARDY: My solution is if
13 there's not a good school in your
14 neighborhood, you should be able to go
15 find a good school for your child, and
16 you shouldn't have to wait until you
17 get --

18 COUNCILMAN OH: You are for
19 fixing the school in your neighborhood?
20 Are you for fixing schools in your
21 neighborhood or you just want to offer
22 schools outside the neighborhood?

23 MR. HARDY: No. I'm saying
24 that if your school isn't working in your
25 neighborhood, you should go somewhere

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2 else.

3 COUNCILMAN OH: I agree with
4 you.

5 MR. HARDY: That's all I was
6 saying.

7 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay. Well,
8 that part we don't disagree on.

9 MR. HARDY: Bingo.

10 COUNCILMAN OH: So let me go
11 back to my point. I'm fine with magnet
12 schools, I'm fine with charter schools,
13 I'm fine with specialty schools, if
14 that's what people want to do. But it
15 does not excuse the fact that we should
16 focus on good quality neighborhood
17 schools on an equitable basis so that all
18 kinds of people, especially those who are
19 financially challenged, don't have
20 jobs -- this is the very population that
21 we're talking about -- can have a good
22 school in their neighborhood.

23 MR. GRIMES: So I just want
24 to -- because you all could have that
25 conversation. I think it's important. I

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2 do. I don't think it will change what is
3 presented today, and I'm hoping that we
4 use our time constructively to really
5 focus on things that can get us to the
6 dialogue necessary. Because, again, this
7 is not about charter schools, public
8 schools. It's not even about good
9 schools, right? Because his school is a
10 good school. Sharif El-Mekki over there,
11 Mastery is a good school. Urban Prep is
12 a good school. We have islands of
13 schools who know what they're doing about
14 this issue, but it's not going to change
15 the fact that systematically there is a
16 process in place that's designed to
17 create academic disenfranchisement and
18 destabilization, and I don't know that a
19 school or any set of schools is the
20 answer to that question, which is why my
21 major thing is I think that when we make
22 this a myopic conversation about schools
23 and education, we miss the mark about
24 what it is.

25 I'm a policy person by

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2 background. My background is in policy.
3 There's a policy theorist named Horst
4 Rittel. I want you to, if you get a
5 chance, read his piece on wicked
6 problems, because one of the things he
7 cautions against is that when wicked
8 problems -- and wicked doesn't mean evil.
9 Wicked just means these big-time systemic
10 issues that are multifaceted and
11 multi-angular.

12 When you try to solve wicked
13 problems with tame solutions, you end up
14 with more wicked problems. And so what
15 happens is, we further the problem by
16 trying to be very myopic and insular
17 about what we consider as the right and
18 wrong way. And that's why you got to
19 have different people in this
20 conversation. You got to have people who
21 are not educators, right? You got to
22 have people who are media people,
23 business people. You got to have the
24 young brothers themselves in this
25 conversation or we're going to have this

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2 back and forth.

3 I want to make a wager, and I'm
4 not a betting man. I bet my 12 cent I
5 got in my pocket that you and Brother
6 Hardy have had some version of this
7 conversation before. So the back and
8 forth that's indicative of this
9 conversation that still gets us to the
10 statistics that he shared, clearly that
11 don't work, so let's stop doing that and
12 let's figure out what we need to talk
13 about that moves this agenda, because if
14 we don't, it symbols and signals that we
15 don't care about the brothers. And we
16 keep signaling that by the very nature of
17 the conversations that we have.

18 Let's raise up the discourse so
19 that we are at least debating about what
20 can move us towards the goal line and not
21 debating about our individual positions
22 on a matter that really even -- whether
23 you're right or he's right about this
24 particular topic is not going to change
25 the welfare of the collective number of

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2 black males that are disintegrating in
3 the schools they're going to.

4 (Appause.)

5 MR. HARDY: I agree with you,
6 but I do want to make one point. Your
7 point earlier was this isn't about
8 reform. It's about redesign.

9 MR. GRIMES: Correct.

10 MR. HARDY: Okay? And all we
11 hear is reform, we got to fix what we
12 have. And I think that your point
13 initially is that it can't be fixed, and
14 I think that that's where we need to
15 start this conversation, is if we're
16 going to fix something, what are the
17 fixes required to make it work for
18 everybody. And if we don't start with
19 that conversation, we'll be back here
20 again another period of time.

21 COUNCILMAN OH: So I appreciate
22 that, and I think that gets at the heart
23 of what we're talking about. If you
24 cannot tweak a broken system, how can you
25 overall redesign it. And I do believe

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2 that, as was discussed here, that at the
3 end of the day, we're all trying to do
4 the same thing. How do we end up that
5 every child has the opportunity to be the
6 best student and the best successful
7 person they can.

8 If I look at this system where
9 I live right now, for example, my
10 neighbors, they're very challenged. If
11 they cannot go to -- if they don't hit
12 the lottery -- so it's a lottery system
13 in a democracy. You got to hit a
14 lottery. That's like gambling. I got to
15 hit a lottery to go to a school if I
16 don't like the school I go to. So what
17 kind of system is that? And why don't
18 people want to go to the school in their
19 neighborhood? Because they deem it to
20 be, as you said, not worthy of sending
21 your child. You'd rather home-school
22 your child. And then we have a system
23 where people go to a specialty school,
24 oftentimes without interest in the
25 subject matter. They just don't want to

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2 be in their neighborhood school. They'll
3 take anything else, and that is a
4 problem.

5 For me fundamentally, Mozart
6 can't be Mozart without a piano, and if
7 this school doesn't have one and this
8 school does, then those kids who get the
9 piano will develop and those who don't
10 won't.

11 But the population I think
12 we're talking about is not the wealthy
13 African American population with the
14 doctor and mother, you know -- doctor
15 father, lawyer mother. This is
16 communities in our city that have had
17 poor education for more than decades. We
18 could measure it how long it's been.

19 So fundamentally if we were to
20 redesign this process to work better, I
21 think that is where we're going to have
22 issues, maybe arguments, but hopefully
23 we'll be able to come up with a solution.

24 I don't want to say that I'm
25 adverse to any of the conversations, but

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2 I do want to say that I do think it is a
3 matter of what vision we're going to
4 have.

5 MR. GRIMES: And I would just
6 add, so my thing is right fight, right
7 players. So to answer your question, one
8 of the things we all have to do is stop
9 kicking the can down the road and fight
10 for or handle what's in our purview to
11 handle. So one of the things I respect
12 about at least what I've heard about
13 where this could go is what City Council
14 does have power over might not be the
15 School District, right? Let's concede
16 that for a little while, even though I'd
17 like to argue that point at some other
18 point. But we have -- Philadelphia is
19 one of the largest university towns in
20 this country, right? Universities drive
21 the economic well-being or not of this
22 city.

23 It is disheartening for me --
24 and I live in West Philly, and I used to
25 work at Temple in their Small Business

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2 Development Center. I teach -- I taught
3 at Penn. So I've seen these campuses up
4 close and personal. And I want to go
5 back to -- I was at Temple when the
6 declaration about changing the
7 demographics of the school was made,
8 similar to what Drexel is going through
9 now. I mean, we know this to be true.
10 So it's amazing to me that I could look
11 at a school like Temple and a school like
12 Drexel, which maybe 20 years ago was
13 considering going out of business, by the
14 way, like it was failing. It was a
15 two-building thing. And I could watch a
16 school like that in many ways publicly
17 declare that they no longer want to do
18 business in a world of getting black
19 students on campus and preparing them for
20 success, and their punishment for that is
21 one of the biggest growths going on in
22 the City of Philadelphia. Every time I
23 ride down Chestnut Street, Walnut Street,
24 they got new buildings going up, at a
25 school like Drexel, which was 20 years

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2 ago almost going out of business.

3 So there's a reward in the
4 failure. That's why I want to go back to
5 the Shomari-ism, right? And I'm not
6 trying to be ego driven about that. So
7 I'm looking at schools like Temple and
8 Penn and Drexel who are being rewarded
9 for a clear decision to marginalize black
10 people. Y'all got something y'all could
11 do about that, because they need to come
12 through y'all to get the zoning
13 ordinances. They need to come through
14 you all to get certain public funding and
15 resources to do the development that's
16 not only displacing students off of their
17 campuses, they're displacing the black
18 residents in those communities, and we're
19 signing off on that meeting after
20 meeting, Council hearing after Council
21 hearing.

22 So if we have the commitment,
23 let's handle what we can handle. And I
24 don't care about Corbett and Wolf. Let
25 me not say that. I do care, but if

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2 that's not your fight that you can
3 leverage, leverage what you can leverage
4 in this room with all these black people
5 who are City Councilpeople and Asians who
6 are on the Council and people who are
7 white and green and yellow who say they
8 care about this. Y'all probably have
9 more -- a nucleus of power around what
10 these campuses can do.

11 How do we reward Temple and
12 Penn and Drexel for stepping back from
13 programs like TRIO and Russell Conwell
14 programs, which were designed to make
15 sure that they took the students who were
16 coming from our schools who needed help
17 and work and getting them in the programs
18 that would support their, quote/unquote,
19 remediation to get them to graduate? And
20 all of these schools, CCP and others
21 included, have stepped back from that
22 commitment, yet they're being rewarded
23 with contracts and all of this kind of
24 stuff for growth and development. That's
25 what Council can handle, and it would be

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2 nice to see y'all at least put a stake in
3 the ground on not rewarding failure
4 unless failure is the reward.

5 COUNCILMAN OH: All right.

6 Thank you very much.

7 Thank you, Chairwoman.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
9 you.

10 I have questions and
11 Councilwoman Gym has questions, but I'm
12 going to ask if she'll hold hers for you,
13 Mr. Harrington, but we've got to move on.
14 Everybody has come up here and said we've
15 been an hour and 20 minutes here. So I'm
16 going to ask, if it's okay with you,
17 Councilwoman Gym, that Dr. Donovan
18 McCargo, Dean of Students, CCP; Derek
19 Perkins, Director, Center for Male
20 Engagement, CCP; and Farah Jimenez come
21 forward. And I'm going to ask -- you've
22 been referenced, Sharif El-Mekki. I want
23 you to come and be at the end of this
24 panel. Would you come forward. Thank
25 you.

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2 (Witnesses approached witness
3 table.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you very much. Any order is fine.

6 MS. JIMENEZ: Good morning and
7 thank you, Chair Blackwell and members of
8 the City Council's Committee on
9 Education, for the opportunity to present
10 my testimony at today's hearing. My name
11 is Farah Jimenez and I'm the President
12 and CEO of the Philadelphia Education
13 Fund, and I thank Brother Grimes for his
14 lovely words about our work. I also
15 serve as Commissioner of the School
16 Reform Commission.

17 I speak today in support of
18 Resolution 170145 calling for hearings to
19 examine the challenges and opportunities
20 in preparing African American young men
21 for college and on improving rates of
22 college-going. And I know that the
23 resolution is calling for hearings. It
24 sounds like we're at the hearing already
25 today, because some of those issues have

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2 already been articulated.

3 While the resolution does not
4 state it explicitly, I trust that these
5 hearings are also going to go further and
6 focus on improving rates of college
7 completion amongst African American
8 males.

9 According to Georgetown
10 University's Center for Education and the
11 Workforce, we are on a collision course
12 with the future as not enough Americans
13 are completing college, and they state by
14 2020, which is just in three years,
15 two-thirds of all jobs will require a
16 college degree. And, further, in four of
17 the five fastest growing occupational
18 clusters, 90 percent of those jobs will
19 require a post-secondary education.

20 So how does Philadelphia stack
21 up? Well, quite frankly, you've already
22 heard not well. Just one out of ten is
23 what my testimony says, but in fact, it's
24 1.3 out of every ten students in
25 Philadelphia will earn a college degree,

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2 13 percent. But most alarming is that
3 these rates are believed to be even lower
4 for Philadelphia's young African American
5 males. I'll say my testimony when I
6 prepared said "believed," in part because
7 the data that was just shared with
8 Dr. Harrington is not one that's
9 universally known and been shared. So I
10 was grateful to have that disaggregated
11 data that helps us understand how African
12 American males are faring as a result of
13 their education in our Philadelphia
14 schools.

15 But the fact is that we
16 actually need much more data, not just
17 information about the number of African
18 American males graduating and completing
19 their four-year degrees or two-year
20 degrees, but also to understand it from a
21 school-by-school perspective. Just
22 because 8 percent of our African American
23 males graduate from a college doesn't
24 tell us enough about which schools and
25 are they mainly universally graduating

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2 after completing in our special admission
3 schools or are our neighborhood schools
4 faring well as well.

5 What we do know is that during
6 each phase of the college completion
7 journey, whether that's high school
8 graduation, college enrollment, college
9 attendance, and freshman to sophomore
10 year over year college persistence,
11 African American males are less
12 represented in all those stages of the
13 college completion journey.

14 So Resolution 170145 creates
15 the impetus for further study, and it
16 challenges those of us in the work to be
17 more intentional in our efforts to move
18 the needle for African American males.
19 We at the Philadelphia Education Fund
20 intend to join in this effort. Our
21 commitment to increasing rates of
22 college-going, college success, and
23 college persistence spans more than 25
24 years, and this year alone we will
25 support 27 Philadelphia public schools,

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2 400 teachers, and 17,000 students.

3 And proud and early graduates
4 of our programs include some names you'll
5 recognize. Your colleague Councilwoman
6 Maria Quinones-Sanchez graduated from our
7 College Access program. The Mayor's
8 Chief Education Officer, Otis Hackney,
9 and State Representative Jordan Harris
10 were both Philadelphia scholars, and
11 thousands more who are providing for
12 their families, contributing to the
13 Philadelphia tax base and continuing
14 their journey up the socioeconomic
15 ladder.

16 Our approach at the Ed Fund is
17 simple and focused. Starting with the
18 end in mind, we focus on college
19 completion. Our Philadelphia Scholars
20 program has invested more than \$13
21 million in last dollar scholarships to
22 2,700 Philadelphia public school
23 graduates, and this year we will award
24 \$700,000 in scholarships to our scholars
25 and support their college completion with

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2 persistence mentoring and programming
3 support.

4 Second, we focus on college
5 counseling. We help students navigate
6 all the steps in the college application
7 process. Much was said about the cost of
8 college and how many students don't
9 complete. One of the things I'm really
10 proud of of our work is the fact that we
11 focus on FAFSA completion so that
12 students have the opportunity to garner
13 as much as they can in financial aid so
14 that they are not burdened when they
15 finish their college education.

16 We consult also with colleges
17 and universities to help their staff
18 design more effective on-boarding and
19 persistence programs for the low-income
20 and non-traditional students that they
21 receive from our Philadelphia schools.

22 Finally, we focus on college
23 awareness. Our "Know Before You Go"
24 series delivers robust college awareness
25 programming in many of our public

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2 schools, and this year we were asked by
3 the City Commerce Department to take over
4 PhillyGoes2College, an online college
5 access portal that is a key initiative in
6 the Department's Talent Continuum
7 strategy. PhillyGoes2College holds
8 tremendous potential to reach thousands
9 of college-possible Philadelphians from
10 now until our funding runs out in
11 December. And, of course, we're hoping
12 that we'll have continuing funding beyond
13 our December -- beyond December when
14 current funding runs out.

