

BUDGET FY 2023
5/4/2022

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Wednesday, May 4, 2022
10:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT DARRELL L. CLARKE, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE L. PARKER, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN KENDRA BROOKS
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS

BILLS: 220240, 220284, 220285, 220286, 220287,
220288
RESOLUTIONS: 220300, 181014

1 - - -

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Good
3 morning to you all. We look forward to a
4 very, very productive day in discussing
5 very important matters related to the
6 School District and CCP. So before we
7 begin the public hearing, I'll make the
8 following announcement:

9 Due to the continuing threat to
10 public health from COVID-19, City Council
11 Committees are currently meeting
12 remotely. We are using Microsoft Teams
13 that make these remote hearings possible.

14 Instructions for how the public
15 may view and offer public testimony of
16 public hearings of Council Committees are
17 included in the public hearing notices
18 that are published in the Daily News,
19 Inquirer, Legal Intelligencer prior to
20 the hearing and can also be found on
21 PHLCouncil.com. I now note that the hour
22 has come.

23 Mr. McDermott, I'll ask that you
24 call the roll. I ask the Members to
25 please say a couple of words to make sure

1 that your image is displayed on the
2 screen. Mr. McDermott, please call the
3 roll.

4 THE CLERK: Councilmember Bass.

5 (No response.)

6 THE CLERK: Councilmember

7 Brooks.

8 (No response.)

9 THE CLERK: Councilmember Domb.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good morning,
11 Council President, colleagues, School
12 District and attendees in Philadelphia.
13 Present.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
15 Morning.

16 THE CLERK: Councilmember
17 Gauthier.

18 (No response.)

19 THE CLERK: Councilmember
20 Gilmore Richardson.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
22 Good morning, Council President. Good
23 morning, colleagues. I am present.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Good
25 morning.

1 THE CLERK: Councilmember Green.

2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Good morning,
3 Council President. Good morning,
4 colleagues. Good morning, attendees. I
5 am present.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Good
7 morning.

8 THE CLERK: Councilmember Gym.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Good morning,
10 Council President. Good morning,
11 colleagues. I am present.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Good
13 morning.

14 THE CLERK: Councilmember
15 Johnson.

16 (No response.)

17 THE CLERK: Councilman Jones.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good morning,
19 Mr. President and colleagues and Dr. Hite
20 and his team.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Good
22 morning.

23 THE CLERK: Councilmember
24 O'Neill.

25 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Good

1 morning, everyone.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Good

3 morning.

4 THE CLERK: Councilmember Oh.

5 (No response.)

6 THE CLERK: Councilmember

7 Parker.

8 (No response.)

9 THE CLERK: Councilmember

10 Quinones-Sanchez.

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

12 Good morning, Council President. Good

13 morning, colleagues. Good morning,

14 School District colleagues. I am

15 present.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Good

17 morning.

18 THE CLERK: Councilmember

19 Squilla.

20 (No response.)

21 THE CLERK: Councilmember

22 Thomas.

23 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good

24 morning, Council President. Good

25 morning, colleagues. Good morning to the

1 public. I'm present.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Good

3 morning.

4 THE CLERK: And, Council

5 President Clarke.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: And

7 good morning to all. Thank you --

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

9 Mr. President, I apologize. This is

10 Councilwoman Bass. I am present.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Good

12 morning, Councilwoman.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good

14 morning.

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good

16 morning, Mr. President. Cherelle Parker.

17 I am also present, sir.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Good

19 morning, Councilwoman. Thank you.

20 We've established a quorum. The

21 Committee is -- and the hearing is now

22 called to order. This is the continued

23 public hearing of the Committee of the

24 Whole regarding Bill Nos. 220284, 220285,

25 220286, 220287, 220288, 220240 and

1 Resolution No. 220300.

2 The Committee meeting is

3 also -- it's also consistent with the

4 requirement for our bi-annual meeting.

5 So we continue to the hearing of the

6 Committee of the Whole to consider the

7 bills read by the Clerk. I'm going to

8 ask for -- I'm sorry.

9 Mr. McDermott -- I got a little

10 challenge just with the scripts this

11 morning. Mr. McDermott, please read the

12 titles of the bills.

13 THE CLERK: Bill No. 220284, an

14 ordinance to adopt the Capital Program

15 for the six Fiscal Years 2023 to 2028

16 inclusive.

17 Bill No. 220285, an ordinance to

18 adopt a Fiscal 2023 Capital Budget.

19 Bill No. 220286, an ordinance

20 adopting the Operating Budget for Fiscal

21 Year 2023.

22 Bill No. 220287, an ordinance

23 amending Section 10-1001 of The

24 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Fees of

25 Commissioner of Records," to increase

1 certain fees for the recording of deeds
2 and mortgages and related documents,
3 under certain terms and conditions.

4 Bill No. 220288, an ordinance
5 amending Section 19-1403 of The
6 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Imposition
7 of Tax," by creating a Philadelphia
8 County Demolition Fund to increase and
9 encourage economic development by
10 demolishing blighted properties within
11 the City, imposing a related fee for
12 recorded documents and related items; and
13 making technical changes; all under
14 certain terms and conditions.

15 Bill No. 220240, an ordinance
16 substantially increasing the budget and
17 number of areas and neighborhoods around
18 the City served by the Community Life
19 Improvement Program, CLIP, to improve the
20 health, safety and cleanliness of every
21 neighborhood and enhance the quality of
22 life for all residents.

23 And Resolution No. 220300,
24 resolution providing for the approval by
25 the Council of the City of Philadelphia,

1 a Revised Five Year Financial Plan for
2 the City of Philadelphia covering Fiscal
3 Years 2023 through 2027 and incorporating
4 revised changes with respect to Fiscal
5 Year 2022, which is to be submitted by
6 the Mayor to the Pennsylvania
7 Intergovernmental Cooperation Authority,
8 the authority pursuant to the
9 Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement,
10 authorized by an ordinance of this
11 Council by the Mayor on January 3, 1992
12 by and between the City and the
13 Authority.

14 And Resolution 181014, calling
15 for the City -- Council Committee of the
16 Whole to convene public meetings and
17 public hearings pursuant to the
18 educational supplement of the
19 Philadelphia Home Rule Charter to review
20 the administration, management and
21 operations and finances of the School
22 District of Philadelphia and adopt plans
23 to coordinate the activities of the Board
24 of Education and the Mayor and City
25 Council for the improvement and benefit

1 of education in Philadelphia.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
3 you, Mr. McDermott. Today we continue
4 the public hearing of the Committee of
5 the Whole to consider the bills read by
6 the Clerk that constitutes proposed
7 operating and capital spending measures
8 for Fiscal 2023, a Capital Program, a
9 Forward-looking Capital Program in Fiscal
10 Year 2023 through Fiscal 2028.

11 Before we begin to hear
12 testimony from the witnesses we have for
13 today, everyone who has been invited to
14 the meeting to testify should be aware
15 that the public hearing is being
16 recorded. Because the hearing is public,
17 participants and viewers have no
18 reasonable expectation of privacy. So by
19 continuing to be in the meeting, you are
20 consenting to being recorded.

21 Additionally, prior to
22 recognizing Members for the questions or
23 comments they have for witnesses, I will
24 note for the record at this time we will
25 use the chat feature available on

1 Microsoft Teams to allow Members to
2 signify that they wish to be recognized.
3 In order to comply with the Sunshine Act,
4 the chat feature must only be used for
5 this particular purpose.

6 This morning we will have
7 testimony from the School District of
8 Philadelphia and the Community College of
9 Philadelphia this afternoon. We will
10 hold public testimony on School
11 District's proposal.

12 This public meeting of the City
13 Council Committee of the Whole and Board
14 of Education will meet the requirements
15 of Section 12-209 of the Home Rule
16 Charter and Resolution 181014 requiring
17 bi-annual meetings of the Board of
18 Education and this Council.

19 Mr. McDermott, the first person
20 to testify today is?

21 THE CLERK: President of the
22 School Board of the School District of
23 Philadelphia Joyce Wilkerson.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
25 you very much and good morning,

1 Ms. Wilkerson. Please state your name
2 for the record and proceed with your
3 testimony.

4 MS. WILKERSON: I am Joyce
5 Wilkerson, President of the Board of
6 Education. Good morning, Council
7 President and Members of City Council. I
8 want to take first the opportunity to
9 acknowledge that by chance this happens
10 to be Teacher Appreciation Week. We
11 appreciate and value the contribution
12 made by our teachers not just during this
13 week, but during every week of the year
14 to support our students and help them
15 achieve their potential. So we couldn't
16 go without acknowledging that today.

17 I also want to introduce my
18 colleagues. I have with me today Vice-
19 president Leticia Igea-Hinton, Board
20 members Julia Danzy, Mallory Fix Lopez,
21 Dr. Maria McColgan is here. This is her
22 last week of service to the Board of
23 Education. We're going to hate to see
24 her stepping down. Board member Salley,
25 Board member Reginald Streater, Cecilia

1 Thompson are all joining me today and
2 will be participating in this
3 presentation. I want to thank you on
4 behalf of the members of the Board of
5 Education and also Mayor Kenney for the
6 partnership that we've established over
7 the last several years.

8 Today we'd like to provide you
9 with an important update since our last
10 meeting in November. We'll share updates
11 on the appointment of our new
12 Superintendent, implementation of Goals
13 and Guardrails, the Board's Five Year
14 Plan and the alignment of budget
15 investments and policy decisions in areas
16 in which we need your support to further
17 expand on the District's progress towards
18 Goals and Guardrails.

19 First, I want to ask the Vice-
20 president Igea-Hinton to comment on our
21 selection of a new Superintendent.

22 MS. IGEA-HINTON: Good morning
23 and thank you, President Wilkerson. As
24 you know, last month the Board of
25 Education appointed Dr. Tony Watlington,

1 Sr., the next Superintendent for the
2 School District of Philadelphia, and we
3 look forward to his arrival on June 16th.

4 Dr. Watlington's appointment
5 followed the local and national search
6 that included input from nearly 6,000
7 Philadelphians on the qualities and
8 capabilities that they wanted to see in a
9 new Superintendent. Dr. Watlington is an
10 educational leader whose career,
11 experience and characteristics do reflect
12 what community members told the Board was
13 important, specifically that we needed an
14 individual who boasts classroom
15 experience, success and instructional
16 leadership and closing student
17 achievement gaps. They also wanted a
18 leader known for organizational
19 efficiency and fiscal management, and one
20 who can participate in partnership with
21 diverse communities and who can deliver
22 on equity and education.

23 I want to take the opportunity
24 to thank all of you for your time and
25 support during the search process. We

1 appreciated the partnership with all of
2 you in hosting listening sessions to help
3 us gather input and make our process for
4 searching for a new superintendent
5 successful. And also wanted to take the
6 additional opportunity to thank all the
7 stakeholders and parents, students, I
8 mean from School District personnel and
9 staff, business leaders, grassroots
10 organizations, advocates, educators, the
11 universities, including Community College
12 of Philadelphia participated, and I may
13 have missed some, but they were students
14 as well, et cetera.

15 We certainly -- before I pass
16 this on to Board member Danzy, I wanted
17 to take the opportunity to publicly thank
18 Dr. Hite for his commitment to the School
19 District of Philadelphia's children and
20 their families. I mean, certainly it is
21 well-known that having a Superintendent
22 for 10 years is not a common thing that
23 happens. So I wanted to take the
24 opportunity to thank you, Dr. Hite, for
25 being here, for the continuity and also

1 thank you for all the work you have done
2 and continue to do on behalf of our
3 children. And certainly, we wish you
4 best success in your future endeavors.

5 We are excited -- and I will
6 close out and say that we are excited to
7 work with Dr. Watlington in the coming
8 weeks to continue the progress started by
9 Dr. Hite in lifting up the objectives
10 found in our Goals and Guardrails and the
11 vision for our students and schools.

12 So would you please go to Slide
13 4, and I'd like to pass this on to Board
14 member Julia Danzy.

15 MS. DANZY: Thank you Vice-
16 president Igea-Hinton. Dr. Watlington,
17 we have a leader who truly believes in
18 the success of every single child and
19 their family, and the Board is excited
20 for Dr. Watlington's tenor of
21 Secretary(sic) of the School District of
22 Philadelphia.

23 It is critical for the
24 stability, growth and morale of the
25 entire School District that our new

1 Superintendent is set up for success and
2 we are committed to ensuring this. He is
3 currently meeting with Dr. Hite, Board
4 members, educators, staff, elected
5 officials and community members to gain
6 further information about the School
7 District.

8 Additionally, he's gearing up
9 for more public and private stakeholder
10 meetings over the next few months and in
11 this process, he plans to use the insight
12 gained from these conversations to
13 develop his 30-, 60-, 90-day plan which
14 will include his vision and plan to
15 enhance student achievement and to
16 address the many facilities and
17 operations issues that -- operational
18 issues that the District face.

19 Now, Board member Cecilia
20 Thompson will speak to you on our Goals
21 and Guardrails. Would you please move to
22 Slide 5.

23 MS. THOMPSON: Thank you, Board
24 member Danzy. Now, we would like to
25 provide you with an update on Goals and

1 Guardrails, the Board's five-year
2 strategic plan to raise student
3 achievement that we adopted in December
4 2020. Goals and Guardrails have allowed
5 the Board to set clear expectations for
6 student success, for student success,
7 monitor progress toward those
8 expectations and to adopt a budget and
9 policies that provide support based on
10 the needs of our students.

11 As a quick reminder, we have
12 five academic goals focused on reading,
13 math and college and career readiness for
14 all students. Just as important, our
15 plan also includes four guardrails which
16 we believe are the conditions necessary
17 to help our students learn and achieve.
18 Our four guardrails foster welcoming and
19 supportive schools enriching and well-
20 rounded school experiences, partnering
21 with parents and family members and
22 addressing racist practices within the
23 School District.

24 During our Monthly Action
25 meetings, Board members devote time to

1 monitoring progress by reviewing data
2 that indicates how on track the School
3 District is to achieving the plan's
4 objectives. At these meetings, we also
5 receive updates from the administration
6 on the strategies being implemented to
7 support our learners and to provide staff
8 with the resources and training they need
9 to differentiate supports for different
10 groups of students.

11 While a lack of student
12 achievement data during the pandemic has
13 made it difficult to monitor progress on
14 some of our goals and guardrails, we stay
15 committed to this process. We strongly
16 believe it is important to remain laser-
17 focused on student achievement as we make
18 system-level decisions to inform the
19 District's policy and budget.

20 This pivot to governance focused
21 on student outcome has allowed us to
22 remain focused on making decisions that
23 support student learning even during the
24 uncertainty of the last two years.

25 Now, Board member Fix Lopez will

1 now continue this update.

2 MS. FIX LOPEZ: Thank you, Board
3 member Thompson. Since we began
4 monitoring goals and guardrails, certain
5 trends have helped us identify our
6 students needs and then invest in
7 targeted strategies and resources. In
8 just the first year of implementing goals
9 and guardrails, we adopted a budget that
10 was informed by lessons learned from our
11 initial progress monitoring sessions
12 where we began observing trends.

13 We made three significant
14 system-wide investments. One, the
15 District implemented a new culturally and
16 linguistically inclusive curriculum for
17 both K through 8 literacy and math. Two,
18 we redesigned the District's approach to
19 professional development and learning
20 opportunities for our educators. The
21 redesign allowed information to be
22 provided in cycles with multiple
23 opportunities for learning and time to
24 practice those newly-developed skills.
25 And three, the District implemented the

1 Multi-Tiered System of Supports, which we
2 call MTSS framework which is a standards-
3 aligned comprehensive framework for
4 improving academic, behavioral and social
5 emotional outcomes for all students.

6 This strategy ensures that every
7 student has access to grade-level
8 instruction and is provided necessary
9 resources and targeted interventions
10 based on the needs of each student.

11 Later this month the Board will consider
12 next year's proposed budget which
13 continues to support these system-wide
14 investments.

15 The proposed budget includes
16 student-focused investments to accelerate
17 progress on our academic goals. Some
18 examples include summer school
19 programming and partnerships with
20 external providers for before and
21 afterschool care, increased number of
22 psychologists, occupational and speech
23 therapists, special education teachers,
24 English as a second language teachers and
25 bilingual counseling assistants and

1 funding to maintain the District's
2 one-to-one technology policy with access
3 to a Chromebook for each student.

4 Additionally, the proposed
5 budget includes investments to support
6 staff by providing them with additional
7 resources to implement targeted
8 interventions as aligned to goals and
9 guardrails. Earlier this year the
10 District was able to reach an agreement
11 with the Philadelphia Federation of
12 Teachers, the PFT, which allows us as a
13 School District to work collaboratively
14 to implement fundamental changes to the
15 way teaching and learning happens in
16 order to drive student outcomes for all
17 learners.

18 And to give a specific example
19 of that, one of the agreements in that
20 contract is that if there is a course,
21 for example, that is not offered in one
22 school that a student needs to take or is
23 interested in taking, there is the
24 opportunity through virtual learning now
25 to have cross-school learning, so that is

1 a big step and more innovative practice.
2 In support of this work, the proposed
3 budget includes retention and
4 re-engagement bonuses for all staff.

5 Additionally, we will explore
6 the implementation of 21st century
7 learning schools models at select schools
8 to provide work-based learning
9 experiences for students to better
10 prepare them for post-secondary success.

11 Board member Salley will now
12 continue this update. Please move to the
13 next slide.

14 MS. SALLEY: Thank you.
15 (Inaudible) that is also equally
16 important that we continue to expand on
17 prior investments in support of the
18 Board's guardrails, which are the
19 necessary conditions for learning to
20 occur. This proposed budget expands on
21 previous investments to social emotional
22 support for students, which are
23 critically important given the rapid
24 increase in gun violence in our City over
25 the past few years.

1 Investments include increased
2 social services and trauma response
3 initiatives in schools, increased number
4 of behavior health counselors, decrease
5 to the student-to-counselor ratio and
6 additional climate and trauma specialist.
7 And finally, we continue to make
8 investments in our facilities to ensure
9 all children have access to welcoming and
10 safe learning spaces.

11 We will continue to monitor our
12 guardrails and make investments to ensure
13 our students have safe and nutrient
14 school communities where they are valued,
15 respected and encouraged. The Board is
16 proud of its commitment to student
17 outcomes focused governance. This
18 structure has allowed us to review and
19 discuss data specific to each goal and
20 guardrail throughout the school year and
21 use this information to assess whether
22 interventions are effective before making
23 decisions on additional investments or
24 policies. We look forward to continuing
25 this important work under

1 Dr. Watlington's leadership as he
2 transitions into the role of
3 Superintendent in the coming weeks.

4 Board member Streater will now
5 continue this update. Please move to the
6 next slide.

7 MR. STREATER: Thank you Board
8 member, Salley. I would like to discuss
9 a pressing issue facing not only our
10 school communities, but also everyone who
11 lives and works in the City of
12 Philadelphia. As we all know, the City
13 has been besieged with rising levels of
14 gun violence which has taken lives,
15 traumatized survivors and harmed
16 communities.

17 Last year the City reported more
18 than 2,000 shootings and saw 562
19 homicides, a tragic record for the City,
20 and there have already been 145 homicides
21 so far this year. And tragically, this
22 violence directly affects children and
23 teenagers. So far this year there have
24 been 96 shooting victims between the age
25 of 13 and 19, and 12 homicide victims

1 were younger than 18.

2 So it's no surprise that Pew
3 Charitable Trust -- Pew Charitable Trust
4 recently reported that 70 percent of the
5 City residents now see crime and gun
6 violence as their main concerns. Our own
7 student Board representative Armando
8 Ortiz recently said during a panel
9 discussion, "Students are petrified to go
10 to school or come back to school for fear
11 of encountering gun violence."

12 Other students called for the
13 School District to create safe spaces
14 where students can express their fears
15 about gun violence and acknowledge that
16 it's affecting everyone. I'm sure you
17 will agree that there is an urgent need
18 to decrease levels of gun violence in the
19 City to keep our children safe wherever
20 they are, but especially as they go to
21 and from school.

22 The School District has put in
23 place a number of measures to address
24 safe passages to and from school.
25 However, addressing gun violence requires

1 a coordinated comprehensive response. We
2 applaud the work of Mayor Kenney and City
3 Council to implement new programming and
4 dedicate funding to address this current
5 crisis, but more needs to be done to
6 protect our young people.

7 As you work toward a final
8 Fiscal Year 2023 budget, we have a number
9 of recommendations that would enhance the
10 work of the School District. First,
11 increase the safe corridors around all
12 schools during travel times to and from
13 school. Earlier this school year with
14 funding from the Commonwealth, the School
15 District announced the first phase of a
16 new Safe Path program where paid
17 community members will help ensure safe
18 passage to and from school for our young
19 people.

20 The School District currently
21 has funding to support eight safe paths
22 for two school years. We believe every
23 young person should have a safe path to
24 and from school. The School District
25 cannot do this work alone. As part of

1 the City's Fiscal Year 2023 budget, we
2 recommend increasing funding for
3 Integrated Town Watch Services to
4 replicate and expand the current Safe
5 Path program.

6 Second, ensure young people have
7 safe places after school, on weekends,
8 during the summer and other days when
9 schools are closed. The School District
10 is committed to working with the City and
11 City Council to make our school buildings
12 available to community organizations
13 during nonschool hours so that young
14 people have a safe place to be, and
15 providing safe places for young people
16 cannot be the School District's
17 responsibility alone.

18 The School District supports a
19 Fiscal Year 2023 budget that includes
20 funding to ensure all libraries and
21 recreation centers are open after school,
22 on the weekends and throughout the
23 summer. Additionally, the School
24 District supports expanding curfew
25 centers throughout the City, especially

1 as we head into the summer months.

2 Third, create safety zones
3 around schools and enforce gun laws.

4 While state preemption laws are
5 frustrating, our current laws, including
6 their prohibitions on gun possession by
7 minors, those laws must be enforced by
8 the police and the District Attorney to
9 keep our communities safe.

10 Fourth, expand mental health
11 services. The School District has
12 implemented a number of programs to
13 support the social and emotional health
14 of our school communities. For instance,
15 we have a rapid response program in
16 schools to help our communities respond
17 to tragic events. However, our programs
18 are not enough. Our young people in our
19 staff need additional support outside the
20 school system.