15 So in conclusion, thank you for
16 calling attention to this thorny issue,
17 and thank you for the opportunity to be
18 heard. And, most importantly, thank you
19 for the opportunity to join in your
20 efforts to craft long-needed solutions
21 for this unfortunate but yet eminently
22 solvable challenge of African American
23 males and college-going.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
25 you. Thank you, Ms. Jimenez.

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2 DR. McCARGO: Good morning,
3 Councilwoman Blackwell --

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you for coming with such short notice.
6 Thank you.

7 DR. McCARGO: My pleasure. I'm
8 glad to be here, and thank you for the
9 opportunity to present, as well as to my
10 esteemed colleges, those who have joined
11 together to hear from wonderful
12 individuals who care about this important
13 issue.

14 I'll start with asking a
15 question, and that question is to
16 everyone here, is when was the last time
17 we've had --

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Excuse
19 me. Would you identify yourself for the
20 record.

21 DR. McCARGO: I am so sorry.
22 I'm Donovan McCargo, Dean of Students,
23 Community College of Philadelphia.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
25 you.

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2 DR. McCARGO: My pleasure.

3 As I stated, I would like to
4 start with a question, and the question
5 is when was the last time we had a
6 meaningful interaction with an African
7 American male that is not a family
8 member? One of the things that's
9 paramount to the experiences and the
10 triumphs and challenges of our students
11 today is the fact that they don't have
12 meaningful conversations and
13 relationships with individuals beyond
14 those in their family. All of you and
15 many of those who are around the room
16 have positions and roles and
17 responsibilities that are important, and
18 those folks -- many of us have value
19 added into these relationships.

20 One of the things that was
21 already spoken about by Mr. Grimes -- and
22 I echo his comments -- is the relative
23 importance to home school and the
24 community factors. A lot of attention is
25 being made nowadays to the impact of

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2 K-12, but I seem to suggest and based on
3 some research that I've done as well
4 looking at home school and community
5 factors have indicated that there are
6 significant issues that are challenges to
7 our students. And, one, if we look at
8 the home and we have significant data to
9 suggest that some of our students are
10 coming from single-family homes, that's
11 significant. Those students who don't
12 have fathers at home is significant.
13 Those students who don't have an uncle at
14 home or a male family member in the home
15 is important. Those people play a role
16 in helping them to understand their
17 values, their sense of purpose, their
18 sense of belonging, and with that
19 absence, it proves critical.

20 Meaningful relationships with
21 clergy, community leaders, teachers, and
22 mentors is also paramount. These are
23 things that we take lightly. Oftentimes
24 we don't take full advantage of engaging
25 our young people in having these

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2 dialogues. These folks, clergy and
3 professionals and family members,
4 community leaders and teachers, they play
5 an important role of encouragement,
6 motivation, support. But oftentimes
7 these same relationships, these same
8 people turn the other way, maybe look the
9 other way, and don't seem to deem these
10 relationships to be as important and
11 having with these young black males.

12 Me being a member of a family
13 of six, one of four boys, recognize and
14 looking at my own family dynamic that if
15 not for these individuals, clergy and
16 family members and friends, encouraging
17 me, motivating me, I would not be
18 standing before you today.

19 Furthermore, family stability
20 is quite critical. In the Center for
21 Male Engagement, we have an opportunity
22 to work with over 300 African American
23 males each year, and one of the themes
24 that continue to show its face is the
25 fact that a lot of our students don't

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2 have family stability. Families don't
3 have jobs. They don't have employment
4 opportunities. They don't have reputable
5 wages to support them and their family,
6 and as a result, these young men
7 oftentimes have to leave what we call a
8 wonderful opportunity to go take on job
9 opportunities and those that don't just
10 pay minimum wage, because minimum wage
11 often leads these young men back in
12 poverty as well as with their families.
13 And so as a result, these young men have
14 to sacrifice their educational
15 experience, which they believe is the
16 catalyst and the pathway for them to go
17 on and be successful in order to survive,
18 in order to take care of their families.

19 Furthermore, these
20 relationships in the high schools, in the
21 middle schools are very important. I
22 know from experience working in the high
23 schools as well as working with middle
24 schools, being a substitute teacher,
25 working for the Boys and Girls Club,

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2 oftentimes these relationships in schools
3 are not there. Parents often are leaving
4 this responsibility to teachers and
5 faculty members and administrators to
6 help their young person, their young
7 student to be successful, to develop a
8 sense of belonging, to be encouraged and
9 motivated to do well in school. And when
10 these are absent, we know for a fact that
11 the outcomes are devastating.

12 The other factor that we
13 acknowledge and we realize is the lack of
14 coherency between the K-12 system and the
15 college system; more specifically, what
16 happens at the 11th and 12th grade levels
17 when students are preparing to enter
18 college. As you know, most of our
19 students are required to take an entrance
20 exam, pretty much focused on reading,
21 math, and writing skills. What I have
22 experienced and observed through this
23 work that I've developed over the past
24 several months with a faculty-to-faculty
25 exchange initiative is that some of our

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2 students are coming ill-prepared and very
3 much under-prepared to enter into higher
4 education. As a result, and as has been
5 mentioned before, is that these students
6 as a result come into higher education
7 not only under-prepared but are forced to
8 take multiple remedial courses, leaving
9 them not only in debt but also leaving
10 the institution without a credential or
11 degree. That's devastating.

12 What we are trying to establish
13 and identify is ways for us to work with
14 high school faculty members at the 11th
15 and 12th grade level and perhaps even at
16 the 10th grade level to see what are
17 those academic and educational gaps that
18 we can explore and remediate before they
19 take the exam. Because, again, once
20 those students take that exam and don't
21 do well, they are placed in remedial
22 courses. That is discouraging to these
23 students. They have not only seen --
24 we've not only seen the data and the
25 discouragement, we've also heard from

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2 these students about the discouragement.

3 It is a slap in the face,
4 especially for students who have done
5 well in high school and earned a 3.0 or
6 above and, as a result, have taken these
7 entrance exams, only to find out they are
8 under-prepared and not have learned the
9 material they needed to learn in order to
10 progress to credited courses.

11 What I am requesting and
12 encouraging is a longer conversation, a
13 deeper conversation to look at ways for
14 us to not wait until it's too late. Yes,
15 tutoring is available in college.
16 Remedial services is available in
17 college, but that is too late. If these
18 students are not getting the support they
19 need in high school and those
20 relationships are not being developed and
21 people are not being held accountable to
22 do better by our students, we are going
23 to concede this significant issue remain
24 rampant in our college environments in
25 which our students who look like most of

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2 our panelists here are going to continue
3 to suffer by way of coming into college
4 under-prepared, taking additional courses
5 that they don't need, and also getting
6 into further debt.

7 Speaking of debt, my last point
8 is, on an average, many of our students
9 are walking away between 10,000 and
10 12,000, and that's significant. If
11 they're planning to go into another
12 institution or transfer, they're carrying
13 that debt load. Some of our students are
14 running out of financial ways, and as a
15 result, they're unable to complete their
16 four-year degree, something that they
17 aspire to complete when they first
18 entered the college realm. That's
19 important. Because if they can't secure
20 a job after graduation, it's only going
21 to take 180 days from the folks who
22 loaned them the money to request that
23 money back, and oftentimes those students
24 go into default, leaving even more stress
25 and even more issues for them and their

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2 families to overcome.

3 Thank you.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you, Doctor.

6 MR. EL-MEKKI: Good morning.

7 My name is Sharif El-Mekki. Thank you,
8 Councilwoman Blackwell.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
10 you for all you do.

11 MR. EL-MEKKI: Appreciate it.

12 Council, I've been an educator
13 in the Philadelphia District and Mastery
14 Charter School for more than 24 years.
15 At Shoemaker where I served for the past
16 nine years proudly, 80 percent of our
17 2016 seniors directly enrolled in a two-
18 to four-year college, much above the
19 national average, yet many of the
20 circumstances that were raised are still
21 present, and we know we have to do a lot
22 better for the actual to complete their
23 college graduation. We have a saying:
24 Graduation is at least twice, and we have
25 to do a lot better to get there.

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2 The fact that City Council is
3 assessing our collective effectiveness
4 and ensuring the college success of the
5 young black men in our City encourages my
6 work as a lifelong educator and founder
7 of The Fellowship, whose goal is to
8 triple the number of highly effective
9 black male educators in all public
10 schools in Philadelphia to 1,000 by the
11 year 2025.

12 Making sure more of our black
13 boys are ready for college, matriculate
14 to, and graduate from college is a key to
15 reaching our goal, 1,000 black male
16 educators by 2025, that research has
17 shown is critical to improving the
18 educational experiences of all our
19 children and not just our black boys.
20 But too often when we look at large,
21 complex issues like this, we settle for a
22 single technical response.

23 I am going to look up the
24 wicked problem, because that's exactly
25 what I'm referring to.

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2 I believe complex issues
3 require complex and adaptive solutions,
4 and in my estimation, to ensure the
5 college success of our black young men,
6 some of the areas we can do are, one, the
7 funding. So bring back the Student
8 Success Centers that the School District
9 used to have. Help ensure that they're
10 staffed with black male role models who
11 can guide our young black men in high
12 school, especially those who are
13 first-generation college-bound students.

14 Another thing is create a
15 transparent and disaggregated blueprint
16 for college success for black boys that
17 are promoted to and adopted by our
18 colleges. This blueprint would insist on
19 a strength-based approach and early
20 access and help to provide a
21 counter-narrative to the beliefs about
22 what black male students can achieve.

23 Students of all kind are
24 impacted by adult thoughts about them,
25 but black children, in particular black

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2 boys, are more impacted by their
3 teachers' and adults' perspective than
4 expectations of them, and there's
5 research to back that up, and holding all
6 institutions accountable in the pathway
7 to college graduation.

8 And key to any blueprint would
9 be building early and longer mentorship
10 opportunities during our students' high
11 school and college years, mentoring
12 opportunities that also are more
13 meaningful, for example, by setting up
14 our young men with a coach according to
15 the path that they choose. So we have
16 coaching for career pathways in
17 education, medicine, the arts,
18 engineering, carpentry, et cetera.

19 College success cannot happen,
20 however, if we can't get more of our
21 black boys succeeding in our neighborhood
22 elementary and secondary schools.
23 According to well-documented research,
24 the average black male high schooler
25 reads at the same level of a white male

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2 middle schooler. This must change.

3 I'm so glad that Brother Grimes
4 brought up the fallacy of reform instead
5 to reinventing. When you think about it,
6 which of our enslaved ancestors prayed
7 for reform to slavery as opposed to
8 outright abolition and re-imagining of
9 their situation and circumstances.

10 The City is already engaged in
11 an unprecedented effort to help all our
12 children be more successful in school by
13 substantially increasing the number of
14 high-quality pre-K slots and by
15 increasing the number of 4th graders
16 reading at grade level through the Read
17 by 4th campaign. I ask that both of
18 those initiatives give special attention
19 to our black boys' needs, because they
20 are at the risk right now.

21 Thank you for this opportunity
22 to testify. There's much work to be
23 done. We must continue this honest
24 dialogue that makes way for difficult
25 conversations and solutions on race,

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2 racism, negative stereotypes, while
3 developing and testing new programs and
4 services. We cannot afford to wait. My
5 colleagues and I at The Fellowship and at
6 Mastery Charter stand ready to assist and
7 serve.

8 Thank you, Council.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:

11 Mr. Perkins.

12 MR. PERKINS: Good morning.

13 Again, my name is Derek Perkins and I'm
14 Director of the Center for Male
15 Engagement at the Community College of
16 Philadelphia.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Excuse
18 me one moment, Mr. Perkins.

19 Let me note that Maria
20 Quinones-Sanchez, a member of this
21 Committee, is here. Thank you, Maria.

22 Please continue.

23 MR. PERKINS: Again, my name is
24 Derek Perkins and I'm the Director of the
25 Center for Male Engagement at the

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2 Community College of Philadelphia. We're
3 a program on campus that is designed to
4 increase the academic and persistent
5 rates of African American males and other
6 male students of color on campus.

7 A part of our work, which is
8 most important to our work, is that we
9 provide a strength-based and holistic
10 approach that provides a
11 counter-narrative to evasive beliefs
12 regarding African American male academic
13 performance. Rather than focus on where
14 African American males have deficits, it
15 is equally important to determine which
16 (unintelligible) subjective and
17 institutional factors have helped
18 successful African American males persist
19 towards college completion and devise
20 programming around this collective
21 understanding. This can potentially
22 provide a blueprint for how to better
23 inform, operationalize, and replicate
24 programming in a responsible way while
25 holding institutions equally accountable

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2 in creating the conditions for African
3 American males' success in college.

4 Our program is really centered
5 around this theory of change, and it's
6 pretty simple. African American males at
7 college, either a two- or four-year, are
8 more likely to persist and graduate if
9 services are coordinated, holistic, and
10 strength-based; students have an
11 actionable academic, financial, and
12 career plan; students are provided with a
13 community of support, including
14 mentorship, early in the college
15 transition process; students are actively
16 and civically engaged in the community;
17 students are exposed to experiential and
18 educational learning experiences that
19 reinforce the connection between school
20 and career; and culturally relevant and
21 differentiated instruction in practice
22 that affirms student academic abilities
23 and sense of worth. And the most
24 important thing that is not listed here
25 but I want to emphasize is that you have

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2 to care.

3 Our program has been successful
4 throughout the years because we actually
5 care about our students, and that's being
6 done through theory and practice. So our
7 budget really reflects our values, and so
8 we make sure that we -- our money is
9 situated and allocated in the best
10 interest of our students in terms of
11 academic preparedness, in terms of life
12 skills and personal management, as well
13 as their career development.

14 We want to make sure that when
15 African Americans came to our particular
16 institution, that they know that first
17 they are cared about and affirmed. We
18 know this because when they come here,
19 they're not academically prepared. Over
20 70 percent of our students are testing at
21 a developmental level, right, which means
22 that when they come into high school --
23 when they have a high school diploma,
24 that high school diploma is an empty
25 diploma. It's when they walk into our

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2 particular institutions, they think that
3 they're college-ready, when they actually
4 are not. If they're testing at the 6th
5 to 8th grade level with a high school
6 diploma, then we know they're not ready
7 for college. And so what we want to do
8 is, psychologically how do you tell a man
9 or any individual that they have a high
10 school diploma that they're prepared for
11 college when they know that there's
12 particular tests that tell them
13 otherwise. And so not only dealing with
14 the academic preparation, the life skill
15 preparation, we're also dealing with
16 masking the issues as well.

17 So what our program is designed
18 to do is what they've been told and
19 culturally told not to do, which is to
20 ask for help. And so how you do that in
21 a way that makes sense for them that they
22 hold themselves up so that they can still
23 give a level of vulnerability but also
24 maintain their masculinity.

25 One of the things that our

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2 students are told more often, what they
3 can't do, and our particular program
4 tells them what they can do, and that's
5 important. So that's something on the
6 institutional level, but also on our
7 programmatic level.

8 Our students are coming and we
9 know -- and they struggle, because they
10 need to -- one particular thing is
11 helping to change the paradigm in terms
12 of how students are entering college.
13 What has been our experience in working
14 with our students is that the School
15 District are preparing our students to
16 enter college, not to complete college.
17 And so when they come there, not only are
18 we faced with helping them to get those
19 requisite skills in order to be prepared
20 to endure, but they are also within the
21 Community College as well.

22 What I applaud our students in
23 doing so well because at a two-year
24 institution, a community institution
25 rather than a four-year institution, they

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2 don't necessarily have to worry about
3 whether or not they have food available,
4 whether or not they have lights
5 available, whether or not they have to
6 walk back to a particular community where
7 they feel safe, right, where they have
8 support around them that also where
9 people who are understanding of the
10 college experience. And so our students
11 coming to a two-year college are the most
12 persistent students that I will ever
13 know, enduring what they have to do in
14 order to endure, but it's also in coming
15 to us, recognizing some of those
16 strengths and provide strategies and
17 services to best support them.

18 We care. Our students -- we
19 have the highest persistence of all of
20 our students compared to any other group
21 on campus, because the students in our
22 particular program know that we care
23 about them. We affirm them. We want to
24 lift them up in ways that are meaningful
25 and ways that can impact their families

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2 and their communities and recognize that
3 they're not only giving them permission
4 to be, whatever that permission is, that
5 they can do that and do that -- and take
6 their rightful places in this world.

7 So thank you for this
8 opportunity to present, and also we're
9 available to be a continued resource.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
11 you very much.

12 We had questions, but our time
13 is killing us, so we will -- if we have
14 serious concerns, then I'll get in touch
15 with you or we'll contact you. And I say
16 thank you very, very much.

17 Our next panel, we're going to
18 ask Bilal Qayyum from Father's Day Rally,
19 Inc. to come forward, and then we'll get
20 you principals out of here. Helen Gym is
21 saying you got to go back. So we have
22 Tonya Wolford, School District; Cheryl
23 Logan, School District; Ted Domers,
24 George Washington Carver, Engineering and
25 Science; Mary Dean, who always comes for

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2 us, we love her, West Philly High School;

3 Linda Carroll, Northeast High School.

4 Thank you for your patience and
5 thank you, Bilal.

6 (Witnesses approached witness
7 table.)

8 MR. QAYYUM: Good morning --

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
10 you.

11 MR. QAYYUM: -- Councilwoman
12 Blackwell --

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Bilal
14 and I have known each other probably 30
15 years, so it's always a pleasure.

16 MR. QAYYUM: Thank you.

17 Good morning, Councilwoman
18 Blackwell, Councilwoman Gym, and
19 Councilwoman Sanchez. I'm Bilal Qayyum,
20 President of the Father's Day Rally
21 Committee.

22 My testimony won't be long. I
23 want to talk more about some solutions.
24 I think all the previous individuals who
25 gave testimony gave very good information

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2 and shared what the problems are.

3 Father's Day Rally Committee
4 last year, around six, seven months ago,
5 we hosted a meeting, what we call
6 intergenerational meeting, between older
7 black men and younger black men to talk
8 about how we could work together to
9 bridge the gap. Out of that discussion,
10 we decided to work together and probably
11 do different projects.

12 One project we came up with is,
13 one of the individuals that was at our
14 meeting was Jeremiah White, who is
15 Chairman of Community College's Board.
16 And Jeremiah talked to us about the
17 problems of black males, and I know you
18 heard from staff from Community College
19 and the Male Engagement, and we decided
20 to work along with Jeremiah and President
21 Generals to do a project, and we came up
22 with a project called 1,000 Black Males,
23 and our intent is over the next year to
24 recruit 1,000 black males to go to
25 Community College that are college-ready.

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2 What we found out in the
3 discussions with Jeremiah White and other
4 individuals and President Generals at
5 Community College is that a lot of
6 students, or particularly black males,
7 come through Community College that are
8 not ready. They have to take remedial
9 courses. And I think Eric mentioned it
10 or someone else mentioned it in the
11 testimony, is that they have to pay for
12 those courses, but they're not getting
13 credit for those courses. So what's
14 happening is, they're dropping out.

15 So what our project would be is
16 to identify over the next three years
17 1,000 males in high school or middle
18 school that we could work with to have
19 them prepared so when they go to
20 Community, they are starting from the
21 start, taking courses that would count
22 towards their -- whatever their
23 particular degree would be.

24 We're excited about that. We
25 have a subcommittee. I'm happy to say

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2 that Eric Grimes is on that subcommittee,
3 Tom Butler, Todd Rose, who is a
4 businessman in the City of Philadelphia,
5 and Emmanuel Bussie and myself, and we
6 have met with President Generals around
7 four times. We are really putting the
8 concept of the project together, and our
9 intent is hopefully by this year in the
10 fall session, we will have some black
11 males going to Community to be part of
12 this project.

13 The second thing I want to talk
14 about is, it was mentioned earlier in
15 some testimony, I think we got to look at
16 the much larger picture. And I'm glad
17 that both y'all are still here with -- I
18 know Jannie left. One of the key issues
19 about blacks going to college, it has to
20 do -- or anybody going to college, it has
21 to do with cost. So in Philadelphia when
22 we look at anywhere from 30, 40 percent
23 of black males are jobless, they're not
24 in the house, 70 percent of the black
25 males are not in the households with

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2 their families, they're not working,
3 there's no income. So a lot of these
4 young folks don't see or don't have the
5 ability to go to college even if they are
6 doing well in schools. And they could
7 get the scholarships. They could get all
8 those other kinds of grants and stuff or
9 loans, but if you don't have any money or
10 you don't have the proper income, you
11 can't pay, and that crosses all racial
12 lines, but particularly as relates to
13 black males in the City of Philadelphia.

14 So as you both know, I'm always
15 pushing jobs. So the Rebuild project
16 that is getting ready to come and any
17 other initiative that's getting ready to
18 come to the City of Philadelphia -- I was
19 just reading yesterday about a project at
20 Broad and Glenwood, \$165 million project
21 to transform that area from a developer
22 from New York, and Jannie talks about in
23 her district the billion dollars worth of
24 work that's being done.

25 If we don't at this point say

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2 enough is enough, that you have to have
3 blacks, Latinos, and other minorities
4 involved in these projects, then they
5 shouldn't happen. Council should not
6 approve any tax breaks or any
7 recommendations for those companies
8 unless they are committing strong numbers
9 to make sure that particularly black
10 males -- and I would say this -- and
11 black women and Latino males and others
12 are being hired on those jobs.

13 So if we want to also increase
14 the number of black males going to
15 college, we also have to create the
16 opportunities for them to be able to pay
17 to go to college or their families to pay
18 for them to go to college.

19 So those are my two basic
20 comments. We're pursuing our thousand
21 black male initiative at Community
22 College. We think that's going to be a
23 major game changer if we could get 1,000
24 males to go to Community College over the
25 next three years that can enter college

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2 without taking remedial courses. And my
3 second is the issue around Council
4 becoming -- I know you're aggressive, but
5 becoming more aggressive around this
6 issue and making sure that there's
7 inclusion in all development projects in
8 this city so we could begin to change the
9 narrative about blacks not being allowed
10 to work on these jobs, which is creating,
11 once again, the crisis we're in. Fifty
12 percent of -- I mean, 35, 40 percent of
13 black males are jobless.

14 So that's my comments this
15 morning. Thank you very much for
16 allowing me the opportunity to be present
17 this morning.

18 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: One
19 question. Thank you, Bilal, for the work
20 you're doing. It's good that you're
21 retired and got more time to do this,
22 right?

23 Real quickly on the question,
24 because you worked in the Commerce
25 Department. You know how challenging

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2 this whole terminology of inclusion, and
3 the Mayor, to his credit, has challenged
4 himself to really make this happen.

5 What did you see when you were
6 in the Commerce Department as being one
7 of the gaps? I mean, I've been doing
8 this for ten years now. Now everybody is
9 saying apprenticeship-ready. What did
10 you see the one or two or three things
11 that you think we must absolutely ensure
12 that this MOU and other documents really
13 have for us to get there?

14 I'm going to ask Ms. Logan a
15 question when she's on deck around the
16 connectivity between CTE and
17 apprenticeship-ready, but what did you
18 see where we missed an opportunity as a
19 city on some of the bigger projects?

20 MR. QAYYUM: It's basically
21 enforcement. You got to enforce the
22 project. And I'll give you an example.
23 Some of y'all can remember when Gallery
24 II was built. A lot of folks in this
25 audience might remember, but Gallery II

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2 was built in the City of Philadelphia. I
3 had the opportunity -- I was a
4 coordinator for the City of Philadelphia
5 for the Gallery II project for minority
6 participation, and during that time, we
7 had set goals with the Rouse Corporation
8 for the Gallery project. And one of the
9 goals was, I believe, was 30, 40 percent
10 of workforce. It was 25 percent minority
11 participation on contracts for the
12 construction. There were two
13 contractors, one was minority and one was
14 non-minority, that were working on the
15 job, and part of my role as coordinator
16 of that project or minority participation
17 in that project was, I would go visit the
18 site, see what's happening. And both
19 contractors, the minority contractor and
20 the white contractor, did not have on
21 site the day I was there any workers of
22 color. And I had a discussion with them,
23 and they were telling me that the unions
24 were giving them problems and all that.
25 I said, Well, you have to correct this.

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2 A week later I went back on the
3 site and it wasn't corrected. The
4 contracts were through the Philadelphia
5 Redevelopment Authority, and I ordered
6 the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority,
7 with the support of the Administration,
8 which was then the Green Administration,
9 interesting enough, not to pay those
10 contractors. The next two days I went
11 out there, there were minority
12 contractors, minority workers on that
13 site, because those contractors did not
14 get paid. I held up their checks for the
15 job. That was an enforcement issue.

16 That's what I'm seeing over and
17 over again. We don't have that
18 enforcement in place.

19 I could be totally honest with
20 you, I'm not up on it like I used to be.
21 I don't know what agencies oversee
22 projects and all that, but I can tell you
23 if you hold a check, you'll get action
24 from those contractors. So I would
25 suggest very surely that there's a strong

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2 enforcement/monitoring component of any
3 MOIs that are being done for the City of
4 Philadelphia.

5 They always use those arguments
6 they can't find them, but they'll find
7 them if they have to have them on the
8 work site.

9 Now, the one problem I'll just
10 say quickly with this, the one problem
11 with that, though, is sometimes they have
12 a tendency to transfer minorities from
13 one work site to that work site to make
14 that -- and that's how come we got to
15 work on the expansion of getting more
16 minorities included to do the work.

17 But you got to -- you're going
18 to have to say to some of these
19 contractors, We're stopping checks, and
20 actually do it. Then you'll get -- and
21 the same thing with contractors who are
22 subcontracting. If they're not -- if
23 they include the subcontractor in the
24 original bid and then you go out on the
25 site and find out that that contractor is

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2 not doing the work or the minority is not
3 doing the work, same thing. Stop the
4 contract until they include the minority
5 on the job.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
7 you, Bilal. And let me say we're going
8 through that now. We have a \$3.6 billion
9 contract held up with Brandywine, Penn's
10 new hospital. Drexel, we're going
11 through it, and USP we're in the middle
12 of discussions with.

13 So we hear you, and we're
14 trying, and this hearing on black youth
15 and, of course, all youth and especially
16 minority youth is all part of this change
17 that has to happen now while we're all
18 still here. We don't want to be here and
19 our time pass on and life has not gotten
20 better, and the people with me on this
21 panel know that. Maria has always had
22 her reputation for fighting anybody and
23 everybody. So we knew that. I never
24 even called her about this stuff. I knew
25 where she'd be. And Helen Gym has been

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 great, period, in education and other
3 fields.

4 So we're there. We thank you
5 and for your lifelong commitment as well
6 to help in this area. Thank you.

7 Let me note that we know Zach
8 is here, but let me say Evelyn
9 Sample-Oates has always been outstanding
10 when it comes to the School District and
11 her response, whether it's for
12 information, in every way. So we say
13 thank you.

14 DR. LOGAN: Good morning, Chair
15 Blackwell and members of the Education
16 Committee. My name is Cheryl Logan. I
17 am the Chief Academic Support Officer of
18 the School District of Philadelphia.

19 Pardon my voice today. It's a
20 little bit hoarse.

21 With me today is Dr. Tonya
22 Wolford. She's the Chief for District
23 Evaluation, Research, and Accountability.

24 We appreciate the Council's
25 role in bringing attention to this

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 important issue, college preparedness,
3 college completion of African American
4 males, and how we can learn from one
5 another to better serve children and
6 families and help our young men unpack
7 their gifts.

8 Today we will share current and
9 planned strategies to provide all
10 students -- I actually think everything
11 we're going to share today is current --
12 regardless of where they live or their
13 social identity, with a high-quality
14 education that prepares them for higher
15 education and the workplace.

16 Dr. Wolford is going to go over
17 a little bit of data and then I will
18 conclude our remarks.

19 DR. WOLFORD: Hello. I'm Tonya
20 Wolford, Chief for Evaluation, Research,
21 and Accountability. And I'm just going
22 to talk about the two figures at the end
23 of our sheet, at the end of our testimony
24 sheet. And these two sheets are on the
25 2012-13 first-time 9th grade high school

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 graduates by race, ethnicity, and gender.
3 And this data or this group would have
4 been the group of kids from the School
5 District that should have graduated in
6 2015-16. And by graduating 2015-16, we
7 go from the end of that school year into
8 September of 2016 to count graduates.

9 It's a little hard to see
10 because all of your bars are the same
11 color, but luckily we have the numbers
12 underneath. So starting on the far
13 left -- Councilwoman Blackwell, do you
14 need a copy of it?

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes.
16 Thank you. I have it. Thank
17 you.

18 DR. WOLFORD: Starting on the
19 far left then, that column is looking at
20 the percentage of black African American
21 males and females of that cohort that
22 graduated from high school. So you can
23 see that the rate for black males was 56
24 percent and for black females it was 71
25 percent.

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2 The next column is for white
3 students in that 9th grade cohort, and 68
4 percent of them graduated in four years
5 for males and 76 percent of the females
6 graduated in four years.

7 Hispanic/Latino students,
8 actually we see the exact same rate for
9 Hispanic/Latino males, which was 56
10 percent, and for females 65 percent.
11 Asian for males 81 percent, females 86
12 percent, and then multiracial or other
13 ethnicities, 73 percent and 71 percent.

14 These are the District school
15 graduation rates, and this is including
16 students that went into alt ed programs.
17 In general, for most of these numbers,
18 it's 10 percent higher, 10 percentage
19 points higher, not counting alt ed.

20 And I also want to reference
21 the lines across the entire graph. That
22 bottom one, which is District average
23 with alt ed schools, is 66 percent. So
24 for that group of children that were
25 first-time 9th graders in 2012-13,

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 overall 66 percent that were in District
3 schools graduated, including alt ed.
4 Without alt ed, it's 74 percent. And
5 then the charter average -- and this is
6 only charters that have participated in
7 our school progress reports -- the
8 average was 79 percent.