21 We must work together to provide
22 a multi-pronged approach to addressing
23 the mental health care provider shortage
24 in the City. Efforts to address the
25 current needs include a support program

1 serving schools, employees and others
2 working directly with young people to
3 provide counseling services and around-
4 the-clock mental health care and call on
5 the Governor and the General Assembly to
6 pass legislation that allows out-of-state
7 practitioners to provide assistance via
8 telemedicine to Pennsylvanians without
9 the need to obtain Commonwealth
10 licensure.

11 While in the short term we need
12 to expand the current mental health
13 provider network, we also need long-term
14 pipeline policies to build our provider
15 capacity, the School District,
16 (inaudible) our capacity. The School
17 District recommends the creation of
18 Philadelphia Mental Health Service Corps
19 where public funding could be used to
20 provide training, scholarships and loan
21 repayments to individuals who commit to
22 working with Philadelphians impacted by
23 gun violence and trauma as well as the
24 public workforce and the establishment of
25 public-private partnerships to increase

1 the number of mental health providers
2 modeled on the University of
3 Pennsylvania's Leonard A. Lauder
4 Community Care Nurse-practitioner
5 program.

6 The critical point that I would
7 like to make is that if we want our
8 children to learn, thrive and succeed,
9 then we must ensure they are safe and
10 physically and emotionally healthy so
11 they are ready to learn. And we hope you
12 will support our efforts to safeguard our
13 children and help them realize their
14 fullest potential in life.

15 Board President, with that we'll
16 now continue with the update. Please
17 move to the next slide. Thank you.

18 MS. WILKERSON: Thank you.
19 There are two other areas where we'd like
20 to ask for your support in addition to
21 measures that address gun violence. As a
22 result of the pandemic, we've seen our
23 labor market challenges change rapidly
24 over the last year. The School District
25 has worked with its labor partners to

1 adopt several measures to remain
2 competitive in the labor market as part
3 of recent contract negotiations.

4 To expand upon current
5 opportunities, we request your support in
6 creating incentives to help recruit and
7 retain District staff. Incentives could
8 include affordable housing and rental
9 options, such as the subsidized housing
10 down payments offered to employees in the
11 Denver School District or the affordable
12 apartments offered to teachers in Santa
13 Cruz School District.

14 Incentives could also include
15 subsidized transportation for District
16 staff, including SEPTA passes or
17 temporary parking permits near school
18 buildings during school days. Such
19 incentives would be meaningful to many of
20 our staff who live and work in our school
21 communities and who may struggle with the
22 cost of housing and transportation.

23 Please move to the next slide.
24 Our final request is directly tied to
25 supporting student achievement in

1 alignment with our college and career
2 readiness goals for all students. We
3 believe our students must have both the
4 core academics, knowledge and
5 opportunities and experience to best
6 prepare them for post-secondary success
7 in life. Paid apprenticeship and
8 internship opportunities during high
9 school allows students to gain hands-on
10 skills and exposure to potential career
11 pathways.

12 The City must mandate student
13 apprenticeship opportunities as part of
14 an economic opportunity plan among local
15 businesses. Meaningful apprenticeship
16 opportunities allow students to gain
17 valuable work experiences to develop
18 professional skills, including
19 communication, self-advocacy and the
20 ability to work collaboratively.

21 So we hope all of you will
22 promote this opportunity for all rising
23 juniors and seniors to apply for
24 student -- and also hope that you'll
25 support and recommend that students apply

1 for the positions of Student Board Rep
2 seats by May 20th. Students may apply
3 online by visiting
4 philasd.org/schoolboard/ and then
5 clicking About a section.

6 Please go to the next slide. On
7 behalf of Board --

8 (Background Interruption.)

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Can
10 we -- excuse me, Ms. Wilkerson. Could we
11 ask people to mute themselves if they're
12 not testifying please. Please proceed.

13 MS. WILKERSON: On behalf of the
14 Board, I want to thank you for your
15 continued partnership and support for our
16 schools. We're now happy to answer any
17 questions or move to Dr. Hite.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Yeah.
19 If we can, let's move to Dr. Hite because
20 I'm assuming there will be a lot of
21 cross-questions so that way it'll be more
22 efficient.

23 Dr. Hite, please proceed with
24 your testimony.

25 DR. HITE: Thank you, Council

1 President Clarke. Good morning to you
2 and to all the members of City Council.
3 I am Bill Hite, Superintendent here of
4 the School District of Philadelphia, and
5 thanks for the opportunity to come before
6 you this morning to provide an overview
7 of our budget for Fiscal Year 2023.

8 Before we dive deeper into the
9 budget, I want to share an update about
10 the work of the District, including
11 success and challenges, successes and
12 challenges to date as well as what's
13 expected of our work ahead or what should
14 be expected from our work ahead.

15 I want to begin by once again
16 acknowledging, as did the Board President
17 Wilkerson, all of our teachers who work
18 in front of young people every day in as
19 much as this is Teacher Appreciation
20 Week. Indeed, I also want to recognize
21 that we are in our final weeks of the
22 current school year and this is, as a
23 reminder, our first full year back for
24 inperson learning.

25 And as we have focused on

1 continuity of education during one of the
2 most difficult times in this nation, we
3 have always kept the safety of our
4 students and staff at the forefront of
5 decision-making. These times have forced
6 us to pivot and redefine how we care for
7 students and as we support their short-
8 term and long-term educational needs and
9 safeguard their health and well-being.

10 As I've said many times before,
11 it takes all of us to support the
12 educational needs of all of our diverse
13 learners. That has never been more true
14 than now as we deal with the many
15 consequences of the pandemic as well as
16 other traumas, including the invasive gun
17 violence happening in communities that
18 our young people unfortunately experience
19 almost on a daily basis.

20 Next slide please. As you
21 already know, the District launched a
22 facilities planning process in March.
23 This process is a critical component of
24 the District's strategic plan to provide
25 tangible solutions to schools, facility

1 and utilization challenges. Through
2 data-sharing and inperson and online
3 community engagement and outreach, the
4 District will solicit feedback from the
5 school community on equitable options for
6 the future of its learning environment.

7 These options will lead to final
8 recommendations that will be presented to
9 the Board next spring 2023 and
10 ultimately, inform the District's
11 Facilities Master Plan, which is a
12 longer-term strategic pathway that
13 prioritizes facility investments,
14 spending and ensure all learning spaces
15 are equipped with the tools and resources
16 students need to succeed.

17 I want to emphasize however that
18 all environmental work will continue
19 throughout this process. Community
20 conversations begin May 10th and run
21 through May 25th. We are asking members
22 of Council to share the registration
23 information for these meetings.
24 Registration can be found on our website
25 at philasd.org and the link has been

1 shared with all Councilmembers.

2 Next slide please. As

3 already mentioned by the Board President,

4 the changing labor market has also

5 impacted the District as it has

6 industries across the country. In order

7 to address this, we have implemented the

8 following to address teacher shortages.

9 We've launched a comprehensive marketing

10 strategy coupled with tracking so we know

11 where we are with meeting our application

12 target goals.

13 We've negotiated higher

14 salaries with our collective bargaining

15 units to make us more competitive in this

16 market. We started early access site

17 selection and that started in January for

18 17 schools which allowed us to begin the

19 school staffing process much earlier than

20 ever before for those 17 schools.

21 Announced, we will be providing

22 retention bonuses up to \$5,000 for

23 teachers who remain with the District in

24 a subset of about 50 schools that

25 typically have lower retention, and we've

1 implemented early notification of
2 intention to retire or resign, which
3 allows us to know earlier what teacher
4 positions we need to hire. We've
5 increased pipeline -- we've increased
6 pipeline of teacher residency from 75 to
7 100 residents for the coming year and
8 added more staff and support to the
9 teacher recruitment team to help the
10 recruitment process.

11 Next slide please.

12 Additionally, we have other actions in
13 progress to address teacher staffing.
14 These include advocating for changes in
15 reciprocity and certification with other
16 states to ease the burden of becoming
17 certified in the Commonwealth of
18 Pennsylvania, if already certified in
19 another state. Also, we've also
20 implemented or we've also committed
21 \$1,000 for re-engagement bonus which will
22 be provided in the fall to all teachers.

23 We've established a more
24 centralized approach for student teachers
25 to better track their pipeline to the

1 District upon graduation, and we will
2 soon share data or details with our
3 teachers about additional reimbursements
4 for cost of coursework to obtain
5 certifications. Perhaps the most
6 exciting, creating a new pathway to
7 support our paraprofessionals to become
8 teachers or other professionals.

9 Next slide please. We have also
10 developed a program specifically for our
11 paraprofessionals to expand the teacher
12 pipeline. In true collaboration with the
13 PFT, we developed a program to support
14 our paraprofessionals to become teachers
15 or other professionals. We will be
16 investing 2.5 million over the next two
17 years. The full tuition is for the full
18 tuition which will be covered by the
19 District for participation in the
20 following programs for selected
21 paraprofessionals over the next two
22 years.

23 College Unbound will offer a
24 program for paraprofessionals who have no
25 or little college experience to begin

1 their pathway to attaining a higher
2 degree. Cheney University will offer a
3 program for paraprofessionals who have at
4 least 45 credits from previous college
5 experiences, who would like to return to
6 college to complete their degree and
7 obtain a teacher certification.

8 LaSalle University will offer a
9 program for paraprofessionals who have
10 obtained a college degree, but who have a
11 GPA below 3.0 to complete the teacher
12 certification program. Drexel University
13 will offer a program to paraprofessionals
14 who have obtained a college degree with a
15 GPA of at least 3.0 to obtain their K-6
16 teacher certification.

17 The previously authorized
18 teacher residencies with Drexel, Relay,
19 Temple and Urban Teachers will also be
20 open for participation with their
21 paraprofessionals as part of this
22 program. And I will add that the
23 tuitions for all of these programs will
24 be covered by the District. We
25 officially launched the program in March

1 and the paraprofessionals are currently
2 applying. We are excited to see the
3 progress of this program and the success
4 of our paras as this rolls out.

5 Next slide please. To date we
6 are at 85 percent staff for teachers for
7 the upcoming school year. As a result of
8 early hiring which I previously
9 discussed, 17 schools hired over 700
10 teachers for the first time before April.
11 Site selection officially launched on
12 April 5th and over 150 teachers were
13 selected in the first two weeks. And
14 teacher applications are up. In the last
15 month, we have received 55 percent more
16 completed teacher applications than we
17 did last year in those same four weeks.

18 As we continue to prepare for
19 the new school year, we will begin hiring
20 a supplemental teacher pool to ensure we
21 have additional teachers to support our
22 schools as they open next year. Continue
23 ongoing recruitment efforts, including
24 online information sessions, job fairs
25 and marketing campaigns and continue the

1 ongoing review of resignations and
2 retirements. For the first time,
3 teachers who notify us by the end of the
4 year that they are leaving after the
5 school year will be able to receive
6 benefits over the summer.

7 Next slide please. As all of
8 you know, in 2018 Governor Wolf signed
9 into law Act 158, which provides
10 alternatives to Pennsylvania's statewide
11 requirement of attaining proficiency on
12 the three end-of-course Keystone exams,
13 Algebra 1, literature and biology in
14 order for a student to achieve statewide
15 graduation requirements. Effective with
16 the graduating class of 2023, students
17 will have the option to demonstrate post-
18 secondary preparedness through various
19 pathways, which more fully illustrate
20 college career and community readiness.

21 Since the release of Act 158, we
22 have spent time evaluating and analyzing
23 the pathways with a wide variety of
24 stakeholders which has resulted in five
25 clearly established pathways to

1 graduation. One of which is specific to
2 work-based learning opportunities like
3 apprenticeships, internships or
4 interestingly enough, proof of employment
5 upon graduation.

6 All of this work to expand work-
7 based learning and experiences is guided
8 by the Board's Goals and Guardrails, the
9 academic framework and what we heard from
10 students. Young people have expressed
11 their desire to make deeper connections
12 between what they are learning and the
13 world of work. Where we have been and
14 will continue to embed the career in --
15 the career and technical education work
16 standards into our curriculum, which
17 focus on addressing four areas of
18 knowledge, career awareness and
19 preparation, career acquisition, in other
20 words getting a job, career retention and
21 advancement and entrepreneurship.

22 We have decided to develop a
23 financial literacy curriculum as well and
24 our team of curriculum staff are
25 reviewing materials and researching

1 programs from all over the country and
2 also, extremely important is the support
3 we are providing to schools through staff
4 designated to work with students and
5 schools as well as through increase in
6 supports like the ones I will refer to in
7 just a second.

8 Finally, we think about how this
9 work opens the doors for the District and
10 the community to work together. We know
11 we need to significantly increase the
12 number of employers willing to partner
13 with us on this effort. In any given
14 year, we could have 2500 students or
15 more, including CTE students who are in
16 need of work experiences. Partnerships
17 are vital to the success of this work.

18 Next slide. Here are the
19 highlights of the work we have been doing
20 to increase preparedness and access for
21 students to work-based learning
22 experiences and direct paths to careers:
23 First, we have increased our support to
24 students as they explore the many
25 pathways to a career as a result of our

1 need to expand work-based learning and
2 work experiences to all students. Last
3 year we launched the Find your Future
4 guide, which allows students to research
5 potential careers and discover the
6 pathway to that career.

7 What's cool about this is that
8 it shows them which high schools offer
9 the courses necessary to prepare for
10 their career. This guide can be found on
11 our college and career page on the
12 District's website. To expand on this
13 guide, this year we rolled out the
14 Student Job Board where students can
15 search and be connected to various
16 opportunities across the City, also
17 available on the college and career page.

18 Secondly, we have strengthened
19 key partnerships in order to provide
20 greater access to opportunities. We work
21 with our colleagues at the Community
22 College of Philadelphia to create a
23 career readiness program, which actually
24 counts as an apprenticeship for students.
25 We continue to develop the partnership

1 with PhilaWorks, the Office of Children
2 and Families and the Office of Workforce
3 Development to create a clear and concise
4 plan for the City of Philadelphia as it
5 relates to increasing the number of
6 opportunities that young people have for
7 work-based experiences, and we have also
8 seen an increase in thought partnerships
9 from our unionized trades to explore how
10 to create more opportunities for
11 students.

12 And finally -- I'm really
13 excited about these last two items which
14 are creating specific programs which lead
15 directly to employment -- this year we
16 were able to negotiate with the PFT to
17 provide for the creation of a new school
18 model, the 21st Century Schools. One of
19 the key components of this school model
20 is that students obtain a credential that
21 allows them to work immediately upon
22 graduation and includes all the supports
23 we know are critical like programming for
24 our low-incidence students with IEPs,
25 strong partnerships with local employers

1 and deep connections between what the
2 students learn in the classroom and the
3 competencies needed at work.

4 Through CTE, we have four
5 programs which set up students for a
6 position immediately following
7 completion: The Fleet Intern
8 Apprenticeship Automotive Maintenance,
9 this is a two-year internship that
10 results in eligibility for promotion to
11 automotive maintenance apprenticeship or
12 the Public Works Maintenance training.
13 This partnership has been in place since
14 2010.

15 St. Christopher's Hospital for
16 Children where students are assigned to
17 work in a department that represents his
18 or her area of career interest through an
19 internship in 12th grade. Mentors assist
20 students with preparing for post-
21 secondary school training and employment
22 opportunities, and all of this is done
23 through the health technology program.
24 We have two new partnerships that begin
25 this school year that I want to highlight

1 as well. The Pennsylvania Pipeline
2 Project in the Philadelphia region. This
3 program aligns critical workforce needs
4 with CTE advanced manufacturing programs.

5 The Philadelphia region is vital
6 to addressing the industry demands. 300
7 defense suppliers and more than 40
8 critical shipbuilders. CHAMP, which is
9 Culinary and Hospitality Arts Program,
10 this is an internship and mentor program
11 created in partnership with FringeArts
12 and presented by PECO. This program
13 prepares students for careers in the
14 culinary and hospitality industries,
15 ultimately creating a pipeline for
16 employment opportunities.

17 At this time, I would like to
18 hand the presentation over to our Chief
19 Financial Officer Mr. Uri Monson, who
20 will highlight the steps we have taken
21 through our budget to support the work I
22 highlighted today as well as our efforts
23 to implement the Board's Goals and
24 Guardrails guidelines. Mr. Monson.

25 MR. MONSON: Thank you,

1 Dr. Hite. Good morning, Council
2 President, members of Council. I want to
3 begin by -- obviously we're in Year 2 of
4 the federal funds and reminded how we
5 have focused the use of the funds that
6 have been allocated for the School
7 District of Philadelphia primary focus
8 areas being supporting and learning
9 recovery, which is the requirement of the
10 bill, several hundred million dollars to
11 improve facilities across the District,
12 funds for supporting the significant
13 social and emotional needs of our
14 students, and then some additional
15 funding related to some of the Goals and
16 Guardrails, IT, et cetera.

17 Next slide please. So for
18 perspective, we looked at the current
19 year and how we've been using the federal
20 money and compared it to where we were in
21 Fiscal Year '11, which was kind of a peak
22 year for School District investment. It
23 was the last year prior to the severe
24 state budget cuts and the end of the
25 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

1 funding.

2 So in Fiscal Year '11, the
3 District averaged one teacher for every
4 13.3 students. In the current year,
5 we're now at one teacher for every 12.3
6 students so a better ratio. And when you
7 look at total school-based staff,
8 teachers, counselors, student supports,
9 et cetera, we're now at one staff member
10 for every 6.6 students as opposed to
11 every 7.4 students in Fiscal Year '11.

12 So you can see the impact already of the
13 first year's worth of investments.

14 Next slide please. We did do
15 another budget engagement survey. We did
16 one last year to get input from family
17 staff stakeholders. It was out for
18 several weeks in multiple languages.
19 Almost 500 responses were received. The
20 responses prioritized fairly similarly to
21 the prior year in the various areas,
22 discretionary funding for schools,
23 additional math, literacy teachers,
24 special education supports, focusing on
25 environmental hazards and school-based

1 environmental and mental health supports.
2 The full details of all the responses are
3 accessible on the District's website.

4 Next slide please. In addition,
5 as we were going into another year with
6 the federal funds, we wanted to make sure
7 that talking to school-based staff,
8 particularly principals, that we were
9 making sure we were looking at an equity
10 lens. We did meet with a macro
11 (inaudible) group of principals to get
12 feedback, respond to their questions on
13 the school budget process.

14 Also looking very closely at the
15 current year ARPA investments, we wanted
16 to make sure that if things weren't
17 working, we didn't continue to do them.
18 And if things were working better, we
19 could double-down on them wherever we
20 could. And all of our investments we are
21 tied to evaluation of actual usage
22 impacts as well as the feedback.

23 Next slide please. In response
24 to the positive feedback for schools, so
25 during this current year when we were

1 particularly challenged with staffing and
2 during the Omicron phase, we doubled the
3 hours for student climate staff who
4 currently work three hours in buildings,
5 for example, usually around extra
6 supports lunch hour or beginning or end
7 of school.

8 We made those six-hour
9 positions. It was so popular that we put
10 that into the base budget, so all of
11 those hours were doubled. What that
12 meant is it doubles the hours for school
13 support staff, supports retention of
14 those staff. All those positions are now
15 six-hour full-time positions fully funded
16 with benefits. And most of
17 these employees are from local
18 neighborhoods. So there's a benefit in a
19 lot of ways, both for the schools and the
20 employees.

21 We did further reduce the
22 counselor ratio. So a year ago for the
23 second counselor was at 950. For the
24 current year we had dropped that to 800
25 students. And for Fiscal Year '23

1 actually pushed that down to 650
2 students, at which point the second
3 counselor automatically kicks in. We
4 also reduced the secretary ratio based on
5 looking at how schools were spending some
6 of their discretionary funding to free up
7 some of that money for other purchases by
8 the schools.

9 Next slide please. Skip a
10 slide. Thank you.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Are
12 you good?

13 MR. MONSON: Sorry. I think we
14 skipped a slide there, the one that says
15 ARPA discretionary program at the top.
16 Go back. No, other direction. Keep
17 going. Right there. Thank you.

18 We got a lot of feedback on the
19 discretionary positions initiative which
20 originally had been designated for just
21 the first year of return to school. When
22 we looked at could we renew it, a lot of
23 principals raised concerns regarding a
24 desire for even more flexibility, more
25 discretion with how funding could be used

1 and identified that positions were not
2 being distributed equitably because it
3 was based on a school as a school, not
4 accounting for the number of students in
5 a school.

6 So we modified it in two ways,
7 spending roughly the same amount of money
8 this year. Each off-track school
9 receives one discretionary position. The
10 remaining funds are allocated to each
11 school for full discretion by principals
12 based on a combination of the size of the
13 school enrollment as well as school
14 poverty demographics to make it more
15 equitable. We maintained the
16 extracurricular activity funding that
17 were added last September.

18 Next slide please. We've been
19 in the process of piloting with about 15
20 schools, Out-of-School Time contracts
21 with partnerships with nonprofit
22 providers that we had done an RFP for,
23 planning to expand the program to
24 additional schools next year as vendor
25 capacity allows, but fully funding what

1 that vendor capacity will allow, added
2 additional teachers for English Language
3 Learners and additional bilingual
4 counseling assistance. And the large
5 part, as we're watching the demographics
6 of our students and as well as the
7 demographics of the City, I want to make
8 sure we're meeting the needs of those
9 students and families.

10 Next slide please. Just for
11 anybody who wants the full details, all
12 of our budget books which includes
13 school-by-school consolidated budget
14 book, district-wide budgeted and we even
15 created a Budget 101 guide for -- I admit
16 the documents can be a little cumbersome
17 to get through, but this tries to help.
18 All these and a lot of other additional
19 budget information can be viewed at our
20 public information site.

21 Next sleep -- next slide please.
22 So I think this is really important to
23 see how we are maintaining our investment
24 and, in fact, how we're taking a
25 different approach than a lot of other

1 districts across the country. So you'll
2 notice that at the very top that our
3 enrollment is continuing to fall. This
4 is consistent and actually not as bad as
5 the rest of the Commonwealth.

6 We're falling at about 2.5
7 percent rate across the Commonwealth.
8 Public schools are falling over 3.5. And
9 nationally, there are much more dramatic
10 declines if you're following the news.
11 Houston, Chicago, Denver, Detroit,
12 Oakland, Albuquerque, just to name a few,
13 who are seeing severely falling
14 enrollments, and while they are doing
15 layoffs and in some cases recommending
16 closing schools, that is not what we are
17 proposing.