9 The second sheet looks at
10 students graduating in 2015-16 entering
11 college during the first fall, and this
12 is by race-ethnicity also, and the bars
13 are for SDP, for District schools. So,
14 again, you can go across and look at the
15 averages, but, yes, for black males the
16 rate of students that entered colleges
17 for this group was 41 percent for black
18 males and 54 percent for black females,
19 compared to 53 and 68 white male and
20 female, 31 and 37 Hispanic male and
21 female, 76 and 77 Asian, and 52 and 64.

22 The averages overall for
23 entering college during the first fall
24 were 51 percent for the District,
25 including alt ed, and 55 percent for

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 charters overall. And I will say that we
3 are working to make this data, the
4 disaggregated data, available on the
5 website, as well as looking into more of
6 the college graduation patterns for these
7 different student groups.

8 DR. LOGAN: So we have a few
9 things that we are currently doing that
10 we'd like to share with the Committee
11 today. We do not think that the effort
12 can start in high school. The effort
13 needs to start as soon as students start
14 school, and the most significant is our
15 effort, in collaboration with Read by
16 4th, to ensure that all students entering
17 4th grade are reading on grade level.
18 We've provided teacher coaches,
19 instructional materials, and intense
20 teacher training to ensure that all
21 students are learning to read before they
22 begin -- they leave grade 3 reading on
23 grade level.

24 Last year, and next year we'll
25 continue, all of our high school students

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 completed the PSAT or the SAT during the
3 school day. This eliminated the need for
4 them to come on Saturday. And it is a
5 critical step in improving access to
6 college, and it also allows us to
7 identify student potential to enroll in
8 advanced placement courses.

9 In the fall, we launched the
10 first in Pennsylvania, a middle college
11 at Parkway Center City. Middle colleges
12 allow students when they graduate high
13 school, they also graduate with an
14 Associate's degree. Their 9th and 10th
15 grade years are -- they spend taking
16 mostly high school courses, with some
17 college courses, one during their 9th
18 grade year, two during their 10th grade
19 year, and all of their courses in their
20 11th and 12th grade year are taken, and
21 this is in collaboration with CCP.

22 Our path to success includes
23 evidence-based strategies that will
24 improve a student's transition to high
25 school and expand the college access

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 pipeline. A few of those strategies
3 include enhancing teacher and principal
4 effectiveness through professional
5 development around cultural competence
6 and equity in education. We believe that
7 the culture, language, and background
8 that each child brings to their school is
9 an asset and that education must be
10 personalized to meet students' interest.

11 Also, significantly reducing
12 the number of students who are graduating
13 with IEP goals as opposed to credits.
14 And the gentleman that's seated over here
15 who spoke about the value of a diploma,
16 that rang true to me when you spoke, and
17 that's a significant strategy on ensuring
18 that when students enter 9th grade, that
19 their IEP goals reflect that they will
20 earn credits;

21 Aligning our K-12 curricula
22 with college and industry expectations
23 and standards;

24 Providing information to
25 families to help improve their children's

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 school and student learning, working in
3 partnership with families so that they
4 can understand what they should expect
5 from their child's school and going into
6 schools to make sure that they are --
7 that they as parents are using their
8 agency to ensure that their students get
9 what they deserve;

10 And increasing the number of
11 students enrolled in advanced placement
12 courses. We acknowledge that there may
13 be many students underachieving and not
14 receiving instruction appropriate to
15 their abilities, and one means to achieve
16 that goal is, we are this spring
17 screening all of our 2nd graders for
18 gifted and talented programs. We are
19 using an instrument that is proven to not
20 be culturally bias in terms of the fact
21 that it is cognitively based, and it will
22 also provide an opportunity for our
23 English language learners to have a fair
24 shot at people being able to recognize
25 their gifts as well.

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2 As we execute and evaluate
3 these strategies, we must align our
4 efforts and continually communicate with
5 our partners in City Council, in the
6 communities, our charter partners, our
7 faith-based school partners, our
8 independent school partners in order to
9 collectively impact our young people.

10 One last strategy that I want
11 to mention is -- and I don't want to
12 miss, because we have three principals
13 here today, and two represent
14 neighborhood high schools, our focus on
15 neighborhood high schools where half of
16 our students who are in high school
17 attend neighborhood schools. So
18 additional resources and support to
19 support the 9th grade transition and to
20 support 9th grade students in their first
21 year of high school to ensure that they
22 make it through the first time one time,
23 because the research supports that if
24 they make it through one time, we know
25 that they will finish.

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2 Later you will hear from Linda
3 Carroll, principal of Northeast High
4 School. And not only do 50 percent of
5 our students attend our neighborhood high
6 schools, but nearly one in ten actually
7 attend Northeast High School because of
8 its size.

9 We do want to change the
10 paradigm to not just to college but to
11 and through college, a nod to our
12 partners in Chicago who have launched a
13 ten-year effort around this.

14 The high school diploma is a
15 low bar and does not reflect our stance
16 of helping all of our students to become
17 the best version of themselves.

18 Now we'll take questions, if
19 there are any.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
21 Councilwoman Maria Quinones-Sanchez.

22 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
23 you, Madam Chair.

24 Very quickly, because I know
25 this is not the content, but in light of

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 the fact that Bilal had brought this
3 over, when was the last time that we
4 realigned our CTE program with
5 apprenticeship-ready to the building
6 trades? The last time we had a
7 conversation, it was during the Paul
8 Vallas years. I think we borrowed a
9 billion dollars, first time ever schools
10 are paying debt service. We can all cry
11 about that and how it impacts
12 school-based budgets. But in light of
13 that, when is the last time there's been
14 a realignment with that?

15 DR. LOGAN: So there hasn't
16 been a realignment since that time. The
17 realignment has happened in some small
18 ways because the state enacted the NOCTI
19 exam as a way to measure how students are
20 doing, and they use that on their state
21 school progress report.

22 One of the things that we found
23 out from all of the folks in industry is
24 the NOCTI bar is too low. So when we met
25 with the electrical union, for example,

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 one of the things that he lamented was we
3 have students who are coming out of the
4 program and their math levels are not
5 high enough to do well on their exam.
6 Now, they do have some opportunities for
7 remediation through their processes,
8 because it is also an effort for them to
9 recruit more people of color into their
10 ranks. So they are doing some things,
11 but that is something that hopefully that
12 with funding as we work through our high
13 school re-envisioning -- and we have been
14 using that word for about the last 18
15 months, using re-envisioning as opposed
16 to any other nomenclature -- that's one
17 of the things that's on our dos to do.
18 We're going -- one of the things that the
19 ESSA law will do, if it's not repealed,
20 is it allows local jurisdictions a lot of
21 flexibility with those kinds of
22 assessments, and so going to a more
23 rigorous assessment that's going to
24 really prepare young people so they don't
25 leave thinking that they're really

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2 prepared and then get out there and then
3 they've finished -- and we do have some
4 great apprentice programs and many
5 companies that hire our students, but we
6 want them to be able to get the best
7 paying jobs, and in order for them to do
8 that, they're going to have to really be
9 ready for those very rigorous exams.

10 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: So for
11 me one of the challenges is we all know
12 that standardized testing
13 disproportionately -- how minorities
14 achieve on standardized testing. There's
15 some biases there. The literature goes
16 all over the place. My concern with this
17 has always been, and even as we talk
18 about Rebuild, the barrier is still their
19 test, the industry test.

20 And so at what point do we
21 assess whether what is an adequate
22 content knowledge versus them just
23 creating another barrier for entry for
24 our young people into their industry? I
25 mean, I'm just being real, because they

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2 keep moving the goalpost. My whole life
3 has been about you get here, then they
4 move the goalpost.

5 So if we're ever going to have
6 that broad-based discussion around access
7 and breaking down those barriers, who is
8 responsible for making that assessment to
9 ensure what is an adequate content level
10 of knowledge?

11 Mastbaum kids made me a
12 beautiful lamp. I have a beautiful
13 Mastbaum lamp that my welding,
14 electrical, auto shop kids -- you know,
15 what do those kids not know that they
16 can't pass those tests?

17 DR. LOGAN: That's a big
18 question, Councilwoman, and I appreciate
19 it. I think it's actually -- I think
20 it's incumbent upon us, along with
21 working with PDE and then actually around
22 the country, to align whatever the states
23 are using -- here it's NOCTI -- to what
24 the industry is asking.

25 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Is that

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2 something we can ask our university
3 partners? I mean, someone has to take
4 this on. This has to get funded.

5 DR. LOGAN: Right. Well, I
6 honestly think -- I think it's us looking
7 at the exam that we use and working
8 with -- I mean, it's a national issue.
9 It's not just in Pennsylvania -- to align
10 that with industry standards, because if
11 not, we're selling our students a bill of
12 goods that they really can't use and
13 students are leaving out advanced on
14 NOCTI and we all celebrate and there's a
15 party and a cake, and then the kid can't
16 get a job in whatever it is they've been
17 certified in because the actual standard
18 for the industry is higher.

19 So I think for me it was very
20 eye-opening when we had -- it wasn't that
21 long ago that we had -- that I found this
22 out, that we have that huge challenge.
23 Even some of the other industries that I
24 thought our kids were better prepared and
25 to have entry level, we're finding out

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 that they don't, even if they score. And
3 so some truth in advertising in terms of
4 what the credential actually means when
5 they leave school is -- that's our next
6 step.

7 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: In the
8 level of priorities, where is this? I
9 mean, I just feel -- and I say this as a
10 graduate of a CTE program. This is --
11 know it, appreciate it. How long is it
12 going to take? Because what's going to
13 happen is, we're going to have this
14 Rebuild and we're going to have this
15 capital program. The Mayor is going to
16 put a lot of political equity on the
17 table and we have that barrier to entry.
18 In none of the conversations up to now
19 have we gotten an agreement from the
20 industry that they're going to release
21 that barrier. We're not doing anything
22 different that they couldn't do by
23 walking into the union hall.

24 So to me, it's like, you know,
25 what can we do at the school base level.

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2 And then obviously I look at Community
3 College as a resource. Also how do we
4 bridge that gap and then -- because we're
5 going to have this conversation. Rebuild
6 is going to be gone in five years. Bilal
7 has been here a long time, right? We're
8 going to have this conversation. Rebuild
9 is done. What I don't want is a
10 situation where we're setting up kids
11 where they work for Rebuild for five
12 years and then they're done because we
13 really didn't break that barrier to entry
14 and we're having the continual
15 conversation.

16 DR. LOGAN: Honestly, I think
17 that our job is to expose them to what
18 the industry standard is and then to help
19 them to reach that bar and that to not
20 use a standardized measure that the state
21 uses for several different reasons as the
22 bar. So if students -- and this
23 happened -- I don't know if you recall
24 with Comcast, with having the discussion
25 with them about their entry exam and

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2 saying, okay, well, these soft skills
3 that you all -- are really, really great,
4 but then we are having this issue with
5 students on passing the exam and to
6 expose them to what the actual content
7 and what they're expected to know for
8 industry as the bar as opposed to what
9 the state is asking them to show
10 proficiency on, because there is a
11 disconnect and the bar is higher when
12 they get out in the workforce.

13 I think that's the work that we
14 can do and control in the short term and
15 then to work with our state partners on
16 the second part, which could be -- and
17 national partners, which could be to
18 change what the assessments look like so
19 they better reflect industry standards.

20 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Yes.
21 I'd like to see that included as you do
22 this, more college access on the high
23 school level. I think that has to happen
24 in our CTE programs, whether it's in a
25 year from now or something, that we're

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2 bridging the gap. And, again, I think
3 Community College is a partner that we
4 need to use in that. Because what I
5 don't want is the situation where we're
6 going to ask the building trade union for
7 something they can't give us, because
8 they're going to keep using their
9 standard and we're not going to meet that
10 standard. Until we know what the gap is,
11 if it's a gap in hours, if it's a gap in
12 exposure, like we need to have that crib
13 sheet so that we know what we're talking
14 about when we say apprenticeship-ready
15 versus what they say
16 apprenticeship-ready, and I feel like
17 there's a huge gap there.

18 DR. LOGAN: I think that is the
19 work of our CTE department to help our
20 teachers to do that.

21 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Okay.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Well,
23 let me say with regard to what the
24 Councilwoman is saying, we've been
25 talking about Rebuild and we want more

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2 inclusion and more positive plans in this
3 area in order for it to even begin. Our
4 understanding is you have 20 CTE teachers
5 who are card-carrying union people. So
6 if they are card-carrying union people,
7 then the youngsters who come out of those
8 programs should be apprentices in union
9 programs. It doesn't make sense that
10 they say our kids aren't making it when
11 they're the card-carrying union people
12 who are supposed to recommend the kids.

13 So we expect something to
14 happen with regard to this program, and
15 we expect serious inclusion with regard
16 to the Rebuild program, or otherwise
17 we're all stuck. Like I tell Drexel and
18 all these folks I've been going through
19 with, Drexel, Penn, and Brandywine with
20 their 3.5 or 6 billion and USP, who we're
21 just beginning this discussion, you know,
22 we'll either all rise together or we'll
23 fall together.

24 DR. LOGAN: Agreed.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We've

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 been around too long to not realize
3 that -- I remember when Lucien Blackwell,
4 who has been gone 14 years now, more than
5 14 years, I remember when 17-500 came and
6 life was changing. Well, we're at that
7 point again where we have to have change
8 in this area. We have to have change in
9 inclusion and non-gentrification, or
10 we're all stuck.

11 We'll either rise together or
12 we'll fall together. It's just that
13 simple, because the people who send us
14 here are neighborhood people who elect
15 us. All of this -- we love all of labor.
16 I love all my institutions. I've never
17 been here with them, but we're there now,
18 because change has to happen if we are to
19 survive. And we mean it when we say
20 we'll rise together or fall together, and
21 that's just how it is. And we believe
22 that when we're on the side of the
23 public, the people who send us here,
24 we'll survive.

25 So that's where we are. These

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 are important issues, serious issues, and
3 we look forward to change occurring.

4 Thank you, Councilwoman.

5 DR. LOGAN: Thank you.

6 MR. QAYYUM: Councilwoman
7 Blackwell, can I make just one comment
8 before you bring --

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
10 Please. Please do.

11 MR. QAYYUM: I've been in and
12 out of schools for many years.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes,
14 you have.

15 MR. QAYYUM: And I could tell
16 you that my experiences, the schools that
17 have great principals are the schools who
18 do better and the schools who really
19 promote better for their students.

20 So I know you're getting ready
21 to -- this is a commercial for two of the
22 principals that are getting ready to come
23 up. I had the opportunity last year to
24 go into the Northeast High School, which
25 blew my mind. I didn't know it was the

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 largest school in the City of
3 Philadelphia. They have students that
4 speak 57 languages, I think it is, but
5 the principal, Linda Carroll, was there
6 and she opened up the doors for us to do
7 a session for black males. So we did a
8 great session with black males, and
9 because of her support, it was a great
10 session. And we also had the opportunity
11 to go into Carver's high school,
12 Mr. Domers, and he opened up the door for
13 us.

14 So I just want to give a thanks
15 to both of these two principals. I
16 didn't get a chance to work with the
17 principal from West Philly, but hopefully
18 we will, because we will be having
19 discussions to go back into schools to
20 have sessions with black males, which we
21 found out was unique and was not
22 happening. And we had an opportunity to
23 go into 12 schools, but these two
24 principals opened up the doors for us to
25 have discussions with the black males,

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 and that's what this hearing is all about
3 today, is how do we create more
4 opportunities for black males and
5 particularly for them to go to college.

6 So thank you.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
8 you.

9 We also have the Office of
10 Black Male Engagement here today, as you
11 know, Jack Drummond.

12 So, principals, come forward.
13 We thank you for your patience, and we
14 thank you for your commitment to our
15 kids. We're interested to hear what you
16 think and what you have to say. And,
17 again, thank you very, very much.

18 (Witnesses approached witness
19 table.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Who
21 would like to go first.

22 MS. CARROLL: Good morning. I
23 think it's still morning. Good morning.
24 I'm really happy to be here. My name is
25 Linda Carroll. I'm principal of

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2 Northeast High School.

3 As I heard through the speakers
4 before me, I thought about when I was in
5 elementary school in Philadelphia. I too
6 am a product of Philadelphia schools. I
7 attended Mary Channing Wister, one of the
8 Philly schools, and when I left, I was
9 offered an opportunity to go to
10 Masterman. And my mother said, Well,
11 that's at 17th Street. We don't have to
12 go there. You have a motivation program
13 right at Stoddart-Fleisher. You'll be
14 fine; just go to Stoddart. And after I
15 attended Stoddart-Fleisher, my counselors
16 put in for me to go to Girls High. And
17 my mother said, I can't afford tokens.
18 You're one of 12 children. William Penn
19 has a motivation program. You'll be just
20 fine. And I was wondering as I sat and I
21 listened to the people before me, I said,
22 I wonder if my mother could still say
23 that today. And why can't she say that?
24 Because all of our high schools should be
25 viable choices regardless of where we are

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145
2 in the City, and that's what we're
3 working toward with my colleagues here,
4 to make all of our high schools in the
5 City great.

6 With that said --

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Where
8 did you end up?

9 MS. CARROLL: I ended up at
10 William Penn High under Odette Harris.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Okay.
12 Yes.

13 MS. CARROLL: Because she
14 couldn't afford tokens to go all the
15 way -- I was one of 12 children. We were
16 raised in Richard Allen projects and --

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: So was
18 I.

19 MS. CARROLL: So, like I said,
20 if you can get there, like I said, no
21 excuses for my students.

22 When I go to Northeast every
23 day, I just -- you know, the one thing
24 that they all know is that, you know, you
25 have to have a standard for all of your

1 3/20/17 - EDUCATION - RES. 170145

2 students.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Did
4 you go to Spring Garden?

5 MS. CARROLL: I went to Wister.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Okay.
7 All right. Great. Great.

8 MS. CARROLL: So being at
9 Northeast, and this is my 12th year as
10 principal there, I go on into a school
11 that people perceived as predominantly
12 white, not really visiting in the last 20
13 years, not realizing that 20 percent of
14 our population is African American. It's
15 hard to get people to understand that we
16 have some of the same challenges --

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Twenty
18 percent in the Northeast High School?

19 MS. CARROLL: Forty percent of
20 my students are African American
21 students. And our school, we have 3,400
22 students from 57 different countries and
23 at least 57 languages. So trying to
24 balance everything we need to go for all
25 the kids there is quite a task every day.

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2 One of the things that I
3 realized coming into a school like that
4 and seeing kids come from all over the
5 world and be successful, I ask myself,
6 why is it that kids can come from the
7 Sudan, walk across the Sudan and graduate
8 number one in a class and I can't get
9 some of my African American students to
10 come to school? What's missing? You
11 know, they have the potential, but what
12 is it that's missing that I can't -- you
13 can't get the kids who live here in this
14 city to buy into why education is
15 important?

16 So what we started to do is
17 sort of backtrack and said, who is
18 accountable? And I think for at
19 Northeast, I hold everybody accountable.
20 It's not just the school. It's the
21 students, they're accountable. Our
22 teachers are accountable. The parents
23 are most accountable, and so is our
24 community. And I make sure everybody
25 knows that each and every day. If a

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2 parent is not doing what they're supposed
3 to do, then I just let them know, we need
4 you here. We can't do this alone.

5 Many parents in our communities
6 think that the schools, their role is 100
7 percent to educate all alone. No. They
8 have to fill in the gaps like every other
9 parent does. You have to come to the
10 home and school meetings. You have to
11 take part in the community meetings. You
12 have to be there, even when you're tired
13 after working two jobs.

14 Some of the other things. When
15 we're focusing on our African American
16 males, we realize that initially many of
17 them are sort of lagging behind in
18 graduation rates. So we put a few things
19 in place. I realize that I have very few
20 African American teachers at the school,
21 male teachers. So what we started doing
22 over the last few years is going out and
23 trying to hire more African American
24 teachers. We even started a partnership
25 with Cheyney University recently to get

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2 more teachers to come in, along with
3 Temple University.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I'm
5 Jannie from Cheyney.

6 MS. CARROLL: And Temple as
7 well as Penn to get more African American
8 males in the school.

9 Since we have so many
10 non-African American teachers, what we
11 thought was really necessary is do a lot
12 of work around courageous conversations,
13 having those bold conversations about
14 what it is that African American children
15 need. And so that sort of made a
16 difference in how many of our teachers
17 who are not African American approach our
18 students on a daily basis.

19 Some of the other things that
20 we did was, our goal is to increase the
21 number of our African American students
22 who were in advanced classes, and we've
23 increased that like 30 percent in the
24 last ten years. And when I first came to
25 Northeast, there were very few African

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2 American males in our AP classes and our
3 IB and magnet program. Now we have over
4 almost 200, with 80 of those students
5 being males.

6 Other things that we've done,
7 just hiring more African American staff.
8 If we couldn't get the teachers, we got
9 more support staff and sort of started
10 sort of a mentoring program for the young
11 men in our buildings.

12 In addition, we knew that was
13 really important to -- when we talk about
14 what are some of the skills that our kids
15 lack, we started to -- our school started
16 to do a lot of work around Angela
17 Duckworth's work on tenacity and grit.
18 We had her come in to talk to our
19 teachers. We had her come in and talk to
20 our students and our parents about what
21 it is that you have to do when it gets
22 tough. You just can't quit. You got to
23 hang in there. And that's one of the
24 things that we really push at Northeast.
25 No excuses. You got to hang in. And so

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2 that's what we sort of pushed across the
3 board in our schools.

4 Other things that we do, when
5 our 9th graders walk into our school, at
6 9th grade, the second week of school --
7 because many of our black males have a
8 really fatalistic approach to the world.
9 So we want them to know that they will
10 exist in the future. And so what we do
11 in the 9th grade is, we actually have a
12 mock graduation where we take them out to
13 the field, all of them. Go out on the
14 field. I need you to know that in four
15 years, this is where you're going to be.
16 And all of those things sort of begin to
17 chip away of that notion that they're not
18 part of the future. They absolutely are,
19 and we do it every day to let them know.

20 Some of the other things we do
21 is start their college visits at 9th
22 grade, not when they get to 11th and
23 12th, but 9th grade. No, we're not
24 visiting any penitentiaries. We're
25 visiting universities, and that's where

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2 you're going.

3 We also enlisted some help from
4 a Jewish community group who actually
5 come in our building to help our -- not
6 the kids in the magnet, but those kids
7 who never even thought of going to
8 college. They come into the building
9 once a week now to help them fill out
10 college applications, do the FASFA forms,
11 and that has been a huge help for our
12 school.

13 We do college visits, as many
14 to the black universities so that they
15 can actually see the students, because
16 they don't -- if they don't see it on TV,
17 they don't think it exists. So we
18 actually visit the different
19 universities.

20 We have an alumni mentoring
21 program, again, with the old guys who
22 graduated from the old Northeast that
23 used to be at 8th and Lehigh. They come
24 back and talk to the students in our
25 schools. We have fraternities, some of

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2 the black fraternities, to come in and
3 talk to the kids. And the main thing --
4 we also created this year a sports
5 advisory, because a lot of our black
6 males are going to college, some of them
7 via sports. So those kids are followed
8 with their same advisor from 9th grade to
9 12th grade, making sure they're keeping
10 their grades up, making sure that they're
11 doing everything they need to do to be
12 successful and get to college.

13 And the last thing I want to
14 mention -- well, next to last thing --
15 is, academic rigor is hugely important.
16 You can't get anywhere if you don't push
17 your students. No excuses. This is
18 where you have to be. We're not watering
19 anything down for you. We're not
20 lowering the bar. You're just going to
21 do what you have to do until you get to
22 where you have to get.

23 Strong, viable CTE programs, we
24 have two strong programs where kids
25 looking into the future, not anything

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2 that won't be in existence ten years from
3 now. One of the programs, we've had many
4 students gain up to 15 credits at
5 Community just going through the CTE
6 program. And, again, like I said, just
7 having a standard for all of your kids
8 every day, making sure that they know
9 that college is not an option. It's not
10 if you're going to college, but just a
11 matter of where you're going.

12 Thank you.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
14 you very much. That was nice. It was
15 fun even.

16 MS. DEAN: Good afternoon.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We
18 love our Ms. Dean.

19 MS. DEAN: Good afternoon,
20 Councilwoman Blackwell.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
22 afternoon.

23 MS. DEAN: Thank you so much
24 for having us here. And I ditto
25 everything that my colleague has just

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2 told you.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Excuse
4 me one moment.

5 We note that Councilman Curtis
6 Jones is here. He survived this Saturday
7 Boot Camp, so I guess all is well. Thank
8 you.

9 Thank you, Ms. Dean.

10 MS. DEAN: Good afternoon.

11 Same thing that my colleagues
12 just said, we have a clear and focus on
13 high standards with our students for
14 expectations, but we also add a component
15 to our school that creates a caring and
16 collaborative, nurturing, professional
17 learning environment. There is also a
18 culture of collective responsibility for
19 all of our students.

20 We have implemented best
21 practice -- a best practice model
22 school-wide for teachers, which include
23 teaching and learning strategies for
24 academic improvement. Students are
25 provided an extended school day to allow

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2 for after-school tutoring, credit
3 recovery. And each year in July, we
4 provide our incoming 9th graders with a
5 summer bridge. There is a 9th grade
6 academy model at West to assist those
7 students with the transition from
8 elementary school into high school, with
9 an emphasis on credit accumulation as
10 opposed to the familiar social promotion
11 of elementary schools.

12 In high school, one "Carnegie
13 Unit" equals one credit. So every class
14 that you take is your credit, and you
15 need 23 and a half credits in order to
16 graduate from high school. So that is
17 explained to our students.

18 The challenges that I see at
19 West Philadelphia High School for our
20 young African American males can be
21 attributed to the instructional gaps, the
22 object poverty, single-parent households,
23 chronic mental health disorders, and
24 other elements of a gang culture that
25 creates community violence which has

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2 impacted the overall school community.

3 With that being said, the
4 efforts to counteract these negative
5 influences on our male students include
6 building a sense of community within the
7 school. We also have a faith-based
8 relationship with a church that's in our
9 community that comes in three times a
10 week to work with our students, and they
11 also have signed permission slips from
12 their parents to go to the church for
13 Bible study.

14 There is an active alumni
15 association with individuals that support
16 our males well into their first year in
17 college and beyond. In an effort to
18 maintain a positive school climate, the
19 school-wide initiative includes the
20 implementation of the International
21 Institute of Restorative Practices that
22 has been implemented at West Philadelphia
23 High School. Through this program,
24 students are able to speak with staff
25 regarding a plethora of issues that

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2 impede their academic progress.

3 As a needs assessment, we have
4 looked at those things that will help our
5 male students even further, and that
6 includes a reduction in the
7 student-counselor ratio for additional
8 support in the school.

9 Right now our graduation rate
10 for four years in '15-'16 school year was
11 73 percent. In '14-'15, it was 78
12 percent. Our five-year graduation rate
13 among all of our students was 85 percent.
14 So they're graduating, but it's taking
15 them longer.

16 They're going to college, but
17 sometimes many of them have to go to
18 Community College. So our college
19 matriculation rate in '14-'15 was 41
20 percent.

21 With that being said,
22 Councilwoman Blackwell, we work very hard
23 to make sure that our male students are
24 mentored with -- we have African American
25 male coaches in our building that support

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2 our students. We have the alumni also
3 with the males. They come back and they
4 work with our students as well.

5 So there are a number of
6 programs within our community that has
7 helped our students. We also have a
8 Promise Corps that works with our
9 students for filling out college
10 applications, and of course we've been
11 with University of Pennsylvania, the
12 Netter Center. They have a specific
13 group of individuals that just come in
14 and help our students fill out the
15 college applications as well and to get
16 their financial aid packages completed.

17 And, finally, I want to say we
18 have removed all barriers for going to
19 college financially with our community
20 partnerships, and we have a community
21 partnership that has a gap scholarship
22 that's only offered to our students at
23 West Philadelphia High School through the
24 A's for J's program.

25 Early college access in terms

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2 of visiting colleges is one of the things
3 that we do with our 9th graders and
4 letting them know that you graduated from
5 8th grade, but that's not the end. It's
6 only the beginning for you to go on to
7 higher education.

8 I thank you.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
10 you. I generally would wait until the
11 end, but it specifically relates to what
12 you just stated.

13 My office had a call or calls
14 that said five students from West applied
15 to Drexel, that all are enrolled for the
16 11th and 12th grade advanced placement
17 classes that you offer. All applied for
18 Liberty scholarships at Drexel, and that
19 Drexel changed their policy, increasing
20 the SAT scores to 1,000 being the
21 requirement as opposed to 900 or whatever
22 it was.

23 MS. DEAN: Yes.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And
25 that they were told none of the students

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2 would be successful at Drexel, and that
3 although they have the grades,
4 extracurricular activities, volunteer
5 work, have overcome issues of
6 homelessness, relocation, domestic
7 violence and more, that Drexel wouldn't
8 consider them. Is that true?

9 MS. DEAN: That is true.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: All
11 right.

12 MS. DEAN: And they were less
13 than 50 points off from the thousand.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: All
15 right. Then I will call you and we'll
16 see what we can do. My staff gave me
17 this. I wanted to verify it. Thank you,
18 but I'll be in touch with you about this.

19 MS. DEAN: The other thing is
20 that we just need an opportunity, access.
21 Once they get there, then we can talk
22 about how we're going to support them if
23 they are falling behind or if they need
24 more support. We can look into that as
25 well.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Okay.