18 In fact, other than the direct
19 enrollment-based teachers, every other
20 staff position level is increasing in the
21 numbers and that's an absolute number,
22 not relative to the students, but
23 actually increasing total numbers. So
24 more assistant principals, more special
25 education teachers, more counselors, more

1 secretaries, more student climate staff.
2 And again, the student climate staff is
3 not just numbers and people, but also
4 doubled hours.

5 As a result of all of this,
6 while others are trying to retrench,
7 we're actually spending more. So if you
8 look on a per student basis, last year we
9 were spending about \$15,800 per student.
10 In the current year, it's about \$18,800
11 per student. We're projecting in our new
12 budget to be for next year over \$21,000
13 per student. I want to emphasize this is
14 not something that's sustainable. This
15 is how we are using our federal funds.

16 So how we start to think about
17 what that looks like as we hit the fiscal
18 cliff as those funds go away after Fiscal
19 Year '24 as we've spent them all will be
20 part of a larger discussion. We can talk
21 about when we talk about the five-year
22 plan outlook. But this is how you can
23 see how we are directing the federal
24 funds into serving our students and
25 maintaining and actually increasing

1 supports despite the fact that enrollment
2 is falling.

3 Next slide please. So in the
4 past we've had Councilmembers and
5 community members and Board members ask
6 about it's not just to look for a system-
7 wide, but actually how are we spending
8 across different, particularly some
9 equity areas or how does it differ for
10 how our spending is on a per pupil basis.
11 So we used some of this new data to try
12 and get a look at it.

13 You can see in the first slide,
14 and this is divided by schools, that the
15 populations that are economically
16 disadvantaged that are serving, so for
17 schools that are serving populations that
18 are less than 50 percent economically
19 disadvantaged, we're spending just over
20 \$16,500 per student. In schools that are
21 serving student populations that are over
22 85 percent economically disadvantaged,
23 spending over \$25,000 per student.

24 We also looked at it for the --
25 as you know, we provide significant

1 supports for special education. So for
2 those that are serving special education
3 populations that are less than 10
4 percent, spending just under \$17,800 for
5 a student. By the time you've reached
6 school populations, and we put the number
7 of schools in the range so you can kind
8 of follow that, of over 30 percent we're
9 spending well over \$27,000 per student.

10 Because the large number of
11 large variances we have in school sizes,
12 enrollment sizes, we also looked at
13 average per pupil for school by
14 enrollment range, so in our smaller
15 schools, those that have the 57 schools
16 that are enrollments below 300, we're
17 spending over \$26,700 per student. By
18 the time you get to the schools that are
19 more than 1400 students per school, we're
20 spending just over \$17,000. So you can
21 see just different ways to look at
22 spending broken down by sector rather
23 than the system-wide look.

24 Next slide please. So this is
25 the Five Year Plan, and a few important

1 things I want to point out. Number one
2 is if you look on the third line that
3 says state revenues, you'll see a
4 significant jump from Fiscal Year '22 to
5 '23, an increase of about \$500 million.
6 That is based on the Governor's budget
7 proposal. We do not know if that will
8 happen. Obviously, no budget has been
9 approved and there's still negotiation.
10 But it is our practice to assume whatever
11 the current proposed budget is, so that
12 is in there.

13 If you go down under
14 expenditures to the last line, there's a
15 TBD expenditures. We've assumed a
16 portion of the Governor's budget would be
17 spent on things to be determined, but
18 obviously until we know for sure that
19 money is coming. But obviously, it's a
20 smaller number than what would be coming.
21 In addition, under expenditures on
22 Charter schools, you see a sharp drop-off
23 in Charter school spending from '22 to
24 '23 by about \$220 million. It goes from
25 1.26 billion to 1.04 billion. That is

1 driven in part by how federal funds are
2 being used by the District and Charter
3 schools, but in large part that is also
4 part of the Governor's proposal.

5 So you have another 140, 150
6 million. So all total, there's about
7 \$650 million in either expense avoidance
8 or new revenues that is wholly dependent
9 on approval of the Governor's budget.

10 Those numbers are what drive the very
11 significant fund balances you see in '23
12 and '24, 584 million, 672 million. We
13 want to make sure that any funds are
14 approved before we commit to how we would
15 spend them.

16 You can see however at the end
17 of Fiscal Year '24 as the federal money
18 goes away and using the federal money
19 both to do new investments but also to
20 maintain some current spending, our
21 structural deficit reappears. That's
22 that line that goes from black to red
23 called operating surplus deficit. And
24 you can see we are negative for the year
25 at 150 million in Fiscal Year '25, and

1 that number grows 260 million,
2 essentially wiping out the fund balances.
3 And I'll point out that assumes -- all of
4 that assumes that the Governor's money is
5 in there and recurring and also, that a
6 number of the investments that are
7 specifically related to federal funds
8 have gone away. So even with that, we
9 will have challenges once the federal
10 monies go away.

11 Next slide please. So the lump
12 sum budget I showed you was what we
13 presented and was sent to you by the
14 Board, approved by the Board in March.
15 There have been some changes. In
16 addition to the school-based changes
17 which we already talked about, we've
18 identified almost \$7 million for
19 environmental operations, expansion of
20 the asbestos identification remediation
21 team, a large focus on creating a lead
22 paint team which parallels the asbestos
23 team.

24 We have a goal of having all
25 buildings certified as lead safe by 2024.

1 There are about 57 buildings remaining to
2 be fully assessed and repaired. And the
3 goal is not just to get to that point,
4 but actually to build up this unit so
5 that we can maintain that status over
6 time through normal cyclical assessment
7 and repairs, continue to expand the
8 current asbestos efforts, completed over
9 the 18 months 3200 locations of abatement
10 actions.

11 We're also committing \$6.2
12 million for a hydration stations project.
13 We currently have over 1300 hydration
14 stations installed in our buildings.
15 This will provide the installation of an
16 additional 800 buildings by 2025, and the
17 time lag is not money-based. In fact,
18 the sooner the better since we're trying
19 to use federal money as much as possible,
20 but really on the capacity and in some
21 cases supply set issues of obtaining
22 units.

23 We know that based on what we
24 have and commitments that a minimum of
25 145 of these will be installed by the end

1 of this summer. But again, by the end we
2 should have over 21 hydration stations
3 installed. And then an additional \$4
4 million for maintenance positions and
5 contracts for HVAC-related work.

6 Next slide please. Some other
7 expenditures, and some of these were
8 already referenced so I'm going to go
9 through them quickly. The investment
10 education certification support, funding
11 for expansion of alternative education,
12 multiple pathway opportunities, over \$2
13 million to ensure both restorative
14 justice programs and full-time school
15 safety officers. We have a number of
16 schools that have part-time school safety
17 officers. And as the School Safety
18 Office's focus has been on restorative
19 justice mentoring, in order to help build
20 those relationships having from the
21 school-based staff and from the School
22 Safety Office, having safety officers
23 fully committed full-time to an
24 individual school was important to help
25 develop those relationships.

1 Several million dollars for
2 climate, prevention, intervention and
3 attendance supports. We know that there
4 are a lot of factors that go into those
5 falling enrollment numbers, but wherever
6 we can do additional coaching supports,
7 positions to assist with finding out
8 where the students have gone if they have
9 not left Philadelphia, can we get them
10 back into the schools is an important
11 commitment. 21st Century Schools were
12 already mentioned before, and then
13 obviously updates for expenditures.

14 Next slide please. A few notes
15 on revenues: So after we had already
16 done our Title allocations for schools
17 and schools did their budgeting, we found
18 out that the federal government reduced
19 Title Funds for Pennsylvania, about an
20 \$11 million impact for Philadelphia. We
21 obviously wanted to keep the schools
22 whole so we will be absorbing that in
23 other ways, but that was unexpected.

24 The federal government also did
25 not renew food service program waivers or

1 increased reimbursements to cover
2 increased food costs. We're looking at
3 somewhere about a \$6.5 million impact,
4 although the numbers may be higher
5 because we have to absorb costs from the
6 current year as well as next year's
7 impact. So we're still figuring out the
8 total impact for multiple years will
9 probably be in excess of \$10 million.

10 We were looking to see if there
11 were any blips from the masking mandate
12 reinstatement on liquor and U&O. We have
13 been notified of some reduced
14 transportation reimbursements in the
15 Commonwealth. This is so new I didn't
16 even have a data point since the new City
17 real estate numbers were put out
18 yesterday. We have not yet met with the
19 City to understand the impact for School
20 District and obviously what the proposals
21 will be around both the amounts of the
22 increases and all the things that have
23 been discussed. I know in the paper
24 today from many of you sitting here or
25 participating in this meeting about how

1 that will go forward, so that's obviously
2 another data point we'll have to update.

3 Next slide please. So timeline,
4 we're at the Council budget hearing.
5 We've already had the Board of Education
6 budget hearing. The budget vote is
7 scheduled for the end of May. Hopefully,
8 it's May or probably more like mid-June.
9 Hopefully, when you adopt the City
10 budget, will adopt the tax measures that
11 impact the School District and most
12 likely adoption of the state budget in
13 June.

14 Next slide. I think that
15 concludes the presentation. And I think
16 we're happy to have Dr. Hite and all of
17 us happy to take any questions, comments,
18 et cetera.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
20 you. Thank you. Long and thoughtful
21 presentation.

22 Before we open it up for
23 questions, I'd like to recognize two
24 members as present that were not in the
25 earlier version of the announcement of

1 the quorum. Councilwoman Gauthier is
2 present and Councilwoman Brooks is
3 present for this particular hearing.

4 And before I open it up to
5 questions, I'd like to recognize the
6 Chair of Education Councilwoman Maria
7 Quinones-Sanchez for remarks, and then
8 we'll get --

9 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

10 Councilmember Sanchez, Councilman Squilla
11 is here too. Thank you.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

13 Councilman Squilla. Thank you,
14 Councilman.

15 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

16 My partner, my Kensington partner. Thank
17 you.

18 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Councilman

19 Johnson is present as well, Council
20 President Clarke.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: And

22 Councilman Johnson, thank you.

23 COUNCILMAN OH: And Councilman

24 Oh.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank

1 you. All right. The squad is all --

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: And

3 Councilman Jones.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: The

5 squad is here. Thank you all.

6 Councilwoman.

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

8 Thank you, Council President Clarke. And

9 I want to just take a moment, and I'll be

10 brief because I really do want my other

11 Council colleagues to have an opportunity

12 to ask questions given the condensed

13 nature of what our hearings are this

14 year. I want to make sure all my

15 colleagues have the time to ask those

16 questions.

17 I just want to thank our

18 volunteer Board, School Board for all of

19 their commitment. I know that this

20 particular year there's been a lot of

21 individual meetings that relates to the

22 Black charters or some of the facilities

23 issues. And I want to thank Board

24 members who've really taken leadership in

25 that and the leadership of our Chair

1 Joyce Wilkerson.

2 Sad to see Maria go. Any time a
3 Maria leaves the table, less work gets
4 done. That's my belief. That's my
5 story. I'm sticking to it. But I want
6 to thank Maria for her service and look
7 forward to the Education Committee, this
8 Education Committee making some
9 recommendations and hopefully, we will be
10 as lucky as to have members as the ones
11 that we have had to date.

12 I want to take a moment to
13 acknowledge Dr. Hite and thank him so
14 much for his leadership and stewardship
15 through very, very trying times. You are
16 a gentleman and you are very much
17 appreciated, so I want to thank you very,
18 very, very much. To Board member Lettie,
19 thanking her for the process that led us
20 to Dr. Watlington. We all look forward
21 to his arrival.

22 I particularly want to thank
23 Lettie for including members of the
24 Education Committee and elected officials
25 in the meeting of the finalists before

1 the final selection. I want to thank you
2 again for that very robust process. I
3 want to make note that last year we
4 opened up hundreds of school buildings
5 throughout the City. I want to thank the
6 Hite team for working with us on
7 enhancing school building opportunities
8 this summer and look forward to expanding
9 that in the fall.

10 School buildings are community
11 anchors. They belong to the community
12 and to our parents and our young people,
13 and I want to ensure that this becomes
14 the new normal, as for the last decade
15 these school buildings were not part of
16 our solution and absolutely have to be
17 anchored and available as we deal with
18 this violence crisis, but also in the
19 recovery of COVID and what it has meant
20 to trauma and how it's impacted our
21 communities and our families.

22 I'm very encouraged by the work
23 that we're doing around the buildings.
24 There's a lot of conversations happening.
25 I want to thank Council President Clarke

1 and Joyce and the team again for working.
2 Look forward to the conversations around
3 not only building renovations, but new
4 buildings, right, and particularly 21st
5 learning environments and this new model
6 that is being introduced.

7 And finally, I want to thank the
8 teachers during Teacher Week, but our
9 stakeholders, CASA and PFT for their very
10 thoughtful feedback on the budget
11 proposals as well as other members of
12 SEIU and UNITE who never left our
13 buildings throughout the last two years
14 and really service our young people and
15 our families during our critical times.

16 So I will not ask questions as
17 usual. I want my colleagues to have as
18 much time as possible to review this
19 five-year plan with our leadership.

20 So thank you very much, Council
21 President.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
23 you, Councilwoman, and thank you and for
24 your work, and thank the Education
25 Committee for their significant

1 involvement in this whole process.

2 I do have a couple of questions.

3 Well, I actually have a lot, but I'm

4 going to just ask a couple in this

5 particular round. One was budget-

6 related, but I did want to ask a couple

7 of questions or respond to the requests

8 in the presentation about your support is

9 needed by the School Board. One relates

10 to this issue around addressing gun

11 violence, and that's clearly one of the

12 most significant issues that we have to

13 deal with because if children are afraid

14 to go to school and teachers and parents,

15 we're not going to make the necessary

16 improvements.

17 I can remember as you referenced

18 that the Community Schools, one of the

19 first things that then newly-appointed

20 Mayor Kenney, myself and a number of

21 other individuals, we went to Colum -- we

22 went to Ohio to look at the School

23 District out there, and they were the

24 first ones to implement Community

25 Schools, and it was very successful. And

1 the importance of that, it was a place
2 where people in the community not only
3 sent their children for education, but it
4 was basically the focal point of those
5 particular communities and it made a
6 clear difference.

7 So I'm interested as we move
8 along not only in the discussion, but the
9 implementation about use of school
10 buildings beyond the schools' 3 o'clock
11 traditional time frame, because as we
12 said earlier, there may not be a rec
13 center in every particular section of the
14 City because there's limitations. It may
15 not be a movie theater, there may not be
16 a lot of things, but there's a school in
17 every part of the City. I mean, that's
18 just the basic reality.

19 So school buildings should
20 clearly be the focal point and hopefully,
21 with the use of the facilities plan we
22 get to a point where we understand that
23 the relationship between the City of
24 Philadelphia's buildings, School District
25 buildings are all about the taxpayers and

1 we get out of that silo where, this is my
2 building. There's no way in the world
3 either one of these entities should be
4 paying for the use of a building from
5 schools or the City. So we need to get
6 that resolved sooner than later.

7 The other issue was in reference
8 about support is needed for staff
9 recruitment and retention, and it's very
10 similar to what we've been talking about
11 in the City of Philadelphia around police
12 and other types of employees that we're
13 trying to get in the City. This has been
14 somewhat of a challenge. One in
15 particular, the SEPTA issue is clearly
16 something that SEPTA should be responding
17 to. Parking permits for near schools,
18 I'm assuming you all are talking about
19 parking permits for teachers. Good luck
20 with that one, in particular
21 neighborhoods. I'll be interested to see
22 how you all make out with that
23 conversation with the Parking Authority
24 and local residents.

25 But the affordable housing one,

1 as you know we just unveiled, City
2 Council -- and I thank everybody for
3 being engaged, this is very awesome -- a
4 proposal. We talked about preferences
5 for City of Philadelphia employees. And
6 one of the things that we talked about
7 was the fact that City employees must
8 live in the City of Philadelphia, and we
9 thought that should give them an
10 advantage as it relates to preferences
11 for housing-related activities.

12 The School District of
13 Philadelphia does not have that
14 requirement is my understanding. If
15 there should be a thoughtful conversation
16 about expanding that preference for
17 housing-related activities funded by the
18 City of Philadelphia, just a word of
19 advice, it probably should talk about
20 some level of longevity because it's
21 subsidized housing for people that, one,
22 may or may not stay here for any period
23 of time, just kind of pop in for a month
24 of rental housing and then kind of pop
25 out.

1 The longevity issue in terms of
2 our preference and our fiscal support for
3 City employees makes a lot of difference,
4 so just a word of advice if there's going
5 to be a conversation about expanding
6 School District employees for that
7 particular recruitment and retention
8 purposes.

9 Real quick, and I'll turn it
10 over because I know there's a lot of
11 questions after the long presentation --
12 well, actually I have two of them. One
13 is with respect to the five-year plan and
14 you referenced the fact of the graduation
15 rate, 35.7 in the City of Philadelphia,
16 much higher than the national average
17 which is 24.1. I need to get a sense of
18 how are we going to close that gap in
19 that conversation. Do we also include
20 individuals that go back to school and
21 get their diploma or GED, so we need to
22 get a sense of that, that it includes
23 those individuals because I know there's
24 an aggressive push to get people to go
25 back in the schools, a number of the

1 schools.

2 The other thing is related to
3 cyber charter schools. It's my
4 understanding that cyber charter schools
5 actually get an allocation of funds for
6 brick-and-mortar. I don't understand
7 that. I mean, the whole nature of a
8 cyber charter school does not have this
9 brick-and-mortar thing. They don't have
10 buildings. So can you just kind of give
11 me a sense of where we are with those two
12 issues? And I guess that would be for
13 Dr. Hite or Board Chair Wilkerson. Not
14 sure who would answer that question.

15 MS. WILKERSON: I can respond on
16 the cyber charters. Charter schools in
17 Philadelphia got over 700 million in
18 federal funds. The cyber charters also
19 got their own COVID funding and there was
20 no attention paid to the fact that they
21 don't have the same capital
22 infrastructure, so they weren't trying to
23 address remediation in the same way.
24 They don't have HVAC systems.

25 The District has worked hard

1 trying to get the state to acknowledge
2 the fact that cyber charters don't
3 present the same kind of challenges.
4 We've not been able to get any traction
5 around those issues. We've worked with
6 districts around the Commonwealth, over
7 200 -- over 415 school districts have
8 passed resolutions urging the state to
9 look at the cyber charter funding issue.
10 But thus far, we've not been successful
11 in that.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Who's
13 leading that effort on the state level?

14 MS. WILKERSON: You have a
15 number of -- well, the Governor's taken a
16 strong position and then you have
17 statewide organizations, Pennsylvania
18 School Board Association, there's an
19 association of administrators, there's an
20 organization learned -- there's an
21 organization of superintendents from
22 around the Commonwealth, so a lot of
23 different parties have taken up that
24 issue.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: All

1 right. And the elected -- you don't have
2 to give it to me now. I just need to get
3 a sense of the elected members of the
4 legislature because that's where the
5 process really starts.

6 MS. WILKERSON: Yeah. We can
7 provide detailed information. There's a
8 lot of information done to analyze, to
9 look at the cyber charter impact
10 district-by-district, and we can make
11 sure that information is provided.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: All
13 right. Thank you. And the graduation
14 rate issue.

15 MS. WILKERSON: Dr. Hite.

16 DR. HITE: Yeah, I'll talk about
17 that. I'll just add one point on the
18 cyber charters too, Council President.
19 The cyber charters are authorized by the
20 state, so they're not authorized locally
21 like all of the brick-and-mortar charters
22 by the jurisdictions, but they're
23 authorized by the state. And so, that's
24 why we're glad to see that the Governor
25 is engaged. The Governor and his team

1 are engaged in this process in trying to
2 amend the law that would be more
3 equitable and fair as it relates to
4 allocation of resources for cyber --

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Yeah.
6 I'm not opposed to cyber charters. I
7 just don't know why we're taking money
8 away from much-needed dollars for capital
9 infrastructure for brick-and-mortar
10 schools and giving it to cyber charter
11 schools that don't have brick-and-mortar
12 or infrastructure.

13 DR. HITE: Yeah. No, I think
14 that -- and then on the graduation rate,
15 I'm not so sure the numbers that you were
16 referencing, but our grad rate is now
17 over 80 percent and it does include
18 individuals who come back and individuals
19 who are in what we call our opportunity
20 schools that are overage and
21 undercredited and maybe working through
22 alternative education programs.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Yeah.
24 Let me make a little more clarity. It
25 references those individuals that are in

1 the poverty rate.

2 DR. HITE: Oh, okay. Got you.

3 Thank you. Yeah, but it's that -- in
4 every category we are seeing positive
5 movement in and amongst our graduates. I
6 mean that young people who are attending
7 our schools, so we're glad to see that
8 has increased to over 80 percent. I
9 think when I arrived it was either at 60
10 percent or the low 60s.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Okay.
12 Thank you. Thank you.

13 Chair recognizes Councilman
14 Jones.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank, you
16 Mr. President.

17 And again, thank you, Dr. Hite
18 and your team, Joyce Wilkerson and your
19 Board, for in my opinion one of the most
20 coherent presentations I've ever seen. I
21 actually got more out of this
22 presentation than most combined, so thank
23 you for that. I'm not going to -- I'm
24 going to focus my questions on things
25 that I know maybe my colleagues will not

1 focus on.

2 And so, I'm going to start with
3 the fact that we do a Safe Corridors
4 program that we've done now since the
5 untimely death of a student Bernard Scott
6 out at Overbrook. I want -- and I know
7 Member Green and Member Gym and others
8 have attended some of those 7:00 a.m roll
9 call meetings to discuss how we combine
10 boots-on-the-ground police, cameras in
11 the sky with live eyes on them during the
12 arrival and departure of our students.

13 It's my understanding that we
14 are replicating this in an effort to keep
15 our babies safe. Can you elaborate on
16 that? But don't start yet. So I want to
17 get my questions out. Second question I
18 would have is that in those roll call
19 meetings increasingly principals and
20 staff have become frustrated with parents
21 who actually come into school and are
22 actually posing a threat to some of the
23 staff and teachers within their schools
24 as I guess an effort to guard their
25 children, but the process kind of puts a

1 pressure on an intensity on interaction
2 with staff which is unacceptable. So I'd
3 like you to cover those two issues on my
4 first round.