3 All right. Thank you. So we'll deal
4 with that. Thank you.

5 Councilman, you wanted to say
6 something?

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: I'll make a
8 statement that -- first of all, thank
9 you, Madam Chair, for raising this
10 critical issue.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
12 you.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: And one of
14 the reasons why the Commission on African
15 American Males was founded was that
16 statistical anomalies that negatively
17 impact a group of people, in this case
18 African American males, should be studied
19 and we should take a deeper dive to find
20 out why. And I'll only say that, very
21 briefly, that I had the misfortune of
22 going to a homicide trial two weeks ago
23 in support of the family of the victim,
24 but when I looked and heard some of the
25 testimony, I realized everybody in that

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2 courtroom was a victim. The perpetrator,
3 the victim, their families all suffered.
4 And what struck me most was that the
5 victim and the perpetrator both had
6 dropped out of college, third year,
7 financial reasons, whatever. Both of
8 them -- and the judge was taken aback by
9 the fact that you guys should have been
10 meeting at a frat party or some place
11 like that, not at her courtroom.

12 So this career choice -- and
13 full disclosure, I'm an Overbrook guy,
14 so --

15 MS. DEAN: Simon Gratz.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yeah. You
17 know how that is.

18 We have to fix this.

19 MS. DEAN: Yes, I agree.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: We have to
21 recruit, retain, and graduate more,
22 because you take them out of the pipeline
23 to prison when you do. So they're going
24 to wind up in some institution, and what
25 we hope and based on your hearings here

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2 today, Councilwoman, is that we find more
3 of them graduating.

4 The most beautiful thing I ever
5 saw in that way was the graduation at
6 Howard. If you've ever been to that
7 graduation --

8 MS. DEAN: That's my alumni.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: You're doing
10 all right.

11 They put on pomp and
12 circumstance that brings your blood
13 pressure down and restores your hope in
14 inner cities and particularly the
15 population that we're talking about
16 today.

17 So I'm thankful that you're
18 doing the hearings, but I'm intrigued
19 about what we're going to do by way of
20 correction, by way of corrective action
21 steps, by way of talking to Drexel and
22 other institutions to find a path into a
23 college professor's classroom. And so
24 whatever we can do, because from the
25 public safety side, I know what happens

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2 if we don't.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
4 you. Thank you very much.

5 MR. DOMERS: Good afternoon.
6 My name is Ted Domers. I'm the principal
7 at George Washington Carver High School
8 of Engineering and Science. We're a
9 special admission school located in
10 Temple's backyard. Our 900 students span
11 the City's boundaries, representing 45
12 different zip codes. Seventy-five
13 percent of our students identify as
14 African American and 53 percent of our
15 student body is male.

16 I want to thank Dr. Hite,
17 Dr. Logan, and Dr. Wolford for inviting
18 me to testify at today's hearing and
19 thank you, members of City Council, for
20 hosting this hearing and raising the
21 level of attention to the critical civil
22 rights matter of analyzing the adequacy
23 of our schools in preparing African
24 American young men for college. I am
25 honored to share some of our strategies

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2 and the data we prioritize to best
3 support the education of our African
4 American young men.

5 I began --

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: What
7 was that percentage you said again?

8 MR. DOMERS: Which? I threw
9 out a couple.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Well,
11 give it both to me.

12 MR. DOMERS: It's 900 students,
13 75 percent African American, 53 percent
14 male.

15 I began my teaching career at
16 Germantown High School over a decade ago.
17 I vividly remember my first graduation
18 ceremony. About three-quarters of the
19 way into the procession, there was a
20 notable change. No more male students
21 walked on the stage. Only female
22 students in white gowns. There were no
23 more green gowns and young men. This
24 moment continues to shape my work.

25 Since then, I have worked in

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2 several school communities, both public
3 and charter, and I've had the opportunity
4 to lead an academic program to better
5 identify strategies to address this
6 challenge. Now in my fourth year at E&S,
7 I will see my first freshman class
8 graduate in a couple of months. I remain
9 laser focused on what it means to create
10 a school culture of college readiness. I
11 tell people all the time, we're not a
12 college prep school. We're a college
13 success school. Our job is not simply to
14 prepare our students to arrive at
15 college. Our job is to ensure our
16 students are successful once they're
17 there.

18 A quick glance at our data
19 demonstrates a level of success: 100
20 percent of our students receive a college
21 acceptance, with 80 percent of our
22 students choosing to attend. Each year
23 nearly 20 percent of our students receive
24 a full tuition scholarship. Our students
25 attend a range of schools, including the

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2 Ivy League, our nation's top engineering
3 schools, HBCUs, as well as the state
4 schools around Pennsylvania. Many stay
5 right here in Philadelphia at Temple,
6 Penn, Drexel, Villanova, LaSalle, and
7 CCP.

8 To accomplish these great
9 results, we take a very intentional
10 approach to develop our educational
11 programming. Our commitment is to
12 develop a confident and well-rounded
13 student. It is not simply about what
14 happens in the classroom. We address the
15 entire student experience with rigorous
16 instructional programs, available student
17 supports, enrichment activities,
18 internships, and summer programming.

19 At the core is a rigorous
20 instructional program. Students from the
21 day they enter orientation are told
22 they're expected to take an AP class
23 before they graduate. To accomplish this
24 lofty goal, we have nearly tripled the
25 number of AP classes we offer. Students

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2 have the choice of 16 AP courses in all
3 four core content areas as well as two AP
4 computer science courses. Students
5 select courses from several different
6 academic pathways that align electives.
7 For instance, our computer science
8 students are required to take Java
9 programming before AP computer science,
10 and our bio-med students take anatomy
11 before AP biology.

12 To support students in their
13 academics, we open our library up every
14 day after school for students to access
15 needed technology, independently study,
16 and/or receive additional support from
17 teachers or peer tutors. We are also in
18 the final stages of formalizing a
19 partnership with Mighty Writers and
20 Temple University to open a writing
21 center in our school. It will serve as
22 the first partnership of its kind in the
23 City. These two supports, studying and
24 tutoring in a library and seeking help in
25 a writing center, are the exact skills

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2 students will need for college success.

3 We recognize, though, that our
4 academic program is only one facet of
5 preparing our students for college
6 success. Therefore, we prioritize
7 enrichment opportunities. We have six
8 different competitive robotics teams.
9 Our chess team competes at the city and
10 state level. Our Quizbowl team is the
11 top public school in the City, and we
12 just found out over the weekend we
13 qualified for nationals. Our students
14 compete in mock trial and debate. We
15 support 26 varsity and junior varsity
16 sports teams. We also hold an annual
17 college day. This year on October 28th,
18 75 colleges attended our college fair to
19 meet with our 11th and 12th grade
20 students. Every 9th and 10th grade
21 student had a college visit at one of 16
22 schools in the region, and every 7th and
23 8th grade student toured Temple
24 University.

25 Not only do these strategies

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2 promote student learning, but they also
3 promote engagement to our school
4 community. School pride is contagious,
5 and we strive, perhaps naively, to create
6 a place where teenagers actually want to
7 come to school.

8 Additionally, we emphasize
9 work-based experiences for our students.
10 These experiences deepen student learning
11 while also creating additional role
12 models, which is of particular importance
13 for our young men. Most notably, many of
14 our engineering students participate in
15 the ACE program, which offers
16 after-school projects and close
17 mentoring. We have developed an internal
18 summer internship program by building
19 partnerships with local organizations,
20 and we fundraise to compensate our
21 students. Similarly, we work closely
22 with the Philadelphia Youth Network for
23 additional internships.

24 Furthermore, our students
25 engage in many summer academic programs,

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2 including the Pennsylvania Governor's
3 STEM Academy, Penn Summer Mentorship,
4 Temple University's Math-Science Upward
5 Bound, Steppingstone Scholars, and
6 Breakthrough.

7 And while we feel like we've
8 developed strategic and effective ways to
9 support our students, we're not satisfied
10 with our progress, and I know we're only
11 scratching the surface. Our two
12 counselors are stretched too thinly, and
13 additional staff in the form of
14 counselors and community partnership
15 coordinators would enable us to better
16 expand our partnerships. We could more
17 effectively place students, oversee their
18 progress, and analyze the impact. In
19 turn, expanded partnerships would
20 increase individualized tutoring and
21 mentoring for our students. Our
22 students' success emerges both from the
23 community of the school and from
24 individualized attention. We need more
25 support in both areas to enhance these

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2 relationships.

3 In 1979, the High School of
4 Engineering and Science was founded with
5 the explicit mission of offering students
6 who are underrepresented in the fields of
7 science and engineering an opportunity
8 for an education in those professions.
9 Today I'm proud to continue this mission.
10 At E&S, we're working to change the
11 alarmingly low rates of African American
12 male students graduating college, and I
13 am confident that we can scale the
14 programming we offer. I am committed to
15 remaining engaged in any future work that
16 emerges from this hearing, and I'd
17 welcome the opportunity to be part of
18 this Committee's future planning and
19 initiatives relating to this issue.

20 I thank you for opening up this
21 inquiry and allowing me to share my
22 thoughts and insights.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
24 you all for your excellent testimony and
25 for trying to be part of the solution.

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2 Thank you very much.

3 (Thank you.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you.

6 Maurice Campbell; Jack
7 Drummond, Office of Black Male
8 Engagement; Maurice Campbell, RANN;
9 Kendrick Davis, Mayor's Office of
10 Education; and George Jackson for PFT,
11 Philadelphia Federation of Teachers.
12 After that, we have just one more.

13 Committee, I know we're pushing
14 it, L&I. I know you're due at 1:00. So
15 we'll try to get through this quickly,
16 and that will be Cory Dulaney, Campus
17 Philly; our own Catherine Blunt, former
18 school principal, who is always there
19 doing a good job; Olufemi Fadeyibi -- I
20 hope you'll tell me if I said it
21 correctly -- Math, Civics and Science
22 Charter School; and Marie Ortiz, a
23 constituent.

24 We have written testimony from
25 Barbara Mattleman, Graduate Philadelphia.

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2 We will submit that for the record as
3 though it had been read.

4 (Witnesses approached witness
5 table.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
7 you very much. Identify yourself for the
8 record and begin. Thank you. However
9 you'd like to do it is okay.

10 MR. JACKSON: Okay. I'll go
11 first. I'm George Jackson from the
12 Philadelphia Federation of Teachers. And
13 in the interest of time and not being too
14 duplicative about what others have said
15 about the challenges facing our education
16 system specifically, I want to first
17 thank you, Councilwoman Blackwell, and
18 the rest of the Committee on Education
19 for convening the hearing.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I
21 forgot my button today. I had it on,
22 though.

23 MR. JACKSON: Yeah, I know. We
24 got a picture of you. It's online.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank

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2 you.

3 MR. JACKSON: And also I want
4 to thank all of the educators and
5 advocates and other individuals who are
6 doing really important work in trying to
7 address this complex issue. And I'm
8 going to focus mostly on the educational
9 side of it in some aspects, to cover the
10 aspects that weren't covered. I
11 submitted the full written testimony for
12 the record. I won't read the whole
13 thing.

14 I want to start off by saying
15 that unfortunately the economic and
16 societal ills that impact every child
17 tend to have an even more pronounced
18 impact on black and brown communities,
19 and this holds particularly true when it
20 comes to educational opportunities, which
21 we feel start with access to high-quality
22 early childhood education.

23 Now, the research shows that
24 children who live in poverty without
25 access to a quality pre-K program are as

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2 much as three years behind their peers
3 who live in upper middle class or
4 affluent families when they enter public
5 school, and too many of our black males
6 do not have access to such programs,
7 which is why the PFT has supported the
8 soda sax and other programs to expand
9 these opportunities for every child.
10 And, of course, we know in Philadelphia
11 that the problems don't end with pre-K.
12 Years of funding cuts have meant that our
13 schools are struggling to provide the
14 most basic materials, programs, and
15 services for all of our schoolchildren,
16 and for black male children, who didn't
17 have the benefit of that quality pre-K,
18 this lack of resources only compounds the
19 disadvantage.

20 And so in order to address
21 these and other inequities, it's going to
22 require a significantly larger investment
23 in our neighborhood public schools.

24 Now, in Pennsylvania, providing
25 every child with the best possible public

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2 education is a constitutional mandate as
3 well as a moral responsibility. And
4 unfortunately, our General Assembly in
5 Harrisburg for the past several years has
6 treated public education as a flexible
7 budget line item, and this is
8 particularly true of districts that serve
9 large populations of black and brown
10 students.

11 As you might remember, in 2014,
12 a study of these funding disparities in
13 Pennsylvania showed that districts that
14 educate large minority populations
15 receive less state funding than whiter
16 districts, and that's regardless of
17 poverty levels.

18 On top of that, you have
19 legislative bills like HB 700 that target
20 Philadelphia and Pittsburgh specifically
21 and only for massive charter school
22 expansion, which are particularly
23 dangerous to the fiscal health of urban
24 school districts like Philadelphia,
25 because there is no reimbursement for the

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2 charter school line item.

3 And then when we hear our own
4 state legislators say that we shouldn't
5 spend money on programs to push inner
6 city minority youth toward college, well,
7 that's a reminder that some of our
8 elected officials have biases against
9 certain communities, and these biases are
10 at the root of the policies and budget
11 decisions that negatively impact many of
12 our most economically vulnerable children
13 and families.

14 And then President Trump's
15 budget takes this anti-public school
16 philosophy to a much larger national
17 level. Not only does his proposed budget
18 slash K-12 funding by \$9 billion, he's
19 also proposed the eliminating of funding
20 for after-school and summer programs that
21 many African American families rely on
22 for their children. And the dream of
23 college will slip out of reach for many
24 young people regardless of race if
25 programs like Pell grants and GEAR UP are

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2 slashed by the federal government as
3 proposed in this budget.

4 Here in Philadelphia, we see --
5 the educators see results of this disdain
6 for public education firsthand as
7 programs and services are taken from
8 their schools, forcing them to do more
9 with less, and that's in addition to
10 having their salaries frozen for the past
11 five years. And I mention that here
12 because I feel it's important for young
13 black males to see reflections of
14 themselves in their teachers and school
15 staff, but for African Americans even
16 considering the teaching profession,
17 these kinds of conditions can be a major
18 source of discouragement and an obstacle
19 to seeing more black teachers in the
20 classroom.

21 So in the end, there's only so
22 much that educators can do in the
23 classroom to offset years of chronic
24 disinvestment in the public schools that
25 serve black and brown communities.

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2 Now, we can achieve our goals
3 of getting more African American males
4 into college, but we've got to be willing
5 to commit to what research shows to be
6 effective, and that includes a higher
7 standard of education for all children,
8 which includes adequately preparing,
9 compensating, and supporting our
10 educators; providing quality pre-K
11 programs for our children starting at age
12 3; lower class sizes in grades K through
13 3. And outside of schools, it also
14 means -- or it also means using public
15 schools to mitigate the impact of poverty
16 on student success.

17 The Community School model,
18 after-school programs, and summer school
19 are examples of programs that can
20 positively impact educational outcomes
21 for children, and they are all currently
22 at risk under this current administration
23 in Washington.

24 We have to remember that in the
25 end, budgets are not just spending plans.

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2 They're a reflection of our values. And
3 from what we've been seeing at the state
4 level and nationally in recent years,
5 preparing young African American males
6 for college will require a tremendous
7 shift in what is currently our value
8 system.

9 So that concludes my testimony
10 for today. Thank you again for allowing
11 us to share our thoughts on the issue.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
13 you. Thank you.

14 MR. DAVIS: Good afternoon. My
15 name is Kendrick Davis. I'm the Director
16 of STEM Initiatives in the Mayor's Office
17 of Education. First of all, I want to
18 start by thanking you and other members
19 of the Committee for inviting us to offer
20 testimony on Resolution 170145.

21 Mr. Hackney sends his regrets, as he had
22 some previous commitments and actually is
23 ill today.

24 So as a result of limited
25 funding, the School District of

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2 Philadelphia has been forced to make many
3 tough choices, cuts to staffing,
4 programs, and services over the past few
5 years. These funding restraints continue
6 to have a negative impact on all
7 students, including young African
8 American males who graduate high school
9 at lower rates than their peers. Despite
10 its challenges, 65 percent of all School
11 District seniors graduated in 2015, with
12 57 percent of African American males also
13 graduating.

14 So understanding that students
15 face many challenges rooted in poverty,
16 the Mayor's Office of Education launched
17 the Community Schools Initiative this
18 year. Funded by the Philadelphia
19 beverage tax, community school
20 coordinators are working in nine
21 community schools across the City to
22 address the non-academic barriers that
23 too often keep our children from
24 learning. Our team is supporting
25 students facing hunger, homelessness,

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social and emotional behavioral challenges, and connecting them to the necessary programs and support services. They are also working to expand out-of-school programs, as studies show the positive impact that these offerings have on student achievement.

For example, Murrell Dobbins Career and Technical Education, or CTE, High School and F.S. Edmonds Elementary School have created male mentorship programs for African American students. South Philadelphia High School recently launched a mindfulness program aimed at reducing the negative impact of trauma and stress for 9th graders, half of whom are males.

Community schools staff are also helping students improve their work-ready skills so they can be more fully prepared for family-sustaining employment. The effort of our coordinators have helped six community school students, three of whom are

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2 African American males, secure paid
3 survey tech internships with the Streets
4 Department. One of the young men in
5 particular is a teen parent and is
6 grateful for this new opportunity because
7 it helps him provide for his daughter.

8 Additionally, CTE students from
9 Kensington Health Sciences Academy and
10 Dobbins CTE High School are also
11 preparing for the construction and
12 Steamfitters union apprenticeship exam as
13 a result of the coordination of the
14 community school staff. In addition,
15 last month our office partnered with the
16 Commerce Department and the Rebuild
17 initiative to convene CTE high school
18 principals and labor union
19 representatives so we can work together
20 to increase our students' employment
21 opportunities in the building trades.

22 These are just a few of the
23 examples of the ways the Community
24 Schools Initiative aims to help our
25 students reach their full potential.

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2 It's important to note that the School
3 District of Philadelphia remains a vital
4 partner in all of this work.

5 The Mayor's Office of Education
6 is also working to improve educational
7 opportunities through the PHLpreK, the
8 City's locally funded quality pre-K
9 program. This January, 88 pre-K programs
10 extended pre-K opportunities to 2,000
11 three- and four-year-olds. These new
12 quality pre-K programs will benefit from
13 a quality, proven curriculum, hands-on
14 learning experiences, social-emotional
15 growth opportunities, and literacy
16 supports that they would not have had
17 without PHLpreK. Countless studies have
18 shown that quality pre-K not only
19 prepares our students for success in
20 kindergarten and the early grades, but
21 pre-K graduates are more likely to
22 graduate high school, attend college, and
23 be employed adults. This initiative is
24 affording our children the quality early
25 opportunities they deserve.

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2 So there's still much work to
3 be done to ensure that every student in
4 Philadelphia has resources and the
5 opportunities they need to succeed.
6 Through the Community Schools Initiative
7 and PHLpreK, the Mayor's Office of
8 Education will continue to do our part to
9 support local students and families.

10 Thank you again for the
11 opportunity to testify, and if there are
12 any questions, I'm available.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
14 you. We want to look carefully at this
15 pre-K and all that is. We know that's
16 part of it. Thank you.

17 Mr. Campbell.

18 MR. CAMPBELL: Yes. Good
19 afternoon, Councilwoman Blackwell, other
20 City officials, City Councilwoman Bass.
21 My name is Maurice Campbell. I'm the
22 Founder and CEO of Renaissance Action
23 National Network, which renaissance means
24 rebirth. One of the things we want to do
25 in the underserved communities was

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2 rebirth economics, education, health and
3 wellness, community development, and
4 social work. In this task that we took
5 upon, when I started this work years ago,
6 really the last six years to get it
7 really get back into sports, I had to go
8 back to my mentors, who Dr. Leon
9 Sullivan, my mother, and William Gambrel.
10 And coming up underneath Dr. Leon
11 Sullivan, one of the things he did with
12 Zion, it was a sports component, but it
13 also was an education component. And you
14 had to go to both to be able to
15 participate in the sports thing. Since
16 he had the best basketball league and I
17 wanted to play, I was forced to go to
18 Emma Chappell tutoring session.

19 So that's what brought me here
20 to start work with the kids in the inner
21 city that needed help in dealing with the
22 crisis that's facing our school. And I
23 hear everyone talking about college, but
24 I visit 60 schools with our committee of
25 former NBA, NFL players. We have

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2 business sector part of our committee.

3 And the kids are failing on the mid

4 school level. Forget high school and

5 college. They need help at the beginning

6 stages of the middle school level. And

7 due to economics and other circumstances,

8 it's part of the problem, but there's so

9 many complexities that dealing with the

10 inner city kids, that it's no one thing.

11 So my committee is saying how

12 do we get to starting at the basic level

13 with the kids, working with the kids,

14 getting them in school, getting them in

15 programming that we going to have to

16 design, because we believe in this is not

17 working at all and we have to just do

18 something different.

19 One thing I understand from

20 Dr. Sullivan when he told Malcolm X and

21 Dr. Martin Luther King, that you asking

22 for the same money that you need for your

23 programs, you asking the same people that

24 told you no from the beginning to get you

25 started in the work you need to get done.

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2 So you have to find other solutions,
3 opportunities to find funding to get the
4 work done ourselves. And that's the kind
5 of look we have to look, how are we going
6 to do this different.

7 And one of the things I take
8 pride in my organization, failure not an
9 option, take no for an answer, and we're
10 not going to do the same thing that
11 everyone else doing. Let's find
12 something else new. When they come to me
13 and I don't like it, let's start all
14 over. We need a different way.

15 The school system, I visit 60
16 schools. The high schools, some only
17 have the basic core. So hypothetical
18 speaking, if a young kid get a basketball
19 scholarship or something, he
20 automatically disqualified, because at
21 the core level, a four-year school don't
22 have four years of English. So if they
23 only given one or two years of English,
24 he disqualified from the beginning. If
25 they have no languages, once again, he's

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2 disqualified. So he's defeated before he
3 even get started. And it's not his
4 fault. It's by design.

5 And we talking about
6 gentrification. Gentrification is not
7 just in housing. It's in education.
8 It's in economics. It's in sports.
9 Decision-makers are being done on our
10 kids that the community and the City
11 officials don't even have an idea what's
12 going on and who is making these
13 decisions, especially on the sports
14 level. Whether it's the MCA or the NBA
15 or other hidden forces, they want to
16 control our kids at our expense.

17 So one of the things that we
18 working on is saying that we going to
19 come up with a program that's going to
20 help design to help our kids get them in
21 the right school that meet their needs.
22 Because every kid is not made for
23 college. He might need vocational
24 training. So college is not a fit-all
25 type thing. So whatever his needs is, we

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2 have to be able to address the needs and
3 get him in the right winning position.

4 One thing I tell the kids, you
5 don't have to be a professional in
6 athletics, but you have to be a
7 professional in something. So if that's
8 going to work every day, be the best that
9 you can be at what you do, and that will
10 make you a professional.

11 For the due of time, I'm going
12 to cut my testimony short.

13 And one thing I want to say
14 about Councilwoman Blackwell, she get
15 behind us 100 percent. We have at least
16 800 kids whenever we put something
17 together, they come from across the City
18 and they join forces with us. So we say
19 if Councilwoman having something, it's no
20 problem for us to get 1,000 kids on the
21 dime to say this is what we going to do.
22 And the first thing that kids ask when
23 that is done, when is your next one? So
24 that's what we want to keep building on.

25 Thank you, Councilwoman

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2 Blackwell, for your support and help.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
4 you very much.

5 Let me note that Councilwoman
6 Cindy Bass is here, and we thank her for
7 being here. Thank you.

8 Thank you, Maurice.

9 Thank you, all three of you.

10 Mr. Drummond.

11 MR. DRUMMOND: Good morning,
12 Councilwoman Blackwell and members of the
13 Committee. It was great seeing you on
14 Saturday at Councilman Jones' event and
15 it was great seeing you this morning.

16 I'm going to expeditiously, in
17 lieu of time, read across some of my
18 comments that I have. First and
19 foremost, my name is Jack Drummond and
20 I'm the Director of the Mayor's Office of
21 Black Male Engagement. Thank you for the
22 opportunity to appear before you today to
23 testify on the preparation of young black
24 men for college.

25 The Office of Black Male

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2 Engagement's intention is to serve as a
3 voice for institutions and individuals
4 within local government, ultimately
5 forging an infrastructure of trust
6 between community and its government. We
7 use a policy-driven collective impact
8 model to lead the City's work around
9 closing the opportunity divide for men
10 and boys of color.

11 I'm always touched, moved, and
12 inspired and encouraged by organizations
13 and individuals who support our
14 melanin-enriched boys and men in the
15 City, like some of the folks who have
16 spoken before us and like some of the
17 folks who have been in the audience, at
18 the Community College of Philadelphia,
19 the Center for Male Engagement, where I
20 come from, as well as the evidence-based
21 model that the Boys' Latin School in
22 Philadelphia has employed to great
23 success.

24 Our students must learn to
25 read, write, think, and compute at levels

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2 that are globally competitive, not only
3 locally, not only statewide, but globally
4 competitive. These skills become
5 necessary to successfully send our
6 graduates to college. For African
7 American males, we know that one of the
8 barriers of success or other successful
9 matriculation and graduation from
10 institutions of higher education is
11 maintaining an active enrollment within
12 their freshman and sophomore years.

13 U.S. News and World Report
14 states that about 30 percent of college
15 students nationally drop out of school
16 during or after their first year of
17 college. This number increases for black
18 males. In spite of the graduates -- or
19 in spite of this, graduates from the
20 Boys' Latin School have exceeded the
21 national average from freshman to
22 sophomore persistence at both in and out
23 of state institution, and I think that
24 that's praise-worthy and commendable.

25 As we take a deeper dive into

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2 the issues around education, we often
3 find that connected to the overarching
4 challenges is perceiving -- of perceiving
5 the intellectual ability of black boys is
6 an additional emphasis placed on the lack
7 of soft skills being taught to our
8 youth - please, thank you, and excuse me.
9 We should foster opportunities for black
10 boys to further develop their skills
11 around communication, teamwork, and
12 collaboration, adaptability,
13 problem-solving, critical observation,
14 conflict resolution and the like.
15 According to the Office of Black Male
16 Engagement's January 2017 Community
17 Conversations report, participants stated
18 that mentorship, career skills
19 development, equitable and adequate
20 funding, culturally relevant curriculum,
21 and literacy programs for youth and
22 adults are identified as the most
23 important educational needs.
24 Et in Philadelphia Ego. Even
25 in Philadelphia, here I am. As we look

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2 forward and as we look to transform the
3 narrative around black boys in the City,
4 we can't help but to notice that the
5 current narrative is fashioned around a
6 deficit-based theme or deficit-based
7 model, like black boys do poorly in
8 school, et cetera. In many ways the
9 educational success of black boys is a
10 product of our society. If we think it,
11 it will be.

12 We live in a time where the
13 data around black boys in the criminal
14 justice system far exceeds the data that
15 we have around their education, where the
16 data about one's early reading determines
17 one's judicial involvement, and in a time
18 where most everything that we learn in
19 our school systems focuses on the
20 interest of maintaining and uplifting a
21 system that does not adequately and
22 effectively consider their voices.

23 In our efforts to further the
24 successful education for black boys, we
25 need to adopt a model that works.

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2 Asset-based frame-working and focus
3 should be taken into deep consideration.
4 Strength-based models for black boys are
5 the key, and so it is -- excuse me. And
6 so is black male teachers and really
7 recruiting more black male teachers in
8 our systems. Recruiting more black male
9 educators is an important goal for our
10 schools in general and a goal we should
11 support. Asset-based frame-working and
12 modeling that emphasizes care, trust, and
13 cultural competencies, in concert with
14 day-to-day learning, are helpful to
15 change the way we view educational
16 outcomes for black boys in particular.
17 These ultimately create an environment
18 where everyone learns.

19 And with that, I thank you for
20 the opportunity to appear before you this
21 morning.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you very much.

24 I see Catherine Blunt there.

25 Is Olufemi Fadeyibi here?

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2 MR. FADEYIBI: Yes.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes,
4 sir.

5 I know Marie Ortiz isn't. And
6 I think that's it for testifying.

7 I assume all you people
8 standing up, are you for the -- you're
9 not for -- you all are for L&I Committee?
10 Cory Dulaney, are you here?

11 MR. DULANEY: Yes, right here.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: All
13 right. So you are our last.

14 All of you are for the L&I
15 Committee? My goodness. We're going to
16 hurry up, because we can't beat all of
17 you folks. My goodness. We only have
18 three more people, then we're out of your
19 way. Is that good? Thank you.

20 We'll finish up our Education
21 Committee, and thank you all for your
22 patience all day.

23 MS. BLUNT: Good afternoon.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
25 afternoon.

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2 MS. BLUNT: My name is

3 Catherine Blunt and I am the retired

4 principal, successful principal, of

5 Parkway Center City High School. And I

6 need to go on the record to say the

7 Middle College High School proposed for

8 Parkway Center City will not be

9 successful because CCP nor the School

10 District has done the deep detailed

11 planning that needs to be done. When

12 you're going to move children who are

13 economically disadvantaged into a middle

14 college high school, there's a lot of

15 preparation that goes into that, and that

16 is not being done. So I think that

17 Council and the Mayor's Office need to

18 have a conversation with the School

19 District and with CCP about that, because

20 it is time that we stop experimenting on

21 our children. And that's what is

22 happening over and over and over again.

23 And I applaud the work that is being done

24 in our advanced schools like Masterman

25 and Central and Carver. However, they do

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2 not have the same students that other
3 schools have, like West Philly or Bartram
4 or Overbrook, Frankford, Furness or even
5 Southern.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And
7 your school is what? Your old school is?

8 MS. BLUNT: Parkway Center
9 City. Parkway Center City High School.

10 So when we look at what's
11 happening in the District and even in the
12 charter school district, we have two
13 separate and unequal systems.

14 Like in Philly and the
15 Philadelphia School District, the
16 Philadelphia School District has
17 exceptional schools in which children are
18 performing exceptionally. The same is
19 true in the charter schools, of which
20 Boys' Latin is one of them. However, by
21 and large, Philly schools, charter, and
22 public traditionally are failing, and we
23 need to recognize that, we need to accept
24 it, and we need to address it. And there
25 cannot be a Band-Aid put on this. We

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2 cannot kind of wash this away. It is
3 part of, as people have mentioned
4 previously, a gentrification plan that is
5 happening in our city and across the
6 nation, in which black and minority
7 children, particularly males, are being
8 excluded from the workforce, being
9 excluded from being educated.