5 DR. HITE: Thank you, Councilman
6 Jones --

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: I'm sorry.
8 One more. The idea that a lot of these
9 sports teams utilizing School District
10 facilities don't have money to pay for
11 those fees, and I understand you have a
12 collective bargaining agreement. I'd
13 love to know what our philosophy will be
14 on making sure that as an anti-violence
15 measure, a lot of these mom-and-pop track
16 teams and football teams and club teams
17 who do not get paid, how they are
18 included in your facilities. And those
19 are the three questions I have. Thank
20 you, Dr. Hite.

21 DR. HITE: Thank you, Councilman
22 Jones. And we'll start with just kind of
23 the work that we're doing with the roll
24 call meetings that you referenced in the
25 Safe Corridors. I'm going to ask Chief

1 of School Safety Kevin Bethel to talk
2 about the work, and then I'll come back
3 and talk about the youth teams and other
4 sports teams who are using their
5 facilities.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

7 MR. BETHEL: Thank you,
8 Dr. Hite. Good morning, Councilman
9 Jones. In relation to your question as
10 you know, Councilman, we're really adding
11 to what you're doing, right. We're
12 really trying to raise the awareness
13 around how we can work more
14 collaboratively across the City to cover
15 as many schools as possible. As you
16 know, it's a large geographical area of
17 concentration.

18 And so part of this, our work
19 moving into the space even with our Safe
20 Path program is support what Town Watch
21 Integrated is doing in those little micro
22 areas where we haven't, but we really
23 want to raise the attention around such a
24 substantial need. So we also as you know
25 are meeting. We break out the City into

1 six divisions running against the police
2 department's model.

3 I work with Inspector Dales to
4 really reinstitute what we used to do
5 years ago, if you recall. We're meeting
6 with the school leaders, and the school
7 leaders are meeting with the Philadelphia
8 Police Department and we're starting to
9 bring other individuals into that space.
10 We have some work to do. We did get a
11 late start in introducing that work. And
12 so, as we move into the next school year,
13 we really want to enhance that component
14 where we're really -- because the
15 dialogue is the key as you indicated.
16 The more we know, the more intelligence
17 we receive going into the community, the
18 better we can respond and stop some of
19 this activity happening. And so, I
20 definitely want to share that with you.

21 You really hit on the head with
22 the parents. This year has been probably
23 a greater challenge than ever. I think
24 some of the things that are contributing
25 to that and we have to be honest about

1 that, when we went to a ticketing for
2 just solely conduct, we really kind of
3 handcuffed so when the police department
4 and others are responding to the school
5 where parents are out of control or
6 acting in a manner, I mean as you are
7 aware, that's a code violation.

8 And so, I think some individuals
9 are taking advantage of that and saying,
10 well, I can go up to the schools and do
11 whatever I want as long as I stay within
12 this level. And so, I think it may be
13 something that we or maybe the Council
14 may have to reconsider. Because as I
15 shared with Dr. Hite and others, schools
16 used to be a safe zone, that you couldn't
17 come up to schools and do some of the
18 things that we're having.

19 We're getting parents coming up
20 with guns at our schools. I mean, it is
21 something that is really, really starting
22 to escalate. And we do need some support
23 and how do we start to identify that our
24 schools are a place of a safety zone, you
25 know, and the parents should not be

1 coming up to school engaging in this
2 level of behavior, threatening our school
3 leaders, our teachers and then even
4 fighting other parents.

5 I mean, in the most recent case
6 parents came up, drove around the corner
7 and started shooting at each other and
8 these are things that were unheard. And
9 I think we have to start sending a very
10 strong message to parents that there is a
11 process of mediation and support in the
12 school to address those issues and they
13 should rely on that and not returning to
14 where they're forcibly coming into our
15 schools or walking our corridors and
16 going after our children.

17 I think you hit on both areas,
18 and those are areas that we would love
19 to, particularly my office and the School
20 District team, collaborate with Council
21 to really have a more robust conversation
22 of how we could possibly bring some of
23 this activity in.

24 DR. HITE: And Council -- and
25 thank you, Chief Bethel. And then,

1 Councilman Jones, I want to circle back
2 on your other point about the sports
3 teams and the use of facilities,
4 particularly as we think about these
5 anti-violence measures, and I think it's
6 really important to acknowledge that.
7 From our perspective, we want to keep our
8 buildings open as much as possible to be
9 used by as many individuals as possible.

10 And I do think that that's
11 important, particularly to have places
12 for young people to go. And I think we
13 should be thinking about all assets, not
14 just schools but all assets and how do we
15 get those things open, including
16 libraries, rec centers. If it's
17 available, it should be open for our
18 young people. But I do also want to
19 acknowledge that we do have a CBA, you
20 asked about a collective bargaining
21 agreement, with one of our collective
22 bargaining units that requires us to have
23 a member of that unit in buildings
24 anytime they're open.

25 And so, if those buildings are

1 open on extended hours or over the
2 weekends, then that CBA requires us to
3 pay overtime. And we are looking at a
4 proposal to identify sets of buildings in
5 and around the City. And I know you've
6 been working with us on this, Councilman,
7 as has Councilman Thomas and the
8 Education Committee Chair as well and
9 appreciate your work, but we're looking
10 at a proposal that the School District
11 will look at and approach like we looked
12 at PHLConnectED so that we have an
13 allocated amount that could be used for
14 that purpose so that organizations that
15 need to use our facilities, particularly
16 on weekends or after hours -- well, after
17 hours like evenings and weekends or
18 holidays are able to do that. So we're
19 continuing to work on that and I just
20 thank you for your help in helping us to
21 come up with a plan for that.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: I want to
23 acknowledge your team that has been
24 engaging in the discussions and the
25 realities of how we can achieve that

1 mutually attainable goal. So I have
2 confidence that we're going to figure it
3 out, and whose pocket it comes out of is
4 less important to me than that it does
5 happen for those young people. The other
6 thing is your staff, your principals,
7 your teachers who are the vanguard of the
8 education process should not be subjected
9 to that type of violence that's on school
10 property, and we just need to be vigilant
11 about that.

12 So thank you, Mr. President, for
13 your indulgence.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
15 you. Thank you, Councilman. Thank you.

16 To the Members, we've been
17 having some issues with respect to
18 queuing for the chat and we got the last
19 couple of days, so maybe calling on
20 individuals that I have access to queue
21 from different methods.

22 So I'm going to recognize
23 Councilman Green at this point. Chair
24 recognizes Councilman Green, and then
25 we'll go to Councilwoman Gilmore

1 Richardson. But I need to look into, you
2 know, I think it has issues with respect
3 to the time that you place yourself in
4 the chat. So I'll figure that out.
5 That's the technology of people. All
6 right.

7 Chair recognizes Councilman
8 Green.

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
10 Council President.

11 And I'm just going to reiterate
12 the comments made by the Chair of our
13 Education Committee, Councilmember Maria
14 Quinones-Sanchez, for the work that you,
15 Dr. Hite, have done in your leadership
16 with the School District and others from
17 the School Board who are leaving us and
18 to your staff. I do have some questions
19 and concerns. And although I'm
20 appreciative of the time you spent with
21 the School District and all the great
22 work you have done, I also just have some
23 concern in reference to certain issues,
24 particularly in reference to the District
25 and the federal funding they received,

1 the American Rescue Plan. I believe
2 about \$1.1 billion.

3 And I know one of the plans, one
4 of the suggested use of dollars was to
5 replace HVAC systems in the schools. We
6 know that's very important because of the
7 issues of COVID and ventilation, and I'm
8 not going to reiterate some of the
9 concerns that I witnessed through some of
10 my tours of the schools from the issues
11 we had with the fans being installed in
12 windows and schools, and then even some
13 of the concerns I've had regarding
14 asbestos and lead.

15 I was disappointed that the
16 District did not come to the hearing that
17 we had regarding that issue. I did hear
18 Mr. Monson talk about the investments
19 that are being made. But I want to get a
20 sense of how the District is going to be
21 using those dollars regarding HVAC
22 systems throughout the schools. And
23 also, I know some of those ARPA funds are
24 also going to be used for special
25 education teachers and support staff.

1 How will we continue to fund those areas
2 after those funds expire?

3 DR. HITE: Mr. Monson, do you
4 want to take that or do you want to call
5 on Reggie?

6 MR. MONSON: I'll do the second
7 half funding part, and then I'll leave --

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And, Council
9 President, do not use the delay in their
10 responding against my time.

11 MR. MONSON: Sorry. Just trying
12 to get coordinated here. On the funding
13 side, I think you're asking exactly the
14 right questions that there are a lot of
15 issues, not just on the school -- the
16 facilities piece about how we deal with
17 once the federal funds are gone. What we
18 have done though is we're not using --
19 the federal funds are only a piece of
20 what we're putting in buildings, both for
21 all building issues, whether it's HVAC,
22 short-term.

23 So we've been able to increase
24 our bond rating and therefore been able
25 to borrow more funds. We have a routine

1 borrowing, so we borrowed over \$400
2 million last fall, over \$500 million two
3 years before that so we have that. And
4 throughout the five-year plan, we plan on
5 having large borrowings every other year
6 that fits the plan of what we're doing.
7 We also have the Penn grant, the \$10
8 million a year for the next 10 years, the
9 \$100 million which is all focused on
10 environmental issues per the terms of
11 that grant.

12 So when you -- and the whole
13 idea was that we were not using the
14 federal funds to supplant, but to
15 supplement. So over six years which
16 includes after the federal money is gone,
17 we have over \$2 billion commitment
18 towards capital. So really looking again
19 at -- I think we were doing that
20 pre-pandemic pre-federal and we were
21 really in a good place on that to
22 maintain a substantial level of
23 investment. And we'll have a better
24 sense of when we're able to complete the
25 master plan of how we can align our

1 borrowing and capital spending to that
2 master plan and what that looks like.

3 But you're correct, and a piece
4 of this is we're not going to have that
5 extra push which we have right now with
6 the federal funding, whether it's for the
7 facilities or for some of the additional
8 supports for students. And I don't
9 know -- let Reggie do the current work on
10 the buildings.

11 MS. WILKERSON: But I want to
12 before --

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: To follow up
14 to your -- Ms. Wilkerson, hold on one
15 second. To follow up to that point,
16 Mr. Monson, how will you continue to have
17 dollars for those services when the
18 federal dollars run out? And,
19 Ms. Wilkerson, if you'd like to jump in
20 on that as well.

21 MS. WILKERSON: Yeah. I just
22 wanted to say that the state has an
23 uncommonly large surplus at this point,
24 and I think that it behooves all of us to
25 lobby aggressively for additional funds

1 for public education. And Mr. Monson I
2 know can put a finer point on that. But
3 this is an unprecedented opportunity that
4 would go a long way in addressing the
5 structural problems that we have.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And,
7 Ms. Wilkerson, I definitely appreciate
8 that. I've now learned from conversation
9 with Senator Hughes and others we may now
10 be up to \$9 billion of unallocated
11 dollars. You also have opportunities
12 through what will be the outcome of maybe
13 the negotiations with the Governor and
14 the General Assembly as well as the
15 William Penn lawsuit. But those are
16 things that are in the future, not
17 guaranteed.

18 The state has not traditionally
19 been supportive of the stuff we've done
20 with the City of Philadelphia in
21 reference to education, but I don't want
22 us to get back to a situation where we
23 had, especially coming through the Obama
24 Administration where we race to the top
25 and we allocate dollars and we had to

1 pull back.

2 MR. MONSON: So we're doing our
3 best to not do that. It's why we're
4 being very thoughtful, and we have the
5 advantage now that we didn't have then of
6 having the five-year plan, so that helps
7 us think about it long term. There are
8 things that we had originally planned not
9 to do for the coming year, but I think
10 with the pandemic going longer in some
11 ways than we had hoped, you know, and I
12 mentioned there are other cities that are
13 already pulling back for that very
14 reason.

15 I think the conversations we
16 have in '24 about how we step that down,
17 hopefully there's some things. And a lot
18 of things we're doing are one-time
19 pieces, whether it's some of the HVAC
20 things, some of the facilities issues.
21 So those are things that we are still
22 going to have to supplement on what we do
23 on the facility side, for example, but I
24 think as much as we can access this.

25 We were disappointed when

1 schools were taken out at the last minute
2 of the federal funds for infrastructure.
3 We will keep pushing for that. They're
4 going to always be proposed with the
5 state. And anything we can do to be
6 creative in the ways we acquire funds for
7 facilities use and utilize the funds for
8 facilities use, so some of the pieces we
9 were doing with the PIDC model for the
10 three buildings we're doing now that were
11 just approved are ways that we think we
12 can be more efficient and effective with
13 the funds we have.

14 So part of it is how do we get
15 more funds, but also making sure that we
16 are using the funds we have as
17 efficiently and effectively as possible.
18 I think the master plan also helps that
19 so we have a long-term plan for the
20 approach.

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I want to
22 circle back to building structure issues
23 and talk about staffing. You did talk
24 about some of the staffing concerns. And
25 I know one of the issues we've seen is

1 the lack of and a need for additional
2 Black and Brown teachers in the District.
3 What steps are you taking to do that type
4 of recruitment and what's your staffing
5 approach to address vacancies in upcoming
6 years, especially considering some of the
7 challenges in students coming back into
8 the District because of COVID-19?

9 DR. HITE: Thank you, Councilman
10 Green. And did you want us to respond to
11 the HVAC question too?

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, no. I
13 think we touched on HVAC. I want to get
14 to the teacher vacancies, and then I'll
15 close because the bell has rung.

16 DR. HITE: Yeah. No, I
17 appreciate that. Thank you. So the
18 staffing, many of the things that I
19 talked about as a part of the first part
20 of this presentation is identify to
21 increase the number of individuals who
22 are more representative of the students
23 we serve. It's one reason we're starting
24 with the paraprofessionals in terms of
25 our tuition reimbursement. These are

1 many individuals who in a lot of cases
2 live in their communities, are from our
3 communities and have children in our
4 schools. And so, that we think is like a
5 first step in the direction to
6 dramatically increase the numbers of
7 individuals who are more representative
8 of the populations in their schools and
9 in their communities.

10 With respect to staffing, as I
11 indicated earlier we identified 17
12 schools that have historical vacancies
13 and long-term vacancies. And we
14 identified those 17 schools first as we
15 opened our staffing protocols or our
16 staffing process. Those schools then had
17 the opportunity to select amongst
18 candidates prior to any other school
19 selecting among those candidates, and
20 those 17 schools have now selected over
21 100 individuals to fill vacancies that
22 have been persistent in and across the
23 years at those schools.

24 Additionally, we've identified
25 another set of schools where we are going

1 to be encouraging retention bonuses or
2 using retention bonuses to keep the
3 individuals there. I think more
4 importantly though we have to also start
5 looking at what programs can we now
6 provide to the young people who are
7 sitting in our classrooms today to create
8 teachers for tomorrow and if that is
9 providing those individuals with supports
10 and programs, academies that introduce
11 those young people to the teaching
12 profession.

13 I think those things are really
14 important as are many of the incentives
15 that the Board President described or
16 requested as a part of the Board's
17 presentation.

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
19 Dr. Hite. And I did see Mr. McNeil come
20 on. And I just wanted to go back to
21 where I started as I close this round of
22 questioning. And I think that's
23 important in reference to staffing. I
24 think it's also important that teachers
25 have reasonable workloads in order to

1 provide the best education and also not
2 providing cumbersome paperwork for them
3 to deal with, which also takes them away
4 from providing instruction.

5 I mean, that's why we're all
6 supporting Teachers Appreciation Week.
7 Myself having a mother as a former
8 schoolteacher, but those types of things
9 take away from the education
10 opportunities in the District. And I
11 think that would be a worthwhile endeavor
12 to reduce some of the paperwork that
13 frustrates the ability of teachers to
14 actually teach.

15 Mr. McNeil, I'll close with you
16 and thank you for being here. Just
17 wanted to get a follow-up on the issues
18 of asbestos and lead. I know we had some
19 conversations. I made reference to an
20 earlier hearing that we had in City
21 Council where the District failed to
22 appear. There's also some statements
23 made by the District that some of the
24 information that members of Council and
25 others testified or had a press

1 conference regarding what's not accurate,
2 even though that data actually came from
3 the School District based on legislation
4 that we as the City Council has done.

5 So I want to get a perspective
6 of how we're moving forward to make the
7 School District more client -- I'm sorry
8 more climate-friendly and doing things
9 like looking at our fleet and other ways
10 to reduce fossil fuels and how can we
11 rely on the District going forward based
12 on some of these past situations that
13 we've had.

14 Thank you, Council President.

15 MR. MCNEIL: Thank you,
16 Councilman, for the questions. The first
17 one, I just want to say we were not
18 present for the test -- we were not
19 present for the hearing understandably,
20 but we did provide you with testimony.
21 And within that, we did cover some of the
22 things that we thought about in regards
23 to how we deal with our asbestos
24 management for the School District.

25 I also want to make sure I cover

1 everything that you discussed. As far as
2 improving the climate for the schools,
3 we've done a great job this year in
4 completing our assessments of all of our
5 schools when it comes to the HVACs that
6 exist and do not exist in the schools by
7 looking also at the electrical capacity
8 within the school building.

9 So since we've completed that
10 assessment, we've already started doing
11 the work in our maintenance shops to
12 upgrade our electrical systems and then
13 install HVAC units in some of the schools
14 that did not have them, and we've also
15 sent a plan over to our capital
16 department who had approved the
17 Guaranteed Energy Savings Act, which
18 focuses on our mechanical systems within
19 our schools.

20 To our proposed budget that
21 we're going to submit to our Board, we
22 have over \$160 million worth of work that
23 can be done over the next couple of years
24 to improve the HVAC systems in the School
25 District.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
2 you. Thank you.

3 Okay. We'll try this again.

4 Chair recognizes Councilwoman Gilmore
5 Richardson.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

7 Thank you, Council President. Thank you
8 so much, Dr. Hite and to the team and the
9 School District and the School Board.

10 Happy National Teacher Appreciation Week.

11 I know that I'm appreciative of the work
12 that the teachers do each and every day,
13 particularly with my two students who
14 attend two different Philadelphia public
15 schools. And hopefully, next year if we
16 can get everything straight with the
17 School District hopefully I'll have three
18 children at two different schools in the
19 School District of Philadelphia.

20 So I wanted to start where my
21 colleague left off relative to the
22 federal funding and building and
23 facilities and just ask about the
24 infrastructure package particularly and
25 if the School District could detail any

1 of the grants and/or proposals that you
2 all are applying for that may be
3 competitive that could be of assistance
4 to the School District of Philadelphia.

5 And I just wanted to get that on
6 the record. I know that I worked with
7 you all on one, but I wanted to see all
8 or the scope of the work you all are
9 doing around some of the competitive
10 federal funding in the infrastructure
11 bill.

12 MR. MONSON: So it's okay,
13 Dr. Hite, if I respond?

14 DR. HITE: (Nodded
15 affirmatively).

16 MR. MONSON: So we obviously
17 applied for any federal competitive
18 grant, so we've been doing them. We
19 actually just submitted for a large EPA
20 grant around water projects that we can
21 do around there to support our schools.
22 The infrastructure bill in particular is
23 a tough one for us because we don't have
24 standing in the same way. It would have
25 to be kind of a joint project with the

1 City or some other local that has -- so
2 we've been trying to find a way for us to
3 identify our projects as projects that
4 make sense either there or in some other
5 ways with -- we speak with the
6 Congressional Delegation in D.C., in ways
7 that can be helpful.

8 There are numerous grants that
9 come through both from federal and from
10 the state that are everything from
11 facilities to student, emotional and
12 behavioral supports. Some are
13 competitive. Some are not.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
15 Uri, Uri --

16 MR. MONSON: Yes.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
18 Just for clarification, I think it would
19 be helpful to the Council President and
20 my colleagues if you could all just give
21 us a list of all the opportunities, all
22 the grants that you all will be applying
23 for, particularly those that are
24 competitive, okay, and they're not
25 formula-based. If you could just give us

1 a list from the infrastructure bill of
2 what you will apply for and then have
3 that list be ongoing as those
4 opportunities come in, because you know
5 I'm on the Board of the Local Government
6 Advisory Committee for the EPA.

7 I did send that information to
8 the District and followed up with you
9 all, and I'm happy that you did apply for
10 that opportunity. But more of those
11 opportunities will be coming down the
12 pipeline. And like you said, that one
13 was water, but some will be climate-based
14 and will be able to fit into the scope of
15 what we are seeking to do relative to
16 buildings and facilities in the District.
17 So my request is if we could get an
18 ongoing list of that activity and
19 everything that you all have applied for
20 and will be applying for.

21 Okay. My second question is
22 relative to addressing some of the
23 backlog of maintenance requests for
24 school facilities. And if you could
25 provide us with an update there.

1 DR. HITE: Councilwoman Gilmore
2 Richardson, good morning. Did you want
3 us to provide that as a response or this
4 morning?

5 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
6 Oh, this morning if possible, yes. And,
7 Council President, please don't count
8 that pause against my time. Thank you.

9 DR. HITE: Thank you. And I'm
10 going to ask for our Chief Operating
11 Officer Reggie McNeil to come back on and
12 provide us with that information.

13 MR. McNEIL: So, Councilwoman
14 Gilmore Richardson, I believe your
15 question was about where are we with our
16 backlog?

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
18 Of maintenance requests, yes, for all of
19 our school facilities.

20 MR. McNEIL: Yeah, we're still
21 at around -- we've made some
22 improvements, but right now across the
23 School District we're about 11,000 work
24 orders still that we have in our backlog.
25 We've made significant improvements over

1 the year, but not at the rate that we
2 need to. And that has a lot to do with
3 some of our supply chain backlogs that
4 we're experiencing right now and also
5 with some of the personnel issues as far
6 as us trying to hire more staff to get
7 the work done, but we are making
8 improvements.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

10 Okay. So then my request will be for
11 this issue that we receive a list of
12 those 11,000 maintenance requests. Can
13 you break them down by school and also by
14 School District -- by Council District?

15 MR. McNEIL: I can break them
16 down by school, Council District as well
17 as categories of work.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

19 Okay. Excellent. And then lastly, I'm
20 Chair of City Council's Committee on the
21 Environment and I was just curious around
22 the School District's goals to reach our
23 City goal of carbon neutrality by 2050?

24 DR. HITE: I'm going to ask
25 Mr. McNeil to also respond to that. As

1 you know, Councilwoman Gilmore
2 Richardson, we also just recently
3 purchased new electric buses, and
4 Mr. McNeil can talk about that and other
5 work that's happening to meet the City's
6 goals.