10 I want to remind us of 40 years
11 of education in Philadelphia, and I'm
12 going to be real quick with this.
13 Dr. Constance Clayton said "every school
14 a good school." So that meant wherever
15 you went to school, that school was going
16 to be a good school.

17 David Hornbeck focused on
18 "children achieving," and he wanted all
19 children to achieve.

20 Paul Vallas -- and we all know
21 Paul Vallas. He said "no excuses." And
22 I'm going to provide the School District,
23 the teachers, the principals, et cetera,
24 with all they need and the children to be
25 successful.

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2 Dr. Arlene Ackerman said
3 "children come first and parents are our
4 partners."

5 Dr. Hite has said "a high
6 performing school in every zip code."
7 That means, again, a high performing
8 school in every zip code. Not every
9 school is a good school, but a high
10 performing school in every zip code.

11 You got to get the meaning of
12 that.

13 Philadelphia is still largely a
14 minority majority city, 68 percent. It
15 has deep, deep poverty, and it has a
16 largely minority majority School District
17 of 134,000 students, 75 of which are
18 economically disadvantaged, 14 percent
19 are in special ed, and 11 percent are
20 English language learners. And I don't
21 have the stats on the immigrants or
22 homeless children.

23 So I'm going to skip to my main
24 point.

25 Philly is a city with a failing

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2 educational system and a
3 self-perpetuating cycle of poverty that
4 neighborhood gentrification cannot root
5 out. If not addressed, communities will
6 continue to disintegrate, crime will
7 rise, young men will be increasingly at
8 risk for incarceration, and this city
9 will become more divided
10 socioeconomically and by race and
11 ethnicity.

12 Schools can become change
13 agents of hope for our distressed
14 neighborhoods and transformative forces
15 for our economically challenged students.
16 However, the School District has lost its
17 way. It has lost its organizational
18 memory and problem-solving ability. It
19 is losing its veteran employees and is
20 losing community support as parents opt
21 out of traditional public schools and opt
22 into charter schools, leaving traditional
23 and comprehensive high schools with
24 overwhelming numbers of at-risk, special
25 ed, and ELL students, who will not be

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2 successful if we do not address it.

3 There are no quick fixes, but
4 there are some things the School District
5 can do. The School District has to do an
6 in-depth needs assessment of each
7 challenged school. Work with those
8 schools to create a plan. Commit
9 resources to those schools to support the
10 staff, students, and principals.

11 It must work cooperatively and
12 collaboratively with schools to create an
13 atmosphere of caring, respect, cultural
14 acceptance, support throughout the
15 District and within every school.

16 It must recognize and accept
17 and act upon the reality that students
18 learn differently. They have multiple
19 intelligence, learning styles, learning
20 needs, and race. How they are engaged
21 successfully in the classroom and total
22 learning environment, which is the
23 school, requires educators to rethink the
24 kind of approach that teaching and
25 learning, achievement expectations, and

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2 how success is to be acknowledged and
3 achieved.

4 Educating the whole child is
5 essential. To that end, college and
6 career education must begin in grade
7 school and be part of a significant
8 exposure and outlet for students to learn
9 about and experience college and career
10 opportunities. Successful habits must be
11 prioritized and encouraged so that
12 students can understand the relationship
13 between achievement, organization, and
14 discipline.

15 Supporting affordable college
16 matriculation for School District of
17 Philadelphia's challenged population must
18 involve a relationship between area
19 community colleges and the School
20 District of Philadelphia. These students
21 and their families should be guided to
22 avoid huge loans and college debt since
23 there are affordable, credible two-year
24 institutions that should and could be the
25 first step to a four-year college

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2 education. This would increase the
3 number of success of Philadelphia
4 students going to institutions of higher
5 education that are local and supportive
6 of their achievement.

7 The School District will be
8 successful when challenged schools with
9 majority of at-risk, special ed, and ELL
10 students are supported and are successful
11 in increasing student achievement and
12 success. These schools tend to have
13 overwhelming populations of African
14 American males. I'm talking about West
15 Philly. I'm talking about Bartram, not
16 Masterman. All right? Overbrook, not
17 Central. Ben Franklin, Kensington,
18 Frankford, Edison. When these schools
19 are successful, then Philly schools and
20 Philadelphia School District will be
21 successful.

22 Now, I don't have the answers,
23 but I'm going to say this: There are
24 people with organizational knowledge and
25 memory like Dr. Clayton, Dr. Lytle,

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2 Dr. Finkelstein and others that have been
3 mentioned today. They need to be
4 invited, along with union
5 representatives, retired educators, and
6 community members to dialogue with Dr.
7 Hite or the School District
8 representative about how this School
9 District can improve student outcomes in
10 its challenged schools. Hopefully
11 specific recommendations like the ones
12 noted above will be developed and
13 presented to Dr. Hite and the School
14 Reform Commission.

15 Finally, we need to grow our
16 own through educating our students,
17 sending them to college, connecting them
18 to careers for the success of our
19 communities and our city.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
21 you very much.

22 Did I say your name correctly?

23 MR. FADEYIBI: You did.

24 Olufemi Fadeyibi. Thank you for having
25 us. Excellent job. You're a linguist.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
3 you.

4 MR. FADEYIBI: I'm here on
5 behalf of Ms. Veronica Joyner, the
6 Founder and Chief Administrative Officer
7 at Mathematics, Civic and Sciences and
8 the Founder and President of Parents
9 United for Better Schools.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
11 Thanks. Would you say your name again
12 for the record.

13 MR. FADEYIBI: Olufemi
14 Fadeyibi.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I'm
16 good. I'm good. Thank you.

17 And, everybody, this is our
18 last person.

19 MR. FADEYIBI: I taught at
20 Overbrook for a year. So that was good.
21 And I taught at Simon Gratz for five
22 years. Those were my best years.
23 Really, really, really, really enjoyable
24 learning time when I taught at Simon
25 Gratz.

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2 At our school, Mathematics,
3 Civis and Sciences, we have a 98 percent
4 college acceptance rate. So 98 percent
5 of our students got a college acceptance
6 letter. And 94 percent of our African
7 American males graduate on time. So
8 those are the School District numbers.
9 Our internal numbers show that we
10 graduate a little bit higher than 94
11 percent.

12 Just three points that I want
13 to talk about that I think would help
14 change the educational landscape for our
15 African American males. One is
16 leadership, and we've heard --

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Say
18 that again. You said 98 percent of the
19 kids are college accepted. And what's 85
20 percent?

21 MR. FADEYIBI: Ninety-four
22 percent is what the School District has
23 for us for our graduation rate for
24 African American males, which exceeds the
25 average in Philadelphia.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes.

3 MR. FADEYIBI: One of the major
4 things that I see and the literature
5 talks -- I'm a doctoral student at Temple
6 also -- is leaders being committed to
7 high achievement but also an ethic of
8 care, and the reason I say an ethic of
9 care is because there's a lot of distrust
10 in poor minority neighborhoods about the
11 schooling process.

12 I want to clarify something.
13 There's not a black male graduation
14 problem. There is a poor African
15 American male graduation problem. Like
16 if you look at counties like Prince
17 George's County, which is one of the
18 wealthiest predominantly African American
19 male communities, there's no problem with
20 graduation over there. Or if you
21 disaggregate the numbers on social
22 economic status, there's no problem for
23 African American males graduating on time
24 and going to college. But it's with the
25 poor communities that we have to focus.

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2 So in this ethic of care is
3 making sure that leaders establish a
4 culture where relationships with students
5 are meaningful. It just can't be about
6 test scores, Keystones, PSSA standardized
7 test scores, but it has to do more about
8 forging meaningful relationships with
9 students so that students can trust the
10 schooling process.

11 A lot of parents that have been
12 recipients of schools in poor
13 neighborhoods, they have a lot of
14 distrust because the teacher quality was
15 poor, their lack of resources, materials,
16 paper, textbooks, access to technology.
17 So it's almost like if I had a bad
18 experience, I'm going to perpetuate my
19 experience to my child, and so there's
20 this distrust. But if we can build more
21 meaningful relationships and create a
22 personalized environment, then students
23 will be able to trust the adults more and
24 buy in to what the adults have for the
25 children.

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2 If you look at this chart -- do
3 you have the chart in front of you,
4 Councilwoman Blackwell?

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I will
6 find my chart.

7 MR. FADEYIBI: Okay. But it
8 talks about Mathematics, Civics and
9 Sciences. That's the first school. It's
10 the acronym MCSCS. We're at 94 percent.
11 But then if you look at other urban
12 districts for graduation rates, like
13 Cleveland, only 28 percent of their
14 African American males graduate on time.
15 Or if you look at Cincinnati, 33 percent
16 of their African American males graduate
17 on time. So there has to be something
18 besides what's being continually said to
19 change it. And I think one of the things
20 that Ms. Veronica Joyner does so well is
21 creating a meaningful environment where
22 relationships with staff and students are
23 really good.

24 Another thing is, we created a
25 mentoring program called the Youth

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2 Empowerment Mentoring Program, and this
3 program was able to bring in professional
4 African American males that would sort of
5 erase something called stereotype threat.
6 Stereotype threat is that whatever my
7 group is portrayed as on TV, that's what
8 I think is possible. So for an African
9 American male, most of the images that
10 they see in the media of another African
11 American male, LeBron James, the
12 basketball player, or a rapper, and
13 unfortunately the more negative ones are
14 a criminal, a drug dealer.

15 So bringing in professionals
16 that have a similar experience -- I know
17 Otis Hackney came to speak. Dr. Hite
18 came to speak, Senator Hughes. High
19 profile African Americans that have a
20 narrative of how education really helped
21 them improve, it trickles down, and the
22 kids say if they can do it, I can do it,
23 or if I see it in other African American
24 males, then I can achieve it also. So
25 that's really been a strong motivator for

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2 our graduation rate.

3 And I would say the last thing
4 is hiring more African American male
5 teachers. If you look at the data, most
6 teachers in the School District are
7 predominantly middle-class white females.
8 And the best teacher that -- one of the
9 best teachers that I've ever seen -- this
10 was while I was at Gratz -- was a
11 60-plus-year-old white woman. So it's
12 not saying that you have to be one race
13 to teach our students. I would never
14 make such a claim like that. However,
15 there is more of a cultural competence or
16 a trust that happens when students see
17 others in authority that look like them.

18 So I know a lot of African
19 American males in my school. They will
20 open up with me and other African
21 American males for advice on life, for
22 advice on school and outside of school,
23 simply because I look like them and
24 simply because I've had to endure similar
25 experiences, sort of police harassment or

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2 being looked at with suspicion. And
3 these are some really close-to-heart
4 experiences that they sort of only share
5 when they know people care and they have
6 more of a willingness to share when they
7 think that someone else has been through
8 that same experience.

9 So if you have any questions,
10 but thank you so much.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
12 you very much. Thank you.

13 And Mr. Campus Philly, you're
14 our last one.

15 MR. DULANEY: Yes. Thank you.
16 Good afternoon. My name is Cory Dulaney
17 and I'm a Program Manager for Student
18 Engagement at Campus Philly, a regional
19 non-profit that serves college students
20 by providing them with opportunities in
21 Philadelphia that will lead them to stay
22 here after they graduate.

23 Thank you to Councilwoman
24 Blackwell, others on the Education
25 Committee, and City Councilmembers for

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2 this opportunity.

3 Campus Philly partners with 34
4 colleges and universities. All of these
5 schools are majority Caucasian, with the
6 exception of Community College of
7 Philadelphia. African American males who
8 enter college in Philadelphia enter as a
9 distinct minority, which adds a layer of
10 difficulty to the already challenging
11 demands of college.

12 Campus Philly serves all
13 regional college students regardless of
14 background, religion, race, ethnicity,
15 gender, and sexual identity. At the same
16 time, many of our programs grow out of
17 the recognition that different students
18 need different kinds of community and
19 support to succeed. I'd like to point
20 out two quick examples for the Council.

21 First, in collaboration with
22 Temple University, Campus Philly produces
23 the Inclusive Leadership Conference every
24 year. This day-long conference, which
25 convenes more than 400 students from

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2 across the region, focuses on leading
3 with inclusivity and diversity while also
4 training the diverse groups of students
5 to find and advocate their unique voice
6 and lead with confidence. I joined a
7 student who is part of Campus Philly's
8 Student Leader Network to lead a workshop
9 centered on how students can and should
10 use Philadelphia as a resource to find
11 and advocate their voice. We discussed
12 how various non-profits, professional
13 organizations, and other groups can
14 connect students to regional networks to
15 grow personally and professionally.

16 Second, it is a core belief at
17 Campus Philly that students will only
18 stay in Philadelphia if they find and
19 connect to a community here. We work
20 hard to introduce students and
21 communities that are meaningful to them.
22 We do this through large-scale
23 initiatives like our Open Arts program,
24 which connects 5,000 student members
25 interested in the arts in Philadelphia to

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2 cultural institutions, events, and
3 artists. We also do this through our
4 Student Leader Network in a more personal
5 way by making sure students in formal and
6 informal roles can find connections in
7 Philadelphia and share them with other
8 students.

9 For example, I work with a
10 student from LaSalle, Zakiyy, who wants
11 to establish his own clothing line called
12 "How You Living." As a freshman, he is
13 still unsure where to find networks to
14 engage with the fashion industry in
15 Philadelphia. After discussing his
16 purpose why he wants to create a fashion
17 line and what he wants to do with it, we
18 journeyed out to Chestnut Street and
19 Walnut Street meeting fashion
20 professionals at Lapstone and Hammer and
21 Ubiqu. I showed him how to network and
22 engage and then encouraged him to try it
23 out himself. His confidence grew with
24 each interaction. He exchanged cards and
25 even made plans to follow up.

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2 In conclusion, we see the need
3 for all students, but especially black
4 males, to receive support outside the
5 classroom to ensure they have mentors,
6 role models, and communities in
7 Philadelphia in order to succeed. Even
8 more work is necessary in this regard.
9 Colleges and universities can monitor
10 academic progress and note academic
11 trouble spots for students, but unless
12 black male students see others like
13 themselves a few steps and years ahead,
14 it will be more challenging for them than
15 for other students to understand what it
16 takes outside of the classroom to succeed
17 and see their future in Philadelphia.

18 Thank you so much.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you very much.

21 Thank you all. We want to also
22 thank Dr. Darlene Thompson, one of your
23 Ph.D.s from the School District. Doc,
24 thank you for being here. Thank you.
25 Thank you always for your support.

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2 Thanks for all my colleagues
3 who have been here. Councilman Squilla
4 was here.

5 This committee and next, I do
6 feel sorry for them, but thank you all
7 for your patience, and the Education
8 Committee will recess subject to the call
9 of the Chair.

10 Thanks, everybody.

11 (Committee on Education
12 concluded at 1:40 p.m.)

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I HEREBY CERTIFY that the
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