7 MR. McNEIL: Right. So thank
8 you, Dr. Hite. As Dr. Hite mentioned, we
9 have recently just purchased the electric
10 buses that we've revealed to the
11 community just a couple of months ago,
12 and we've also had the Board approve an
13 additional buy towards \$8 million for
14 more electric buses. Our goal is to try
15 and replace our fleet with more
16 modernized equipment that reduces the
17 carbon footprint within the community.

18 So we'll continue to seek grant
19 funding for that as well as talk to Uri
20 about putting more operational spend on
21 and capital spend actually on buying some
22 of those electric buses.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
24 Okay. All right. So if you could keep
25 us updated on all of your goals around

1 achieving or working towards carbon
2 neutrality as a District, that would be
3 helpful.

4 My next set of questions is
5 relative to the school finder portal.
6 And my real concern that our projected
7 enrollment at our schools is not accurate
8 based on the incorrect GIS system that
9 the School District is utilizing. This
10 is something that I brought up to the
11 District two years ago. I worked with
12 you all on this issue. You assured me
13 that this issue was taken care of. That
14 is not the case.

15 I come to this issue as a
16 graduate of the Philadelphia public
17 school system by way of Gompers,
18 Masterman and Girls High. I taught in
19 the public school system. I have
20 children in the public school system
21 currently. And the GIS system is not
22 working. And I want an answer on this
23 hearing today on how you are going to fix
24 the GIS system, the school finder system,
25 so that parents can be directed to the

1 appropriate school for their child to
2 attend.

3 It is messing with the
4 enrollment numbers, which then impacts
5 the staffing. I hear the bell and I will
6 just continue for a moment because I want
7 an answer today on this issue. It is
8 impacting the enrollment for our schools,
9 which is then impacting the projected
10 staffing needed for schools and it's not
11 working. I sent you all copies of GIS
12 tracking to show from a residential
13 location to the school how far it is, how
14 parents are being sent to schools that
15 are outside of their catchment area that
16 will require bus service, and this is all
17 happening from the School District.

18 And then you all come here and
19 you complain that you don't have any
20 money because you have to pay for the
21 students that want to go to other
22 schools, but you're sending them there,
23 okay. And so, what I want to know today
24 is when and who will fix that GIS system,
25 okay? And I made a speech about this in

1 March and I'm coming back to you again
2 today.

3 I followed up with the staff.
4 This is not for lack of follow-up or
5 follow-through on my regard. Me
6 personally as a parent, I can't even sign
7 up my own son in the kindergarten in the
8 School District of Philadelphia at our
9 closest local public school because it
10 doesn't work.

11 So, Council President, excuse
12 me. I apologize for my anger, but I am
13 sick of the School District of
14 Philadelphia. It should not be this hard
15 to enroll our young people in our closest
16 local public school. Then you come here
17 and complain that you have no money. I
18 don't want to hear it. I want to hear
19 how this will be fixed today.

20 DR. HITE: Thank you,
21 Councilwoman Gilmore Richardson. And I
22 think that we have Karyn on the phone --
23 I'm sorry, on the line, Karyn Lynch,
24 Chief of Student Services. And there is
25 a point that I think needs to be

1 corrected for the record. The system to
2 enroll children does -- the GIS system
3 doesn't impact enrollment. We're still
4 counting those children regardless of if
5 they're with us or with a charter. So we
6 still count the number --

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
8 Point of information, Council President.

9 I apologize for interrupting
10 you, Dr. Hite, because I have sent three
11 to four pages of evidence on this issue.
12 It is impacting the enrollment for the
13 School District of Philadelphia because
14 not only are the students being sent to
15 other schools, okay, which, fine, that's
16 the parents' choice. But the bottom line
17 is you all should not be doing the
18 marketing for them.

19 And secondly, when you call
20 yourself correcting it, and I'll give you
21 my case as an example which is why I know
22 this is happening to tons of other
23 families all across Philadelphia, I'm
24 being sent to a school that's over 2
25 miles away from my home, 2.1 miles away,

1 that will require bus service for my
2 5-year-old instead of the school that's
3 .7 miles away that's the closest local
4 public school. Help me out.

5 DR. HITE: So I'm going to ask
6 Karyn Lynch to give a response to the
7 concerns that you've mentioned this
8 morning.

9 MS. LYNCH: Councilmember, you
10 are absolutely right that you have sent
11 the information to us, we have reviewed
12 the information. Your address is much
13 closer to a school that is not the
14 assigned school that you're in. This is
15 not a GIS problem. The GIS is working
16 accurately. The GIS assigns the school
17 that has been identified in the boundary
18 as the school that is to receive students
19 from your address. In other words, the
20 system itself is working correctly.
21 We've checked the system numerous times.

22 The boundary change has to be
23 changed. Your address is assigned to a
24 school that yes, in fact, is further away
25 from the nearest school, and we need to

1 do a boundary change and reassign the
2 school address, the addresses of the
3 schools that are in your immediate area.
4 That boundary change we have not yet been
5 able to do.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

7 Out of respect for the Council President
8 and out of respect for our leadership
9 team and my colleagues, I will come back
10 on the second round to continue this
11 conversation. But today we will get this
12 corrected.

13 Thank you, Council President.

14 And thank you, colleagues.

15 MS. LYNCH: Thank you.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
17 you, Councilwoman. Councilwoman, you
18 never have to apologize for being
19 passionate about education. Thank you.

20 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
21 Gym.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
23 very much, Council President. I'm going
24 to follow up with Councilmember Gilmore
25 Richardson's deep, deep, deep concerns

1 about enrollment, about engagement of
2 students and families. All of us on this
3 Council have been very clear that the
4 health and well-being of our schools
5 determines the success of our City's
6 future. When the City and the School
7 District lose residents and families, all
8 of us, all of us bear the consequences as
9 a result.

10 It is our responsibility to win
11 our families back, to do everything that
12 we can to engage and to bring them there
13 to fight to get every single student,
14 whoever walked away, to capture every
15 single student trying to enroll and make
16 sure that we show them that if they
17 return to our public schools, they will
18 find a safe haven, they will find
19 opportunity and they will find a public
20 school to call their own.

21 Our Council body has made clear
22 time and time and time again not only
23 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson sending
24 over information, but myself repeatedly
25 year after year asking for a strategy to

1 re-engage and boost enrollment for
2 attendance and the engagement of children
3 and families. And so, not only are we
4 hearing individual stories like
5 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson has
6 said, but in fact the District has failed
7 on this because you are projecting a
8 7,000 student enrollment decline for next
9 year and staffing cuts that include the
10 loss of nearly 350 teachers.

11 350 fewer teachers in our
12 schools will not make our schools
13 stronger. It will not improve confidence
14 that teachers won't burn out or that our
15 student needs can be better met. And I
16 can guarantee you or I would like to see
17 whether the schools with the largest drop
18 in enrollment are the schools that have
19 actually borne the greatest crises with
20 gun violence, COVID and opioids that
21 endangers the very promises of racial
22 equity that this School Board promised to
23 the public.

24 The last time the School
25 District saw this dramatic of a drop in

1 student enrollment was following the
2 SRC's decision to close nearly 30 schools
3 in 2012 and 2013. Projecting that a
4 similar loss is going to take place and
5 accepting it during a pandemic makes
6 clear that the District is resigned not
7 just to a self-fulfilling prophecy, but
8 actually accepting of a dramatic
9 reduction in resources school-by-school.

10 And it's not just dividing it out over
11 the existing students that you project.

12 These enrollment projections are
13 never predetermined. Yours moreover are
14 deeply contested by school-based staff.
15 They're fighting them each and every step
16 of the way from principals to teachers
17 and families on the ground. And what is
18 certain is that cutting staff at this
19 level will increase the likelihood that
20 those enrollment projections become more
21 real than ever.

22 This is literally an existential
23 crisis because as the Board begins to
24 roll out its facilities master planning
25 process, it becomes really hard to not

1 see the Facilities Master Plan as a
2 blueprint for potential school closings,
3 especially as federal funds dry up and we
4 hit the 2025 fiscal cliff. So we've been
5 very clear. We need a formal all-hands-
6 on-deck strategy that engages City
7 agencies, but we have not yet heard one.

8 The new Superintendent deserves
9 that. The public deserves it and
10 taxpayers expect it. So I want to hear
11 what are we doing differently this year
12 to re-engage families as we draw new
13 students into our schools? What is the
14 status of initiatives such as the
15 Community Ambassadors Program and have
16 you made any formal requests to the City
17 Administration to support re-engagement
18 of families?

19 DR. HITE: We have made a formal
20 request for the City agencies and the
21 Offices of Work, Children and Youth --
22 I'm sorry, not Children and Youth, the
23 office that -- yeah, the Office of
24 Children and Families, excuse me. So we
25 have made a request for meeting with the

1 Office of Children and Families to meet
2 on this issue. But the work that we're
3 doing more broadly, Councilwoman Gym,
4 around trying to engage and coordinate
5 behavior health services, coordinate
6 areas where we can keep summer
7 programming open longer, have more before
8 and afterschool opportunities and even
9 some of the positions that we are
10 increasing this year for the purpose of
11 re-engaging families and attracting back
12 those families who have left, and we know
13 that they're still in the City.

14 For a lot of other families who
15 have moved out of the City, that
16 re-engagement effort is more difficult
17 naturally and we're losing individuals to
18 two entities, and this is the same across
19 the state. One is to cyber charters.
20 The other is to homeschools. We can
21 focus on those who are homeschooling, and
22 we think that we have made progress in
23 that area by having a full year of
24 schools being open for instruction.

25 We've also reached out to

1 agencies in the City, and Karyn can talk
2 more about the work that we have
3 connected with the City or attempted to
4 connect with the City to do, and perhaps
5 you could help us with this.

6 MS. LYNCH: Thank you, Dr. Hite.
7 Councilwoman Gym, in addition to those
8 items that Dr. Hite mentioned, we have
9 also engaged as he just pointed out with
10 community partners. We did an RFP early
11 in the year where we got community-based
12 organizations to do door-knocking. So
13 they went door-to-door identified by the
14 families that we knew had previously
15 engaged with the families, just to check
16 on the kids to establish good
17 relationships, to determine what barriers
18 might exist. That door-to-door knocking
19 campaign was not nearly as successful,
20 but it did help us identify several of
21 the barriers to success.

22 In addition, we have done
23 outreach by as many innovative processes
24 as cell phone numbers, robocalls,
25 constant ongoing search for the students

1 that we have not and had not been able to
2 find. And as you know, our behavioral
3 health teams have been involved as well.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so
5 much. Thank you, Karyn. I don't deny
6 that you are doing work. The issue is,
7 is that you're still projecting a 7,000
8 student enrollment decline and the loss
9 of hundreds of teachers as a result. So
10 the thing that we would request from the
11 School District of Philadelphia is that
12 we want a full analysis of all the
13 schools in which you're learning, whether
14 you're losing kids and what you are
15 losing them to, including whether they
16 have moved out of the City, whether they
17 have been lost to cyber charters and
18 specific strategies that you're working
19 with each and every school to be able to
20 build back a re-engagement strategy
21 that's on the base level.

22 We have to know about specific
23 school communities, including early
24 learners. It is ridiculous that my
25 colleague Councilmember Gilmore

1 Richardson has problems enrolling her
2 child at a neighborhood school. And if
3 she's having problems enrolling her child
4 at a neighborhood school or has to make a
5 choice that she has to send her child
6 over 2 miles away, then definitely so
7 many other families are doing the same
8 and are at a loss and don't have the
9 opportunity to have a direct conversation
10 with you. I want to hear about
11 disengaged high school students as well.

12 And then finally, I think as we
13 go back into engagement I'm just going to
14 put on the record that we're also talking
15 about educators and a recent study
16 showing that the number of Black teachers
17 in the School District of Philadelphia
18 has plummeted to a historic low. 1200
19 Black teachers need to be hired just to
20 return to the numbers we had 20 years
21 ago.

22 And so, additionally I was
23 surprised to see that we have more than 1
24 in 4 students who come from a family with
25 at least one nonEnglish-speaking parent

1 or guardian in the household. So I need
2 to hear the School District's, again,
3 strategy to specifically recruit Black
4 and Brown and bilingual teachers into the
5 District. I would like to see that
6 written out. We don't need to go through
7 all the different things that you've
8 done, but you're hearing tremendous
9 concern.

10 Again, this is not just a mere
11 budgetary question. This is an
12 existential crisis for the District and
13 the City. When you lose kids, we lose
14 residents. When you lose children, we
15 lose family members and people lose
16 faith. And we're not going to -- we're
17 going to hit a fiscal cliff. And again,
18 if that Facilities Master Plan is based
19 off of the current numbers and
20 projections, it is impossible for it not
21 to be a school closings plan. And that
22 is deeply unfair to an incoming
23 Superintendent and it's unfair to
24 taxpayers who expected that we would have
25 learned some new lessons.

1 So I will stop there and come
2 around for a second group of questions,
3 Council President.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
5 you. Thank you, Councilwoman.

6 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
7 Gauthier.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
9 you, Council President.

10 And good afternoon, Dr. Hite and
11 to your team and members of the Board. I
12 wanted to make a comment about the state
13 of our school facilities before I go into
14 my questions. I'm very glad that the
15 District has now embarked on a full-scale
16 capital plan, but I also think it's
17 shameful that we ever let things
18 deteriorate to the point that students
19 and parents are forced to protest in
20 hopes that repairs will be made quickly.

21 In particular, I'd like to note
22 the efforts of the students and faculty
23 at Paul Robeson High School. I'll be
24 supporting them in their protest this
25 Friday, but the crumbling facilities and

1 lack of communication from the District
2 that led them to take these actions
3 shouldn't exist in the first place. And
4 I think we all can agree that our kids
5 deserve and require safe and healthy
6 learning spaces.

7 I wanted to go back to the issue
8 of gun violence. I was pleased to see
9 that that was such a substantial part of
10 your presentation. Given that you
11 address our City's current gun violence
12 crisis, how do you then reconcile the
13 absence of climate managers in every
14 school? Climate managers not only
15 de-escalate interpersonal school
16 community issues, but they create and
17 implement programs that teach nonviolent
18 strategies and values. As an example,
19 Bartram High School lost a climate
20 manager in this budget and two students
21 were killed at that school right outside
22 of Bartram. So how are we thinking about
23 that?

24 DR. HITE: Councilwoman
25 Gauthier, I'll start. And another thing

1 that Chief Financial Officer talked
2 about, Mr. Monson, one, our enrollments
3 are based on -- our allocations are based
4 on student enrollment. Two, in many
5 places we've increased the number of
6 supports other than teaching positions
7 that were previously referenced. And
8 then three, many of the budget
9 allocations are in response to the
10 selections that principals make.

11 And so, I wanted to actually ask
12 the Chief Financial Officer to talk about
13 the process that we use to provide
14 individuals with the things that they
15 have requested over not just this year
16 because we held all schools harmless last
17 year, although we saw drops in enrollment
18 last year as well.

19 So, Mr. Monson, can you add.
20 And then I'll ask Karyn if we leave out
21 anything to talk about what we're doing
22 from a climate perspective.

23 MR. MONSON: So I'll just add
24 that I know -- then I'll let Karyn talk
25 about the school specifically. But in

1 general as I mentioned, the only position
2 I really saw lost was enrollment-driven
3 teachers. And even within that, there
4 are still more EL teachers and more
5 special ed. teachers. But the number of
6 climate supports, which was the highest
7 number we've ever had in the current year
8 is actually higher for next year. So we
9 had increased it last year and went up
10 additional. So there were a lot
11 throughout the system. We're over 392
12 climate behavioral specialists across the
13 system --

14 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Do we
15 have them at every school?

16 MR. MONSON: Well, sometimes
17 there is principal choice involved. And
18 some of those positions the principals
19 can make trade-offs where they can choose
20 what is best in the interest of their
21 school that meets the school plan
22 consistent with the input from assistant
23 superintendents, from the rest of the
24 school body --

25 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Did

1 Bartram request not to have a climate
2 manager?

3 MR. MONSON: I can't speak to
4 them specifically. I don't know if Karyn
5 has more information on that
6 specifically.

7 MS. LYNCH: I know currently,
8 Uri, Bartram has two climate managers.
9 And, yes, Councilwoman we usually -- it's
10 not our decision. The principal makes
11 the decision regarding the number of
12 staff and the allocation of staff that
13 they will have on their budget. So we
14 can check specifically with Bartram to
15 see what the decision-making process was
16 with regard to the number of climate
17 managers that you have indicated. I was
18 not aware that they were reducing the
19 number of climate managers that they
20 have.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
22 you so much. If you could get back to me
23 with that information.

24 MS. LYNCH: Absolutely.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: I wanted

1 to also ask you to lay out the specific
2 programs that the District has
3 implemented to address gun violence and
4 the amount of money that the District is
5 spending on each program.

6 DR. HITE: So I'll ask that
7 Chief Bethel will come back on and
8 provide us with some of the things we're
9 doing directly to respond to schools that
10 are impacted by gun violence, and this is
11 also partly a Karyn Lynch response as
12 well.

13 MR. BETHEL: Yeah, thank you,
14 Dr. Hite and Councilwoman. So one of the
15 things we are doing we're investing in a
16 violence interrupter program using Cure
17 Violence workers from Temple University.
18 We were able to get a grant from the
19 Neubauer Foundation to start that process
20 to hire two workers. We're going to be
21 doing that at Martin Luther King as well
22 as Bartram. It'll be a demonstration to
23 see how we can work more effectively in
24 that space.

25 Once I brought that to

1 Dr. Hite's attention, he also gave me
2 additional funding. So we have roughly I
3 believe around \$600,000 over the next two
4 to three years to be able to fully
5 implement those programs in the school
6 with the hope that that can be moved to
7 other neighborhood schools that we think
8 identify as having gang-related issues.
9 We dedicated around \$900,000. Part of
10 that was from the PCCD grant. I believe
11 it was a quarter of a million dollars
12 from PCCD as well as additional funding
13 that Dr. Hite gave us to be able to set
14 up the Safe Corridor, the Safe Path
15 Corridor, that we're doing.

16 And as you heard Uri talk about
17 the additional restorative funding, we
18 did ask for this year \$300,000 to support
19 us as we expand our community youth court
20 to support our diversion work that has
21 been going extremely well, our mentoring
22 work, investing in our mentoring to
23 expand our mentoring work.

24 Right now we're at five middle
25 schools. And so, we've been investing in

1 those and expanding our mentoring into
2 that program as training and those
3 activities. We just most recently took
4 the kids on some trips and we continue to
5 do that. We're also investing in our
6 PAL. So we presented a request to create
7 three PAL centers in our three middle
8 schools. One of them being Tilden
9 because of the issue with Bartram. As we
10 identified a model, a violence model,
11 having a PAL center as a feeder into
12 Bartram we thought would be an effective
13 tool. So we started that PAL center.
14 It's going extremely, extremely well, and
15 we appreciate Dr. Hite's investment in
16 that space.

17 We also put a PAL center in
18 Clemente, and we're doing Harding. These
19 were three of our most challenging middle
20 schools. The bell doesn't count for me
21 so I could keep going. But that was --

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Could I get
23 a point of information?

24 MR. BETHEL: A point of
25 information, yes, sir, Councilman

1 Johnson.

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:

3 Mr. President.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Chair
5 recognizes Councilman Johnson for a point
6 of information.

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Was that
8 \$250,000 for Safe Corridors programs over
9 three years?

10 MR. BETHEL: No, the Safe Path
11 program --

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: The
13 \$600,000 --

14 MR. BETHEL: I'm sorry. I
15 missed it. Partial was paid by PCCD and
16 we received additional funding to
17 continue that over the next three years.

18 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So just for
19 clarity 600,000 for violence interruption
20 over three years and \$250,000 for Safe
21 Corridor program, correct?

22 MR. BETHEL: I'm going to give
23 you the exact numbers. I didn't have
24 those specific numbers so I'm rounding.
25 But I can provide the Board with the -- I

1 mean, City Council with the exact
2 expenditures.

3 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And just
4 for the record, Uri, is the School
5 District's budget more than \$3 billion
6 dollars? I just want to say that
7 information for the record.

8 MR. MONSON: Yes, it's 3.5
9 billion.

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So the
11 School District's budget is 3.5 billion
12 and we're spending \$600,000 for violence
13 interruption workers over the next three
14 years and \$250,000 for Safe Corridor
15 programs; is that correct?

16 MR. BETHEL: Councilman Johnson,
17 I want to clarify. I'm just doing a
18 piece of it. I'm going to turn it over
19 to Karyn. This is part of a bigger pie.
20 I'm only talking about a piece of where
21 we are. School safety is just moving
22 into the space. But Karyn's team has
23 been in this space for a long time. So
24 let me kick over to where there's a lot
25 more money being expended.

1 MS. LYNCH: Thank you --

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I just want
3 to reserve it back to Councilman --

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Yeah,
5 Ms. Lynch can respond.

6 MS. LYNCH: Thank you. So,
7 Councilman, you remember two years ago
8 when we came before your Committee I
9 think you and Councilmember Gym had in
10 anti-violence. And at that Committee
11 meeting we heard from Kathy Reeves from
12 Temple University. Hers is a \$360,000
13 effort that is now in four of our schools
14 and she is assisting us with funding that
15 effort in three of the schools, but
16 there's another \$360,000.

17 Anywhere in our budget where you
18 see the involvement of prevention and
19 intervention and behavioral health
20 services including our STEP budget,
21 that's all directed toward at this point
22 looking at the violence that's taking
23 place, gun violence. They spend much of
24 their time responding to crisis
25 intervention related to violence and gun

1 violence and addressing the needs,
2 particularly of students.

3 In addition, we have other
4 efforts that are intended for the well-
5 being and I guess the support of adults
6 in our schools who are experiencing
7 tremendous feelings of depression and
8 anxiety as a result of the gun violence
9 involving the loss of their students. I
10 also want to quickly -- so it's only a
11 fraction and we can get you more of the
12 dollars that are spent on this topic. I
13 wanted to get that --

14 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Can you
15 specify? I'd like my colleague's line
16 of questioning about the total. What was
17 the total --

18 MS. LYNCH: -- and also --

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Hold
20 on. Hold on. Ms. Lynch, hold on a
21 second. We're not going to be talking
22 over each other. All right.

23 Ms. Lynch, conclude your
24 response to Councilman Johnson's point of
25 information, and then we'll go back to

1 Councilwoman Gauthier so she can conclude
2 her question. And then, Councilman
3 Johnson, you're next in the queue. All
4 right.

5 MS. LYNCH: Thank you. So I
6 can't give a full dollar amount now. We
7 can get back to you with the full dollar
8 amount once we look at the percentage of
9 effort that a particular position might
10 be providing toward anti-gun violence.

11 Councilman, may I also address
12 the issue that was raised regarding
13 Bartram and the two climate managers by
14 the Councilwoman?

15 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: (Nodded
16 affirmatively).

17 MS. LYNCH: Great. Thank you.
18 So Bartram has two climate managers
19 assigned for this year and for next year.
20 They have two counselors, one behavioral
21 health counselor. They have a STEP
22 coordinator. They also have a STEP case
23 manager and they have two climate
24 liaisons, all are providing the services
25 that we're talking about here, and it

1 would be again the principal's decision
2 to determine how he would like to
3 allocate his budget and that's how he has
4 allocated his budget, knowing the issues
5 and concerns that he has and that his
6 students and staff have at that school.

7 Thank you.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

9 You're welcome.

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're

11 welcome.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

13 Councilwoman Gauthier, did you get a
14 response or a conclusion to your last
15 question?

16 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: I think
17 we were waiting -- I guess you'll get
18 back to us with sort of the totals, the
19 spending in this area. I just would make
20 the point that we are not in the pilot
21 phase of our gun violence epidemic. 562
22 people were murdered in Philadelphia last
23 year and we're on pace to exceed those
24 numbers. We should not be in the pilot
25 phase of a response to the gun violence

1 epidemic, whether we're talking about
2 safe corridors, whether we're talking
3 about violence interruption. The way
4 that we're moving forward on these things
5 does not match the pace and the scale of
6 the issue. Thank you very much.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
8 you, Councilwoman.

9 Chair recognizes Councilman
10 Johnson.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
12 Council President.

13 First and foremost, I want to
14 thank Dr. Hite and his team. Dr. Hite,
15 as you make the transition, thank you for
16 your leadership. I was with you from day
17 1 until now and I thank you for not
18 leaving, you know. Often times I've seen
19 superintendents come and go based upon
20 each new administration, so thank you for
21 sticking and staying. And thank all your
22 team. Thank Karyn and Kevin Bethel and
23 Uri for the work that y'all have been
24 doing.

25 I have a couple quick questions

1 that I want to get in during this round.
2 First is transition because that's what
3 I'm looking at now in terms of what the
4 new paradigm shift is going to be when it
5 comes with the District. We have a new
6 Superintendent. Dr. Hite, can you just
7 give us a snapshot of where we're at in
8 terms of student achievement for reading,
9 math and the graduation rate, right?

10 What do you count briefly as successes?

11 And I know we start off talking
12 about some challenges that we may have to
13 look at. What is our transition plan for
14 the -- we wouldn't know what the new
15 Superintendent is going to do in terms of
16 his vision, but what is the transition
17 plan to smoothly go into a new
18 administration? And that's my first
19 question.

20 And then hopefully, I can get
21 the second part of this question in this
22 round, and this is for Kevin Bethel and
23 Karyn regarding the Safe Corridors
24 program, how schools are targeted, how
25 many schools will be implementing safe

1 corridors around the issue of public
2 safety and gun violence?

3 And then also, have we taken the
4 approach of partnering with programs such
5 as PAAN that will come in the schools
6 like they used to help deal with the
7 conflicts that spill over from the
8 schools and to the neighborhood? That's
9 a role that PAAN played in the past. It
10 doesn't play the role -- it's not playing
11 the role now, but has that been explored
12 so a transition plan and then safe
13 corridors and violence interrupters in
14 terms of in the schools? And I might
15 have missed that earlier because I know
16 you did talk about those violence
17 interrupters.

18 DR. HITE: So I'll begin,
19 Councilman Johnson, with just where are
20 we today versus where we were a decade
21 ago. And I think that the one thing that
22 is different now is a set of Goals and
23 what's called Guardrails that the Board
24 has established. So regardless of who
25 comes in, in my seat to the School

1 District, and we all want to welcome
2 Dr. Watlington here as the new
3 Superintendent, but the goals are not
4 going to change. Those academic goals
5 around children reading on grade level,
6 doing math on grade level, graduating
7 with the ability to get into the college
8 or to get into the job of their choice,
9 and then it talks about some guardrails,
10 which are the conditions around which.

11 But more importantly, before the
12 Board established the Goals and
13 Guardrails and the way we do progress
14 monitoring now, we were already on a pace
15 and I've already talked about some of the
16 graduation numbers that are markedly
17 different now than they were a decade
18 ago. Financially, we're in a much better
19 position, although we have to be looking
20 at the five-year plan to understand after
21 those federal monies what will happen.

22 Many of the things that were
23 historically cut from schools have now
24 been returned and exceeded. As a matter
25 of fact, for the fourth year in a row the

1 School District of Philadelphia was voted
2 one of the best communities for music in
3 schools as an example, because all K
4 through 8 schools now have music
5 programming, and that's just one example.

6 On our old accountability
7 system, we had increased 100 percent the
8 number of children who were in better-
9 performing schools and decreased, cut in
10 half the number of children who were in
11 lower-performing schools, which meant
12 trending that children were just in
13 better-performing schools, either the
14 schools were improving or there were
15 boundary adjustments, but children were
16 in better-performing schools.

17 Naturally, I'm proud of things
18 that we've been able to restore on behalf
19 of children. I'm also proud of a lot of
20 the work that is not just a palette, I
21 know that was indicated earlier in terms
22 of some of the work we're doing, but we
23 were, you know, we started some balance
24 prevention work I think it was a year
25 after I arrived and talking about all of

1 the work that we were doing in order to
2 keep children safe.

3 And while the School District of
4 Philadelphia is not the sole -- doesn't
5 have the sole responsibility to control
6 gun violence, we feel like we're making a
7 significant step in the right direction
8 to ensure that our children continue to
9 feel safe to and from schools. I would
10 add that with respect to the transition,
11 and the Board President can talk more
12 about this, but I'm meeting with
13 Dr. Watlington when he's here each week,
14 a couple of days a week.

15 We're talking about the work
16 that has happened. He's coming up with
17 his own perspective on how to do this
18 work. I'm providing him with a lot of
19 information just for the purpose of
20 sharing that information to increase his
21 body of knowledge about the School
22 District, about Philadelphia, about our
23 students, our staff members and the
24 community. And Madam --

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: That's

1 cool. Could you do this then? Just
2 because I know he's going to come in,
3 take over from where you are. Just give
4 us a snapshot, give me achievement rate
5 of reading, math for I guess it's
6 elementary, middle, grad -- I mean, high
7 school students. And Council President
8 Clarke asked about the graduation rates.
9 Just give me those three snapshots
10 because if I'm evaluating the outside
11 looking in, right, or picking a school
12 for my toddlers, the first thing I'll do
13 when I come to the school system and I
14 talk to the school principal, what's the
15 achievement record for reading and math
16 for this particular school.

17 And when I'm talking about my
18 nieces and nephews for high school, I'm
19 asking what's the graduation rate and
20 that's the barometer I'm going to use if
21 I want to make a decision to send my kid
22 to that school. I just want to get an
23 idea of that snapshot as we go into this
24 new administration coming in.

25 DR. HITE: Yeah. No, I

1 appreciate that, Councilman Johnson. So
2 the graduation rate is over 80 percent
3 now. It's the highest it's been in many
4 years. And we haven't -- because of
5 COVID, we haven't had the opportunity to
6 take the state assessment, the Keystones
7 and/or the PSSAs for the past two years.
8 We will be taking them this year
9 naturally, but we haven't been able to
10 take them over the past two years.

11 But with respect to what the
12 Board has established as their goals, we
13 do have a formative assessment that we
14 use on a regular basis. It's called a
15 STAR assessment. And in the last meeting
16 that we had with the Board several months
17 ago, we saw that we were seeing because
18 of the good work that's happening in
19 classrooms, we were seeing progress
20 across every grade in turn, and each
21 Kindergartner through 12th grader does
22 those assessments. And so --

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Can we
24 quantify that number if you don't mind?

25 DR. HITE: Yeah. The numbers

1 change, Councilman, because they're
2 different grades so it's not -- you can't
3 put everybody into one percentage, but it
4 shows growth from where children started
5 in the fall to where they score in the
6 winter to then in the spring. And so, we
7 do that on the annual -- and this is the
8 first year we've done that across all
9 grades.

10 And so, until we have the PSSAs
11 again, I think the last time we took the
12 PSSAs we were out at a 37 percent in 38
13 percent of the children, 3rd through 8th
14 grade who were proficient in literacy.
15 That number was much lower in math. And
16 both of those numbers are higher than
17 they were when I arrived a decade ago.

18 MS. WILKERSON: Councilman, this
19 is Joyce Wilkerson. We'd love to have
20 the opportunity to sit down with
21 Councilmembers individually and go
22 through our monitoring report so that you
23 can see how we're tracking progress
24 because we asked, you know, the progress
25 really varies by student group. It

1 varies by income level, and would love
2 the opportunity to sit down with you and
3 talk about who's not succeeding, why
4 aren't they succeeding and what's the
5 District going to do about it. That's
6 the drill we go through on a monthly
7 basis.

8 We do it at a District level,
9 but it's also done school-by-school and
10 would love to have the opportunity to sit
11 down with you. In terms of the
12 transition, part of what the Board
13 negotiated with Dr. Watlington is his
14 engagement with the District twice a
15 week. He has spent I guess last week,
16 about four days in Philadelphia. He's
17 been engaging with, you know, he's been
18 visiting schools. He's been meeting
19 elected officials and he's been talking
20 with various constituencies.

21 He's putting together a 100-day
22 plan that he'll be able to announce.
23 He's focused on the things that the Board
24 has identified as priorities. They're
25 not surprises, but would love the

1 opportunity to sit down with you to talk
2 about goals and guardrails and how we
3 monitor, and that's where you really can
4 see some of the really I think
5 significant improvements that are being
6 made that involve a lot of heavy lifting
7 by the District, you know, looking at the
8 curriculum, looking at the kind of
9 supports going into schools. But we'll
10 follow up with you on that.

11 DR. HITE: And if I may, Council
12 President, so just to be more specific to
13 respond to Councilman Johnson's question,
14 particularly thinking about the
15 transition, the goals are as follows:
16 We're seeking to increase the PSSAs for
17 3rd through 8th grade for reading from 36
18 to 65 percent, and by 2026 to increase
19 Grade 3 English language arts from 33 to
20 62 percent, to increase math 3rd through
21 8th from 22 percent to 52 percent all by
22 2026. High school proficiency on all
23 three tests we want to increase from 26
24 percent to 52 percent by 2026.

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And,

1 Council President, I'm wrapping up on
2 this. Now, I'll save the public safety
3 question for the second round.

4 But this question is to
5 Ms. Joyce Wilkerson. Are those goals,
6 are the milestones a part of the contract
7 for the new School Superintendent? Is
8 that part of his -- I know it's kind of
9 hard. But at the end of the day,
10 sometimes some contracts may have bonuses
11 if the District, if the Board says, reach
12 these numbers, right, and they may meet
13 half or more than half and there may be
14 certain incentives. Are those built into
15 the contract?

16 MS. WILKERSON: Well, we don't
17 have incentives, but the goals are
18 incorporated into his contract. We have
19 to revisit the exact numbers. So we
20 established the goals and guardrails
21 pre-COVID.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

23 MS. WILKERSON: And we're going
24 to sit down with Dr. Watlington and say,
25 okay, this is where we are now, this is

1 what --

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

3 MS. WILKERSON: -- we're looking
4 for. That's a huge part of what we're
5 going to be negotiating with
6 Dr. Watlington. And he understands that.
7 He wants to be accountable. He believes
8 that children in Philadelphia can achieve
9 at high levels. And so, that's part of,
10 you know, it's going to be in his
11 evaluation.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
13 That's what I wanted to hear. Thank you
14 very much, Council --

15 MS. WILKERSON: And I will --

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: --
17 President, for your latitude.

18 MS. WILKERSON: -- deploy,
19 Council, Board member Fix Lopez who's
20 done a lot of the monitoring around
21 literacy and math to sit down with you to
22 step you through what it is that we do.
23 She'll be reaching out to you momentarily
24 probably.

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

1 MS. FIX LOPEZ: Councilman
2 Johnson, it's good to see you as my
3 District Councilperson anytime and I can
4 definitely walk you through that. I just
5 want to take the opportunity since Board
6 President said my name, to invite all
7 Councilmembers and staffers to attend our
8 monthly Board meetings. So every month
9 we spend 90 minutes to 120 minutes
10 monitoring.

11 And so, I've done the last
12 progress monitoring actually for the last
13 three months which focuses on English
14 language, you know, literacy and math.
15 And one of the things to go back to what
16 Dr. Hite said is this is the first
17 time -- and, Dr. Hite, correct me if I'm
18 wrong -- in your tenure that we have seen
19 the results, as you said progress, in
20 every single subset group throughout all
21 grade levels, and we're also starting to
22 see an intersection between as literacy
23 rates increase so do math, right.

24 And so, I think it's really an
25 encouraging place the District's at, but

1 I'd be happy to talk with you about any
2 of those details.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
4 you --

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
6 very much. Thank you, Council President,
7 for your latitude.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
9 you, Councilman.

10 Chair recognizes Councilman Oh.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
12 much, Council President.

13 Dr. Hite, thank you for your
14 service and I wish you well in your new
15 position. I do have questions and
16 comments. So I am trying to follow and
17 understand, first of all, when you talk
18 about the results in terms of graduation
19 rate, math proficiency, reading
20 proficiency, does that come from public
21 schools or a combination -- well, let me
22 say public non-charter schools or is that
23 a combination of public non-charter and
24 charter schools?

25 DR. HITE: It's just the School

1 District of Philadelphia schools,
2 Councilman Oh.

3 COUNCILMAN OH: All schools
4 including cyber schools?

5 DR. HITE: No, it doesn't
6 include charters nor does it include
7 cybers.

8 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay. So it's
9 just the non-charter, non-cyber public
10 schools?

11 DR. HITE: That's correct.

12 COUNCILMAN OH: And the numbers
13 that I have which I want to -- because I
14 hear you say that this year it's -- or
15 last year, this year 80 percent --

16 DR. HITE: Yes.

17 COUNCILMAN OH: -- graduation
18 rate?

19 DR. HITE: Yes.

20 COUNCILMAN OH: So I'm looking
21 at a form that says graduation rate for
22 2022, 66 percent.

23 DR. HITE: Yeah. I don't know
24 what form you're looking at, Councilman.
25 But if you could send that to me, I

1 could --

2 COUNCILMAN OH: No, no. You're
3 giving me the official number there.

4 DR. HITE: Yes.

5 COUNCILMAN OH: There's been a
6 decline in student enrollment; is that
7 correct?

8 DR. HITE: That's correct.

9 COUNCILMAN OH: And a projection
10 of --

11 DR. HITE: And, Councilman Oh,
12 if I may add --

13 COUNCILMAN OH: Yes.

14 DR. HITE: -- if you compare it
15 to the state data, then our calculations
16 are a little different than the state's
17 because they're different time periods.
18 And so, we look at --

19 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay.

20 DR. HITE: -- we look at a
21 specific cohort of students who have
22 graduated over a period of time. The
23 state may be looking at a different time
24 period.

25 COUNCILMAN OH: I'm looking at

1 state data.

2 DR. HITE: Yeah.

3 COUNCILMAN OH: The state data
4 that I look at says 66 percent graduation
5 rate, 23 percent math proficiency, 37
6 percent reading proficiency. Okay. So
7 they're measuring something different; is
8 that what it is?

9 DR. HITE: Yeah -- well, they're
10 measuring the same thing but it's for
11 different periods of time. So they may
12 not be capturing the students who are
13 coming from the alternative education
14 programs that we include because they do
15 become graduates.

16 COUNCILMAN OH: Do you have any
17 indication, and you may not, where the
18 students are going, the ones that are
19 not -- the ones that are leaving the
20 School District?

21 DR. HITE: So we don't have an
22 indication, but the PDE, the Pennsylvania
23 Department of Education just put out some
24 information about enrollment changes
25 between '19-20 and this current year, and

1 they looked at all of the LEAs, and that
2 includes the non-public, rural, suburban
3 school districts, charters, right. And
4 so, the enrollment change had every
5 sector down.

6 As a matter of fact, as Uri
7 Monson indicated more of those sectors
8 had high percentages of enrollment
9 declines than the School District of
10 Philadelphia with two exceptions. Cyber
11 charter enrollment was up by 59.1, this
12 is across the state, and then by 59.5
13 homeschool. And so, those were the only
14 two exceptions that saw increases.
15 Everything else saw a decline.

16 So, yes, we suspect that we
17 have -- we can account for children who
18 are in cyber charters because they have
19 to report it to the state, but we also
20 can account for children who left the
21 District and may have moved out of the
22 City. But then there are others we
23 cannot account for. And those are the
24 ones we're trying to re-engage.

25 COUNCILMAN OH: So this will not

1 be your problem. But while I don't know
2 the answer to that either, I will say
3 that as an At-large Councilperson who
4 hears from a lot of people, I am
5 concerned when I hear people complain.
6 When I hear advocates, supporters and
7 critics complain, when I hear teachers,
8 administrators, parents and students
9 complain, that that's giving me a wide
10 universe of people who are complaining,
11 some people complain about things that
12 are beyond our control, the pandemic and
13 the responsive pandemic, but other people
14 are clearly complaining about a lack of
15 responsiveness from the leadership of the
16 School District, lack of responsiveness.
17 You've heard it when people
18 complain about the reduction of public
19 comment time from three minutes to two
20 minutes or when the magnet school lottery
21 system was put in place, the parents at
22 those schools that were impacted. And I
23 think beyond the ultimate decision of
24 what to do, just a sense of a lack of
25 communication, concern or hearing them

1 out.

2 Another thing does have to do
3 with safety inside and outside the school
4 and public transportation on the way to
5 school. I remember that when we were
6 talking to the new School Board members,
7 there were several School Board members
8 that talked about removing public safety
9 officers, school police, getting rid of
10 metal detectors. I understand that
11 however it does send a message that
12 safety will not be what it was.

13 I do not know if it's true, but
14 I understand that there has been a
15 reduction in what used to be called
16 school police, school safety officers and
17 things like changing the start time to
18 10:00 a.m., while it's based on the
19 science let's say. In terms of
20 afterschool programs, a lot of kids who
21 must travel after school on public
22 transportation back to Southwest Philly,
23 North Philly, West Philly, they're not
24 comfortable leaving school after dark and
25 traveling on public transportation.

1 Public transportation even in
2 bad neighborhoods is much safer in the
3 morning than in the evening. I mean,
4 ultimately how does the school re-engage
5 with its faculty, its teachers,
6 prospective employees, parents and school
7 children to give them not only a sense of
8 being heard, but a process of being
9 heard?

10 DR. HITE: (Muted).

11 COUNCILMAN OH: I'm sorry.
12 You're on mute.

13 DR. HITE: Yeah. Thank you.
14 Thank you, Councilman Oh. I'm going to
15 ask Karyn Lynch to chime in on some work
16 that was done with some families to hear
17 from them, but I also want to respond to
18 a couple of the points you made. Number
19 one, we do not have a proposed start time
20 of 10:00 a.m., and we did put out a
21 proposed high school time of 9:00 a.m.
22 And we're currently still receiving
23 feedback around that, including from
24 young people that have a series of public
25 town halls.

1 I did one with my student
2 advisory, had a good number of young
3 people who gave us great feedback. We
4 also have been doing feedback sessions
5 with individuals who participated in this
6 year's school selection. And Karyn can
7 talk about that. President Wilkerson can
8 talk about the time differences for the
9 public comment during Board meetings. I
10 mean, that was -- that's all in the realm
11 or under the responsibility of the Board
12 of Education.

13 But look, I've been doing this a
14 long time. I understand and have heard
15 many complaints to your point. But I
16 think the thing that we have always
17 attempted to do is be responsive, and it
18 may not -- we understand it may not
19 satisfy everyone, everyone's interest.
20 But by the same token, we want
21 individuals to understand the rationale
22 behind which we are making some of the
23 recommendations. Karyn.

24 MS. LYNCH: Thank you, Dr. Hite.
25 Councilman, I will share with you that

1 just as Dr. Hite said, we learned from
2 our experience and when we see
3 opportunities to improve and when you
4 share with us ways to improve, we
5 definitely move in that direction. Over
6 the last few months we've had a survey
7 that has been translated in nine
8 different languages that families that
9 participated in the process of school
10 selection this year could respond to.

11 We've had two K through 12
12 parent participation sessions that were
13 translated in Spanish and Mandarin. We
14 have had -- in addition to that, our
15 research team has conducted individual
16 smaller group sessions. There were about
17 eight of those where families that
18 participated that were 8th graders could
19 engage. I have personally had individual
20 meetings, Zoom sessions with one, two,
21 three parents that have asked.

22 Any parent that has asked for a
23 meeting I've had a meeting with that
24 parent. Any time that I've received a
25 response email, I have responded to those

1 emails. If you know of any parent that
2 is trying to get in touch with us with
3 regard to anything related to school
4 selection, I would be glad to speak with
5 that parent individually because I think
6 the topic is so important.

7 I will also say that ours is an
8 organization that translates material and
9 makes material available for individuals
10 that speak over 126 languages. I don't
11 know of any other entity in the City that
12 does that. We do not just do oral
13 translation, we do written translation.
14 We have incredible contract fees for the
15 amount of translation that we engage in
16 every single year. And the reason for
17 that is because we want people to know
18 that their opinions matter, that they can
19 give us input, that we are taking their
20 input into consideration. So if you know
21 of an instance where we have not been
22 responsive, that's where we want to
23 improve.

24 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you. My
25 time is up. I appreciate the response.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
2 you, Councilman.

3 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you,
4 Council President.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Chair
6 recognizes Councilman Thomas.

7 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: It's
8 afternoon now. Good afternoon,
9 everybody. I want to start by first
10 thanking the School District and your
11 team for the work that you do as it
12 relates to our young people. I
13 definitely want to give a special thank
14 you to Alicia Prince as well as
15 Dr. Brooks, Dr. Prince and Dr. Brooks for
16 working specifically with me over the
17 last couple months on a number of
18 different initiatives is definitely
19 appreciated.

20 I'm going to jump into my line
21 of questioning because I have a lot of
22 questions. And I'm already in a chat for
23 the second round because I know I'm not
24 going to get through them all. So with
25 that being said, I'm going to start with

1 sports because you guys know that that's
2 my little thing. In my correspondence
3 with Dr. Prince, we've talked about the
4 start time of school being moved back to
5 9:00 a.m for high school students, which
6 in turn will push to start practices
7 back.

8 Thinking about the fact that
9 it'll get dark earlier and thinking about
10 the line of questioning with my other
11 colleagues, I'm wondering what plans will
12 we have in place as it relates to
13 traveling after school, and also what
14 happens with sports because now sports
15 practices will be pushed back and now
16 we'll have young people traveling home
17 from extracurricular activity a little
18 bit later.

19 So if you can -- you know how
20 this is, Dr. Hite, our time is limited.
21 So if somebody could just maybe take a
22 few seconds to answer that part for me,
23 and then I can move on with other stuff.

24 DR. HITE: Yeah. Councilman
25 Thomas, thank you for the question. I'll

1 start with the bell schedule. So just to
2 be very quick around this because I know
3 you have a lot of questions, so we will
4 be maintaining the current schedules, the
5 current athletic schedules. And so, on
6 game days, transportation pickups will
7 remain at 1:45. Game starts will remain
8 at 3:15 for both middle and high schools
9 athletics --

10 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: That's where
11 we want to kind of do some advocacy
12 there, right --

13 DR. HITE: Yeah.

14 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: -- a lot of
15 us are not in favor of the school time
16 being pushed back. But if the school
17 time is pushed back, the one thing that
18 we thought would be good is that games
19 and athletic activity would not have to
20 start at 3:15. That has traditionally
21 been a problem for the public league as
22 it relates to a lot of our sports,
23 parents being able to participate, as it
24 relates to viewing activities and things
25 of that capacity.

1 So I get what you're saying, but
2 I think we want to move in the opposite
3 direction. And I got my Council hat on,
4 but you know I'm sitting on the Board of
5 PIAA District XII as well as the coaches
6 with the public league and based on the
7 meetings that I've been in, we would
8 actually be in favor of if we are going
9 to push the start time back, to also push
10 the game times back to allow parents to
11 be able to participate and come to those
12 athletic activities. We thought that
13 that would be the catch-22. We were
14 like, okay, if we have to start
15 everything later, our children are
16 traveling later, at least games can be
17 played later.

18 And then you also can think
19 about the fact that those young people
20 wouldn't have to worry about that early
21 dismissal and missing that class time on
22 those games as well too. So I just
23 wanted to --

24 DR. HITE: Yeah. I apprec --

25 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: -- and have

1 that advocacy in there.

2 DR. HITE: Okay. No, I do
3 appreciate that. Thank you. You want to
4 go to your next question?

5 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Absolutely.
6 So I also, Dr. Hite, and I know you and I
7 have talked about this. I also wanted to
8 put it on the record that we wanted to
9 have more publicity for our championship
10 games, our athletic championship games,
11 football, basketball, things of that
12 nature. So, yeah, just wanted to throw
13 that out there as well too as it relates
14 to the sports stuff. I'll come back on
15 the sports side on my second round.

16 I also was looking at the
17 presentation. A couple questions: How
18 many elementary schools, middle schools
19 and high schools do we have under the
20 School District of Philadelphia,
21 traditional neighborhood schools,
22 elementary, middle and high school? You
23 can include magnet or not. It doesn't
24 matter.

25 DR. HITE: Yeah. This is going

1 to be a rough estimate, Councilman
2 Thomas, because I don't have the exact
3 numbers in front of me unless, Uri, do
4 you have the exact numbers?

5 MR. MONSON: (Shook head).

6 DR. HITE: Okay. So then I'll
7 do -- I think we have 150 what we would
8 call K-8 schools, about 54 high schools.
9 And then the balance of those schools
10 would be some iteration of middle schools
11 or elementary/middle schools. So their
12 grades, that that could be 4 through 8 or
13 3 through 8 or 5 through 8 or 6 through
14 8. And so, it's roughly 150.

15 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So you're
16 saying 150 schools K through 8?

17 DR. HITE: 150 element --
18 roughly 150 K-8.

19 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Okay. So a
20 couple things, and these questions came
21 out of just your presentation today. So
22 in your presentation when you looked at
23 Out-of-School Time, you talked about
24 Out-of-School Time contracts for
25 approximately 15 schools. I know that

1 that can't be all of the out-of-school
2 opportunities that we have if we're
3 looking at over 150 K through 8 schools.
4 It has to be more 50 Out-of-School Time-
5 based initiatives but your
6 presentation -- 15, but your presentation
7 says 15. That can't be correct, right?

8 MR. MONSON: Can I just jump in
9 real quick. 15 is just the pilot that we
10 were trying to get to test it out right
11 now with the larger roll-out next year.
12 15 is literally just the pilot. That was
13 just the starting point as we were
14 rolling this out in developing
15 relations --

16 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: How many --

17 MR. MONSON: I'm sorry?

18 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: How many
19 Out-of-School Time programs do we have in
20 our schools right now? How many schools
21 have some type of afterschool program in
22 them right now?

23 DR. HITE: I don't have the
24 number for that, Councilman Thomas --

25 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: It's

1 definitely not 15 though?

2 DR. HITE: It's more than 15,
3 yeah, absolutely.

4 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Okay.

5 DR. HITE: And some schools are
6 not using a provider. Some schools are
7 using current staff that are also paid an
8 hourly rate to stay with children either
9 to tutor or to cosponsor a club or
10 activity.

11 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: If you can
12 get that number to the Council President,
13 it'll be appreciated. On the first page
14 of your PowerPoint, you talked about
15 federal government dollars being reduced.
16 This is a simple yes or no. Have we
17 talked to any of our federal partners to
18 be able to talk about what can be done
19 for the \$11 million that we lost around
20 Title Funds for Pennsylvania as well as
21 the 6.5 million we lost around school
22 services programs? Has there been any
23 direct communication with our federal
24 partners to figure out what that's about
25 or what type of advocacy there needs to

1 be to offset that?

2 MR. MONSON: (Nodded
3 affirmatively).

4 DR. HITE: (Nodded
5 affirmatively).

6 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Okay. All
7 right. I see you saying yes. That's
8 great. Let me move on to the next
9 question. So when I look at some of the
10 things that we want to do addressing
11 poverty and issues around workforce
12 development, I know my colleague
13 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson has been
14 adamant about this work. But a recent
15 number of different parties I've been in
16 dialogue with -- I'm sorry, has told us
17 that there are 80,000 trucking jobs.

18 So when I think about
19 apprenticeship programs and I think about
20 opportunities like trucking jobs that
21 could pay up to 100,000 a year, I'm
22 wondering has the District had any
23 conversation or are there any plans in
24 place to be able to bring driver's ed.
25 back into our schools so we can begin to

1 create a pipeline directly into the
2 workforce of young people who want to do
3 some type of truck driving or driving for
4 a living?

5 I'm told that these jobs can pay
6 up to \$100,000 a year. And I think it
7 would be a great initiative for us to
8 include this in some of the
9 apprenticeship that's already being done,
10 partnering with somebody like the
11 Teamsters as well as the PFT to be able
12 to make this happen. I'm already queued
13 for a second round of questions for
14 Dr. Hite. I would love to hear your
15 response to that, and I'll be back for a
16 second round.

17 DR. HITE: Yes. As a matter of
18 fact to answer your question, yes, and we
19 have some of those jobs available as
20 well, Councilman Thomas, because we also
21 need bus drivers. And to your point,
22 yes, we have been. And additionally, we
23 have implemented a training program where
24 we're paying individuals to learn how to
25 do that and to be ready to be certified

1 to drive or have a CDL.

2 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Can you have
3 something sent to us in writing that
4 tells us where the District is currently
5 with that and what the future plans are?

6 Thank you, Council President.

7 I'm teed in for a second round.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
9 you --

10 DR. HITE: Yes. And I mean, a
11 lot of the investigation, and this
12 wouldn't be a shock to you, Councilman
13 Thomas, is around the liability and
14 insurance associated with making sure
15 that we are -- ensuring that everyone's
16 protected as they work through that.

17 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Absolutely.
18 Thank you.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
20 Thank you, Councilman.

21 Chair recognizes Councilman
22 Domb.

23 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
24 Council President.

25 And good afternoon, Dr. Hite.

1 DR. HITE: Good afternoon.

2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: You got a
3 tough job. I've just been listening.
4 It's not easy. And I will say this, I've
5 been listening to all these meetings
6 we've been having. And I think from the
7 Police to SEPTA to the School District to
8 every department coming through, this
9 pandemic was very, very difficult. And I
10 think everyone did the best they could
11 and really came out pretty much okay, not
12 perfect. But we had no experience
13 dealing with the pandemic.

14 And so, at the end of the day I
15 give you a lot of credit, your team,
16 School Board, I think you overall did a
17 good job. Let me just go back. And by
18 the way, all my questions only require
19 lightening round answers, so you can be
20 very brief in the interest of time. When
21 you started, Dr. Hite, was that about 10
22 or 11 years ago?

23 DR. HITE: 10.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: 10 years ago.
25 I'm just curious because I'm looking at

1 the bond rating. What was the bond
2 rating back then for the School District
3 and how were we financially managing the
4 School District?

5 DR. HITE: I think it was junk
6 status and we were facing at the time
7 almost a \$1 billion -- over a \$1 billion
8 revenue shortfall in our five-year plan,
9 extended plan. And I don't think it was
10 five years even. I think it was a three-
11 year financial plan.

12 COUNCILMAN DOMB: We were
13 categorized as junk status?

14 DR. HITE: Yes.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: It doesn't
16 sound too good. What is our status today
17 on the bond rating?

18 DR. HITE: I think we
19 are investment grade -- Uri, you can
20 correct me if I'm wrong -- we now have an
21 investment grade rating, which means we
22 can borrow money, we can borrow more
23 money at lower interest rates and take
24 care of many of the things that we're
25 able to take care of and not load the

1 operating budget up with a high debt
2 service payment on an annual basis.

3 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Well, I got to
4 tell you, Dr. Hite, your team, everyone,
5 kudos because that's a tremendous change
6 in 10 years from junk bond status to
7 where we are today. That's amazing, so I
8 appreciate it. I'm sure my colleagues
9 appreciate it. That's really great and
10 we'll miss you. I know you're leaving I
11 think soon. We have a new Superintendent
12 coming in, but great job on helping us
13 climb out of that financial disaster we
14 were in 10 years ago. It's amazing.

15 So I have a few other questions
16 I'm going to just ask briefly. I know
17 that we learned yesterday about real
18 estate assessments increasing in the City
19 of Philadelphia. And I was just
20 wondering what would be the plans if you
21 have any yet, because I know it's all
22 new, for the portion for the School
23 District of the increased revenues
24 that'll be coming to the School District,
25 what is the plan on how to invest those

1 dollars to maximize its return?

2 DR. HITE: Mr. Monson, do you
3 want to take that?

4 MR. MONSON: So I think a lot
5 will depend on exactly what the numbers
6 are. And as I mentioned at the
7 beginning, we haven't had those
8 discussions with the City yet. And
9 obviously, Council, you and your
10 colleagues, need to weigh in on what
11 exactly the end result will be for all
12 that. I think once we know that the best
13 part about it is it's recurring revenues.
14 So it would be ones that we would want to
15 prioritize those. Those types of
16 investments such as we were doing
17 pre-pandemic in academics.

18 And ideally, looking at the
19 investments that worked well with the
20 federal money. That's one of the issues
21 we're doing is really evaluating. So if
22 there are things that work well that we
23 want to maintain, I think those would be
24 the priorities particularly as we look at
25 when the federal money goes away.

1 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. That's
2 true. Very good point. These are going
3 to be consistent dollars coming to the
4 School District. I have a comment I
5 wanted to just make. I was listening and
6 hearing that I think we're losing 7,000
7 students in the District. And I just
8 want to make a comment that it could be
9 from the last couple years during the
10 pandemic we saw people leave the City
11 earlier than expected for public safety
12 issues. They were concerned. This is
13 not just Philadelphia. This is every
14 major city.

15 They left the city because they
16 wanted more space for their children even
17 though they're smaller, maybe not in
18 schools yet, to be outside. And they
19 also left for education. They felt some
20 of the schools in the suburbs were
21 better, and they accelerated their plans
22 to leave. If they had 2 and 3 and
23 4-year-olds, normally they would stay
24 until they're going into kindergarten,
25 they left earlier.

1 And the big driver for many of
2 that not just was public safety and
3 schools, but was the low interest rates.
4 Let's face it, interest rates were 2.5 to
5 2.75 percent and looking at buying a home
6 somewhere else in the suburbs or whatever
7 was a lot less expensive than they've
8 ever seen. And even today that rate has
9 almost doubled. So my point is that I
10 think we saw an acceleration of a lot of
11 people leave the City, and I'm hopeful
12 that that'll calm down now over the next
13 couple years because those people that
14 were planning to leave a year or two from
15 now probably have already left. They
16 took advantage of those factors, so
17 that's a hope.

18 So I did watch your presentation
19 and I was very pleased to see that you're
20 introducing more financial literacy,
21 that's great, and more opportunities for
22 jobs. And I just want to pick up on
23 Councilmember Thomas's idea. I think
24 that's a pretty interesting idea that he
25 proposed, we should probably look into

1 that.

2 But I think at the end of the
3 day I was sitting here thinking and
4 saying, the real goal here of our School
5 District and our education is to create
6 an environment where people want to come
7 to Philadelphia to go to our schools,
8 where people seek us out as the best
9 district in the country for education for
10 their kids, and that requires a lot of
11 changing what we're teaching. It
12 requires all the things we're talking
13 about with facilities. But that is the
14 key really in the long term. That's the
15 key to the City's success, having a
16 school system that people want to seek
17 out versus go to the suburbs to send
18 their kids to the schools.

19 And I think one of the key
20 foundations is, you know I'm going to say
21 this, is that financial literacy from K
22 through 12, teaching technology from K
23 through 12, teaching entrepreneurship,
24 teach people how to own a business and
25 create wealth versus just getting a job,

1 and then which I see you're starting to
2 do is allowing students, kind of that
3 Cristo Rey model in 9th, 10th, 11th and
4 12th grade to go to school for four days,
5 work one day and get paid and get credit
6 and maybe even get a summer job so they
7 have four different opportunities that
8 takes them off the street.

9 But think about this, if we put
10 this in place now and 15 years from now,
11 we will have been teaching technology,
12 entrepreneurship and financial literacy
13 from K through 12. All of a sudden as a
14 city we've become very attractive to any
15 employer who's looking for talent. We've
16 created a whole workforce of talent that
17 companies -- I don't know if it's Amazon
18 then, whoever it is -- will look to the
19 City and say, I want to put my business
20 here. And I think long term that should
21 be our goal.

22 So having said all that, I have
23 one more focus point. And that is, we've
24 become a hub for biotech and life
25 sciences. And with special

1 concentrations right now in the rapidly
2 growing fields of gene and cell therapy,
3 we're doing tremendous things in this
4 area. And it's exciting to see these
5 businesses growing in Philadelphia. We
6 want to keep them growing because they're
7 good-paying jobs, but we also want to
8 make sure that Philadelphians benefit as
9 much as possible from these new jobs that
10 pay well.

11 So how do we make sure
12 Philadelphians find their way into all
13 levels of these cutting-edge fields that
14 could really make the most and make more
15 diverse life sciences hub in the country.
16 And my question is have we been meeting
17 with, for example, the 10, 15 or 20 or 30
18 life science companies and asking them
19 what do you need and how do we
20 accommodate that? And can we give them
21 some benefits as to hiring Philadelphia
22 students from our schools?

23 DR. HITE: Thank you, Councilman
24 Domb. And not only have we've been
25 meeting with some of those organizations,

1 we've been asking them not just what
2 other skills students need, but what are
3 the competencies teachers need in order
4 to ensure that young people have those
5 skills. And I would go back to something
6 that was in the presentation. We talked
7 about the 21st Century School models that
8 prepare children or young people with
9 some of the experiences that we want them
10 to have.

11 So in other words, the workday
12 may not necessarily be in a classroom.
13 It could be on -- it could be at one of
14 those science labs or the laboratories or
15 hospital or a logistical center. So
16 we're beginning to recraft and
17 reformulate some programming to allow
18 young people to engage in the types of
19 activities that you just described, but
20 also understand that we have to equip our
21 educators with the ability to also teach
22 the children the skills that individuals
23 have indicated are important.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: All right.
25 Well, I'm glad to hear that. And again,

1 Dr. Hite, thank you for everything you've
2 done for us and I guess I'll come back on
3 the next round. Thank you.

4 Thank you, Council President.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
6 you, Councilman.

7 Chair recognizes Councilman
8 Squilla.

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I
11 know the Councilman had something to do
12 briefly. We'll come back to the
13 Councilman.

14 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
15 Brooks.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Thank you,
17 Council President.

18 Good afternoon. So my question
19 is about, my first question is about
20 community engagement. As you know,
21 making sure the District is effectively
22 engaging with communities has been an
23 ongoing issue. I was wondering what
24 steps have you taken in how you approach
25 community engagement to ensure that

1 you're authentically encouraging or
2 engaging with communities, specifically
3 around the upcoming facilities planning
4 process? And will it be different in
5 your approach to community engagement?
6 Because I really want to understand what
7 lessons you've learned from the past
8 processes. For example, the CSPR
9 process, the Superintendent search
10 process and I want to make sure that
11 you'll be using an informed approach for
12 this large upcoming project.

13 DR. HITE: Thank you,
14 Councilwoman Brooks. And I want to thank
15 you for actually helping us. I know we
16 have called you in the past to give us
17 and help us with how we should approach
18 some of the communications that we're
19 having with families. I want to bring on
20 my Chief of Staff Alicia Prince who has
21 been working with the team that's doing
22 or that's setting up the engagement
23 around our school facilities process.

24 So, Alicia, can you talk a
25 little bit about the engagement?

1 MS. PRINCE: Yes. Thank you,
2 Dr. Hite. Good afternoon, Councilwoman
3 Brooks. Thank you for this question,
4 because this is one of the things that
5 when we revamped this process, we really
6 took the information and the lessons that
7 we learned from the CSPR process which
8 was paused because of the COVID pandemic
9 to really say what do we need to do
10 differently.

11 And so, one of the things that
12 we knew was we were doing this process
13 piece-by-piece and the engagement piece-
14 by-piece so it wasn't a city-wide effort,
15 so certain communities were getting
16 conversations and not all communities.
17 We really wanted to focus to make sure
18 all communities were getting those
19 conversations. We wanted to come in and
20 not just start with, okay, here's the
21 information, but instead the first round
22 which were those conversations Dr. Hite
23 spoke about earlier starting May 10th, to
24 really make sure people understand the
25 data and then also can provide their

1 feedback on, oh, well, can you make this
2 clearer for me when I look at the data so
3 when we dig deeper into those
4 conversations.

5 We also created a process guide
6 so that people can look at those things
7 to understand here's the process and make
8 it really clear. We put the meeting
9 dates out way more in advance to make
10 that clear to people, and we also wanted
11 to make sure we're meeting people where
12 they need. One thing that we really have
13 learned through the pandemic through all
14 of our different offices is that engaging
15 through these online platforms has been
16 very helpful for a lot of communities,
17 because if you have to go to work or you
18 get off late, you can still hop on from
19 your car. You can hop on and still make
20 dinner and hear what's happening and
21 still engage. And so, we really wanted
22 to pick up and use that as part of the
23 process.

24 And so, additionally then when
25 we get to those fall meetings we really

1 are then able to say to people, okay,
2 here's the first part, here's what we
3 learned and here's what we heard from
4 you, here's the next part. And then
5 we're going back to the community again
6 even after that first round of
7 conversation to have a second round of
8 conversation around here's what we heard
9 in your meetings, we took that back and
10 here's the feedback that you all put
11 together, and we want to get one more
12 round of feedback before we move to a
13 final resolution stage. So really it was
14 taking that -- the community in this
15 process is a key component for us and we
16 can't just say, here's what we're doing,
17 but instead here's how we all do this
18 together to build this master plan.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: So were
20 community members involved in creating
21 this engagement process or was it
22 designed by a consultant firm or inhouse?

23 MS. PRINCE: It was -- we
24 designed this inhouse. We had some
25 support of some consultants, but we also

1 took the feedback. So when we were doing
2 the CSPR process, we took the feedback
3 that we got from those sessions from
4 community folks around what their
5 concerns were. So one of the big things
6 was we didn't have information on the
7 website before. Now, we do. We have
8 information that's on the website.
9 People couldn't see school-by-school.

10 People were just going by
11 certain communities so then they were
12 waiting for, well, what's next for my
13 community, when am I going to hear
14 something about my community. So we
15 wanted to really take that feedback that
16 we heard from communities through the
17 first CSPR process and use that. And
18 then I think one thing that we learned as
19 well even from the Board Superintendent
20 search process was really how they did
21 the conversations and how they had them.
22 And so, we really took that to be a part
23 of this as well.

24 So we did engage with public
25 engagement organizations and community

1 gro -- excuse me, communications
2 organizations to really make sure that
3 our communications and approach was
4 really focused and our engagement
5 approach was really focused on how we
6 meet the needs of our communities and how
7 we make sure their voice is the main
8 voice in this conversation.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Thank you
10 for that. I just want to make sure that
11 we are including community members every
12 step of the way. I do want to say you
13 guys are doing a lot better from where
14 you came. But I just want us not to
15 forget each community you have to engage
16 very differently and the engagement looks
17 very different. So I want to make sure
18 that we're including actual community
19 members in every step of the process and
20 the planning of it, when possible, as
21 much as possible.

22 And I want to know are you doing
23 proactive outreach to communities? So
24 during the CSPR, it was mostly like the
25 more affluent white school communities

1 that were engaging. And I want to know
2 what are you doing to meet people where
3 they are rather than just working with
4 whoever shows up at these meetings,
5 because the reality, you know, some of
6 our parents are most in need or mostly
7 need to be a part of this or children are
8 most affected are the ones that are
9 probably at work, not available and then
10 try to make time.

11 And I want to make sure that
12 there are ways that we can measure that
13 every community is being included because
14 you can't speak to the trauma and
15 experience of the kids, the families in
16 Kensington when you're from Center City.
17 So I want to make sure that that's
18 happening and I want to know what are you
19 doing in terms of outreach to those
20 various communities that are hardest to
21 outreach to?

22 MS. PRINCE: I agree with you
23 100 percent, Councilwoman. So one of the
24 things that we are doing a little
25 differently than we did the last time, so

1 number one, we know that the best way to
2 engage our parents really and that was
3 what made it really hard for us during
4 the pandemic is through backpacks, right,
5 and through that direct school-level
6 communication. So we have made sure that
7 we have flyers at school. We've equipped
8 our school leaders with information so
9 that they can be pushing out that
10 information through ClassDojo to remind
11 parents to sign up, and then we have
12 communication that goes out.

13 We're looking at community
14 letters, community newsletters, community
15 newspapers as well to send out that
16 information and make sure that they get
17 that. And then finally, we are just
18 going out -- so we're monitoring who
19 signed up and that's one of the reasons
20 we have that sign-up process so we know.
21 And when we're seeing a lack of folks
22 sign up in certain areas, we're doubling-
23 down on those community groups. We are
24 reaching directly out in the engagement
25 with community groups.

1 So for instance, we met with the
2 West Philadelphia Community Group, the
3 Overbrook Association, and they pushed
4 that out to schools right away on their
5 Facebook group to communities to make
6 sure we get it out, so that's one of the
7 ways we're doing that to make sure it
8 happens.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Yeah,
10 thank you for sharing. I just want to
11 make sure that we're doing this. And I
12 thought about another thing. Another
13 thing I thought about is every other
14 circle we're talking about trusted
15 messengers, and trusted messengers from
16 the community is always the best way for
17 outreach. And I want to make sure that
18 we're using that same model because it's
19 really building and empowering every
20 community by having a trusted messenger
21 at every school to help deliver the
22 information you're trying to funnel out.
23 And it may not just be teachers and
24 administration. It could be parents as
25 well.

1 MS. PRINCE: Absolutely. And we
2 will continue to do that and thank you
3 for the feedback on that. We'll make
4 sure that happens.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: I know my
6 time is up. I put in for a second round.

7 DR. HITE: Mr. Council
8 President, could I also give a point of
9 information to a previous Councilmember's
10 question?

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes,
12 Dr. Hite. Please proceed. I think the
13 President is attending to technical
14 issues.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: No,
16 I'm back.

17 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.
18 Thank you, Mr. President.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I was
20 actually multi-tasking.

21 DR. HITE: Understand. Also to
22 respond to an earlier question by
23 Councilmember Thomas, we have 149 schools
24 that have some version of Out-of-School
25 Time program, and these do not include

1 the students where teachers are doing
2 sponsorships of clubs. Additionally,
3 there are some programs that the City
4 also has so that the City also hosts 84
5 programs in 70 schools, and some of those
6 are duplicate programs to schools that
7 already have another program, but the
8 City is also supporting about 4100 slots
9 for individual children. So I just
10 wanted to add that because Councilman
11 Thomas asked that question about how
12 many.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
14 you. Thank you, Dr. Hite.

15 I think Councilwoman Parker was
16 next, but I think she will come back on
17 the second round. What I'd like to do
18 now, Modesto, I'd like to take a brief 5-
19 to 10-minute break and make some
20 decisions on testimony from the public.
21 So if you can just take us offline around
22 10 minutes. We'll be right back, members
23 of the School District. Just stay tuned.
24 We'll be right back.

25 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT: Okay.

1 Thank you, Council President.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
3 you.

4 (Brief recess.)

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
6 you. Thank you very much, and thank you
7 for your patience. We are back. Now,
8 we're going to conclude the testimony and
9 questions for the School District of
10 Philadelphia. We have adjusted the
11 schedule for public testimony so we're
12 hopefully going to be in a position to do
13 that around 3 o'clock today.

14 For those of you that are
15 awaiting public testimony, we're reaching
16 out to those individuals who have been
17 scheduled for public comment today. So I
18 want to thank you all very much for your
19 indulgence and your patience. So I want
20 to conclude the first round.

21 I want to recognize Councilwoman
22 Bass because she did not get a first
23 round, and then we'll come back and start
24 our second round. Chair recognizes
25 Councilwoman Bass.

1 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
2 Mr. President. I appreciate that. I
3 want to, you know, the problem with going
4 last is that a lot of your questions have
5 already been asked. But I do have a
6 couple things I just wanted to make
7 mention of.

8 And let me start out by saying
9 to Dr. Hite, I thank you for all the work
10 that you put in. These jobs are not easy
11 and we recognize that. And I'm going to
12 be somebody who's going to miss you
13 because you always pick up the phone.
14 You're always very much available even
15 when I'm calling you with something and
16 I'm a little upset about something that's
17 been happening in my District or
18 throughout the City. You still take
19 those calls. You take those hard, hard
20 phone calls and I have an appreciation
21 for that, that you'll sort of stand and
22 take the fire. So we will miss you.

23 And to all of your team, again I
24 know that these jobs are not hard -- are
25 not easy, excuse me. They are hard.

1 They are not easy by any stretch of the
2 imagination. And with that being said,
3 I'm going to just say a couple of hard
4 things to you now on your way out the
5 door.

6 But one of the things I just
7 wanted to mention or make mention of and
8 I heard --

9 (Background interruption.)

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Hold
11 on. Hold on. Somebody needs to go on
12 mute please. All right. Thank you.

13 Councilwoman, I'm sorry. Go
14 ahead.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: That's okay.
16 So one of the things I wanted to
17 piggyback off of is the conversation that
18 some of my colleagues mentioned. I think
19 Councilmember Brooks talked about
20 community engagement, and that's one of
21 the things that I wanted to talk about
22 today. And I think she hit the nail on
23 the head about just engaging the
24 community in your constituency in a much
25 more robust way.

1 I have to say there's a couple
2 of things that really left a lot to be
3 desired by parents, the school
4 communities, those who care about our
5 schools and really the entire City of
6 Philadelphia. And the things I wanted to
7 mention begin with the change in start
8 times. There was very little information
9 provided ahead of time. There was very
10 little input provided from your
11 constituencies. There was no outreach
12 provided to say this is what we're
13 planning on doing, thinking about doing,
14 what do you think, how will this affect
15 you, your family, your household. What
16 is the impact that it's going to have,
17 you know, sort of like a global vision.
18 So there was none of that happening.

19 The other thing was when there
20 was conversation around Special Admission
21 Schools and the changes that will be made
22 therein, and there was no conversation,
23 there was no involvement. And there was
24 a lot, a lot, a lot of confusion around
25 exactly what the policy was intended to

1 do. I get the idea that we want to make
2 sure that we have more Black and Brown
3 people who have been sort of excluded,
4 that they have an opportunity to apply to
5 these schools, and we certainly do want
6 to support that.

7 But at the same time, there was
8 no conversation about what do you think,
9 how do you think this should go, how do
10 you think that these changes will be
11 embraced to the school's community, is
12 this something that you would like to
13 see, is there another way to approach
14 this, what have other cities done, just
15 that sort of global conversation is
16 respectful and really makes a difference
17 in terms of how people feel about the
18 input that they want to provide to the
19 School District.

20 And the other thing was
21 obviously the Superintendent search,
22 which I know was through the Board. But
23 again, overall there was not the level of
24 inclusion that I heard from residents in
25 my District that they wanted to hear and

1 know and be included in the very process
2 that says this is who the new person is
3 going to be, with all due respect to
4 Dr. Watlington. I'm sure he's a fine
5 person. He's already reached out and is
6 making the rounds, and that's a really
7 good sign. And so, I'm looking forward
8 to working with them.

9 But again, community engagement
10 involving your constituency, transparency
11 and widespread input from your
12 constituency must be a part of the fabric
13 in which the School District of
14 Philadelphia, which operates on taxpayer
15 funds, must do. It's not something that
16 you should do, you could do, you might
17 do. It's something that you must do, I
18 think. And I just really wanted to be on
19 the record about that.

20 The other thing I just wanted to
21 make mention of and I know that this has
22 been discussed in different ways, but
23 around efficiencies. Schools close,
24 schools move, schools change and I have
25 some great concern about schools being

1 sort of taken offline and instructional
2 materials being left behind. I was just
3 told just this week about someone who
4 went into a school, and I cannot remember
5 exactly what school it is but if it comes
6 to me, I will certainly reach out and let
7 you know, but about materials being left
8 behind, thousands and thousands of
9 dollars worth of new textbooks, new this,
10 new that being left behind when a school
11 is drawn down and closed and shuttered.

12 And so, that's something that I
13 think in terms of efficiencies the School
14 District needs to look at who's
15 responsible for that. When a school goes
16 offline, who is responsible for making
17 sure that even down to awards and
18 trophies and things of that nature that
19 schools competed for and won and all of
20 these things, and schools that I have
21 seen that have closed, it's almost as if
22 someone walked out of the building, the
23 last person walked out, locked the door
24 and that was it, and no one came in
25 behind them except for maybe vandals and

1 addressed any of the things that were
2 left behind.

3 So these are the kind of things
4 that really do give a lot of pause in
5 terms of how people feel about the School
6 District and if we are doing a good job,
7 if we're doing -- is it operating
8 efficiently, is it doing what it's
9 supposed to do and being the responsible
10 partner that it should be in government
11 and in educating our young people. So
12 those are just a couple of things that I
13 wanted to mention.

14 And the last thing I just wanted
15 to mention and I wanted to mention it in
16 a way to, I don't know, just to address
17 something that's kind of bothering me a
18 little bit. And that's the way our
19 School District is perceived. And we all
20 know there's a great television show out
21 now about school district schools which
22 is Abbot Elementary, which really gives a
23 very interesting viewpoint.

24 And listen, I really do enjoy
25 watching Abbott Elementary, but it really

1 does draw down or puts a spotlight on the
2 School District of Philadelphia and how
3 money is spent, how things are done. And
4 I remember I saw when the reviews came
5 out about the program it talked about
6 that the program was hilarious. And it
7 was -- I took exception with that word
8 because it really is kind of hilarious in
9 the way of you see somebody tripping and
10 falling and you laugh at that. It's
11 really not funny, you know. Somebody may
12 get a chuckle out of it, but it's really
13 not funny at all. But it really does
14 draw from the operation of our schools.

15 I really want us to do better,
16 be better, get better. And I know that
17 standing as a partner is a true way to
18 see that happen. When we have criticism,
19 it's important to bring that criticism to
20 light. But the other question that I
21 think we all have to ask ourselves is
22 what can we all do, what can we all do to
23 assist the District to do better for all
24 of our kids. So again, I thank you for
25 your service. And listen, we're all here

1 to be helpful. So thank you, Dr. Hite.

2 Thank you, Mr. President.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
4 you. Thank you, Council Lady.

5 Councilman Squilla was not
6 available when we called for the first
7 round. Councilman Squilla, are you on
8 now?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
11 Councilman Squilla, I was told you were
12 back. Okay --

13 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: I am back.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Oh,
15 there you go, sir. All right.

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: There you
17 go. I apologize. I'm --

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Chair
19 recognizes Councilman Squilla.

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: -- sorry
21 for delay. And thank you. I did miss
22 some of the questioning too so I'm sure
23 probably some of these have been answered
24 and I will submit questions in writing.
25 The questions I had when I met with you

1 guys previously, and I think it was that
2 by 2024 or 2025 all the water fountains
3 would be converted. Was that what I
4 heard?

5 DR. HITE: Yes. Reggie McNeil
6 is coming on too. So --

7 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.

8 DR. HITE: -- Reggie, you want
9 to answer that question.

10 MR. McNEIL: I was just coming
11 on to say yes.

12 DR. HITE: Yes.

13 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: So what,
14 was it '24 or '25 and --

15 MR. McNEIL: 2025, Councilman.

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: 2025, and
17 that will -- the number of -- all the
18 schools right now have at least, is it
19 one fountain or one water dispenser on
20 each floor; is that correct?

21 MR. McNEIL: So each school has
22 at least three hydration stations
23 installed already.

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Each school
25 has at least three?

1 MR. McNEIL: Yes.

2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All right.

3 And then by 2025 all the schools will be
4 fully done at that point?

5 MR. McNEIL: Correct, there's
6 800 more hydration stations to be
7 installed, and we'll have that --

8 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And I think
9 the reasoning was, and correct me if I'm
10 wrong, that it wasn't a resource issue
11 but more of a capacity issue to be able
12 to do these when kids weren't in school?

13 MR. McNEIL: Correct, we don't
14 have the -- we did not have the capacity
15 to get them done at the time so we've
16 increased our -- we're trying to increase
17 our workforce, not just inhouse but also
18 through contractor services to get these
19 hydration stations installed.

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: So do we
21 have an estimate like how many will get
22 done over the summer since most of these
23 schools will be closed at that point?

24 MR. McNEIL: We have 145 that
25 will be done by September 2022.

1 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay. All
2 right. Thank you very much. And I know
3 Councilmember Green had also asked the
4 questions on the lead and mold -- I mean,
5 the asbestos and mold and it's going to
6 include the lead into the current
7 legislation. But is there an estimated
8 time on when all the schools will be
9 fully inspected and a detailed list of
10 what work would be done?

11 MR. McNEIL: So we have a goal
12 on making sure that we get to our three-
13 year inspections for AHERA within the
14 next year and a half, so we are
15 continuing to inspect schools now for
16 asbestos. And we always deal with the
17 management or, excuse me, the asbestos,
18 as we continue to inspect. If there's an
19 issue, then we deal with that head-on and
20 we don't delay that. But as far as
21 completing our AHERA inspections, we're
22 looking for about a year, a year and a
23 half out. That's our goal.

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All right.
25 And we're still working collaboratively

1 with the schools and the PFT to make sure
2 that all the guidelines are met and I
3 guess maybe with the possible new
4 legislation in place, is that something
5 that you guys are looking at?

6 MR. McNEIL: So we are looking
7 at the new legislation to see how we can
8 even comply with it. But we do have a
9 relationship with PFT that we haven't
10 stopped as far as inviting them to
11 certain sample testing that we do at our
12 schools, so that hasn't stopped.

13 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.
14 Thank you so much for your time. Thank
15 you all.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
17 you. Thank you, Councilman.

18 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
19 Parker.

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you,
21 Mr. President. Mr. President and
22 colleagues, can you hear me? Is my sound
23 working well, Mr. President?

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Sounds
25 good.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Yes,
2 it is. You're good.

3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.
4 Thank you so very much. Dr. Hite, let me
5 lend my voice to the choir and say a
6 special thank you for your service.
7 Having had the opportunity to work with
8 you since my days in the Pennsylvania
9 General Assembly, so I commend you for
10 the work you have done, wish you well in
11 the future. And also agree with
12 Councilmember Johnson, I thank you for
13 not bailing on us because we did need
14 your professional prowess bad.

15 With that being said, Dr. Hite,
16 I want to go back to a question that we
17 talked about during our briefing. It's
18 one that one of my colleagues has already
19 mentioned but one that I've often asked
20 since my tenure in this body and, that
21 is, relative to the number of Black
22 teachers who are in the School District.

23 Now, for the benefit of the
24 viewing public, I just want to note that
25 the stats that you just heard a little

1 earlier about Philadelphia public and
2 charter schools as well as District that
3 they employ nearly 1200 fewer Black
4 teachers combined last school year
5 compared to 20 years ago is not a data
6 point that we are pulling out of the sky.
7 It is a product for Research for Action
8 Report.

9 With that being said, Doc, tell
10 us what you are doing to shore up that
11 pipeline, and I also need you because I
12 listened to your presentation, what you
13 talked about with the partner
14 institutions associated with the
15 paraprofessional program, I saw a lot of
16 local partners, but I did not see Lincoln
17 University, so Black teachers,
18 particularly Black men, and I've asked
19 that question every year because you
20 can't be what you don't see. And also,
21 where is our other Historically Black
22 College Lincoln University in that
23 program?

24 DR. HITE: Thank you,
25 Councilwoman Parker. I'm going to ask

1 our Chief of Talent Larisa Shambaugh to
2 come on who has specific information
3 around some of the things that you just
4 asked -- oh, she's raising her hand so
5 I'll start so that we're not waiting for
6 her to be signed on.

7 One of the things I think that
8 is really important is to acknowledge,
9 you're right, that those data points
10 didn't just come out magically. Those
11 are data points that have come from the
12 Pennsylvania Department of Education.
13 And as we know, as we are seeing in
14 Philadelphia because also we're the
15 largest employer in the Commonwealth of
16 Black and Brown teachers, our pipelines
17 depend on to a large degree individuals
18 who are coming from colleges and
19 universities, both locally and nationally
20 simply because of the numbers of
21 individuals that we educate. And so,
22 from --

23 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Dr. Hite,
24 let me -- Dr. Hite, if I can, let me just
25 jump in here and just note not just is

1 Philadelphia the largest employer of
2 Black teachers out of all counties in the
3 Commonwealth, the additional stat that we
4 should put on the record is that in the
5 same research it noted that Black
6 students who were exposed to Black
7 teachers by 3rd grade, they were 13
8 percent more likely to enroll in college
9 and if kids had two Black teachers by the
10 3rd grade, Hart said in this research the
11 likelihood of college enrollment
12 literally jumped to 32 percent.

13 And so, I want people to
14 understand we're making a direct
15 correlation to academic outcomes for
16 Black students when they get the
17 opportunity to see someone who looks like
18 them teaching them, and that doesn't mean
19 that we don't need all great teachers,
20 right, because I've had a lot who
21 empowered me and that's why it's
22 important to note that.

23 DR. HITE: No question about it,
24 Councilwoman Parker. And the
25 individuals, this is not just -- we now

1 know by evidence from research that if
2 young people are exposed to a Black
3 teacher, then they're more likely to
4 graduate and to enter college. And so,
5 that's one reason we're starting with the
6 paraprofessionals. The demographics of
7 the paraprofessionals are more closely
8 aligned to the communities that we serve
9 and the demographics that are in the
10 schools.

11 Many of them are parents. Many
12 of them live in those communities. But
13 more importantly, we have to deal with
14 the pipeline issue. And the pipeline
15 issue is really going to be how we are
16 more positively talking about teaching as
17 a profession. And to me, it's somewhat
18 demonized over the past three to five
19 years, not just here in the Commonwealth
20 but across the country. And we have
21 to --

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Doc, you
23 know the clock is running. Lincoln
24 University, where's LU, Doc? Where is LU
25 and are they being recruited to be a part

1 of the program?

2 DR. HITE: Yes. So we're
3 talking to LU as well as the other
4 programs. I just mentioned the other
5 programs because they already had
6 programs established. Lincoln also --

7 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.

8 DR. HITE: We're trying to
9 establish a program with Lincoln
10 University as well, but the other ones I
11 mentioned they were former programs that
12 have existed before and we are developing
13 and building on those. But we certainly
14 are interested in partnering with Lincoln
15 as well and talking to Lincoln University
16 as well.

17 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you,
18 Dr. Hite. We don't want to leave any of
19 our PA HBCUs behind in the midst of this
20 discussion, so I thank you for including
21 that on the record. I also want to go
22 back to an issue, again this has been
23 every year. We know about the diversity
24 of the School District in terms of our
25 attendees. Another issue that we rarely

1 talk about is out of that \$3 billion
2 budget, \$3.5 billion I think Uri said,
3 School District of Philadelphia budget,
4 on an annual basis there are a lot of
5 firms that build wealth doing business in
6 the School District of Philadelphia that
7 is serving a majority Black and minority
8 constituency.

9 If you will, tell us what is the
10 overall dollar amount that you have spent
11 in contracts just doing business. And if
12 you could give us those numbers relative
13 to the demographics MBES and WBEs, and
14 the answer may be lengthy. What I'm
15 going to ask you to do is to not put the
16 data on the record now, but to send it in
17 writing to the Council President for
18 distribution to all Members, because what
19 I may have to do after some conversation
20 with members of your team, we talked
21 about some issues that I had concerns
22 with.

23 And I will have to, Dr. Hite,
24 when we review that information, I will
25 get back to you, Uri Monson, and to tell

1 you what my hope will be about the next
2 steps to address the concerns that I
3 raised, but it's important that we wanted
4 to get that on the record and we look
5 forward to receiving that information.

6 DR. HITE: I appreciate that,
7 Councilwoman Parker. And then just going
8 back to the LU conversation, for the
9 paraprofessional program just
10 specifically, those were all the schools
11 that responded to the RFP in order to do
12 that work. We do work with LU and other
13 types of pilot programs in attracting
14 Black teachers. But for that program,
15 they didn't respond to the RFP.

16 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you.
17 Thank you so very much, Mr. President. I
18 heard the bell.

19 I do want to note for the record
20 for the benefit of the McCloskey
21 Elementary PTA parents who are watching
22 along with the Finletter parents,
23 Dr. Hite, my team will be meeting very
24 specifically with your office regarding
25 some challenges we're having at two

1 different school sites where the
2 Department of Recreation has some capital
3 projects ongoing with our rec centers.
4 But at one location we have major
5 flooding that we need the School District
6 of Philadelphia to address over at
7 Finletter because they will be without
8 recreational facilities.

9 The subpar playground area that
10 we have over there, the parents have been
11 through petition, through calls to my
12 office talking about the need to ensure
13 that playground equipment and the
14 basketball court is installed because for
15 so long they will not have access to
16 that. But I look forward to meeting with
17 your team to come up with some solutions
18 to address that issue.

19 And, Mr. President, thank you
20 very much for your leeway, sir.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
22 you, Council Lady.

23 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
24 Gilmore Richardson.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

1 Thank you. Thank you, Council President.

2 And thank you to Dr. Hite and

3 the School District team. I wanted to go

4 back to the questions I had earlier

5 relative to seeking to enroll students in

6 the School District of Philadelphia. I

7 also have questions relative to of course

8 career and technical education. I know

9 the topic has already been broached by my

10 colleague Councilmember Domb. And you

11 all know that's a very unique interest of

12 mine relative to ensuring we're creating

13 pathways for young people. And my last

14 question will be around conflict

15 resolution.

16 I wanted to start by getting on

17 the record if I could get data around the

18 projected enrollment versus actual

19 enrollment for every year since 2008,

20 okay. And I think that data is important

21 to looking at trends, particularly after

22 all that happened in 2008 and 2009. I

23 was a legislative aide in Council during

24 that time so I remember being in those

25 meetings with all of the folks at the

1 District.

2 And so, if we could get
3 projected versus actual enrollment from
4 2008 and every year thereafter until the
5 projected enrollment for this upcoming
6 school year, that would be exceedingly
7 helpful. And if someone from the
8 District could quickly with the limited
9 time I have for second round talk about
10 the process for enrollment and about the
11 boundary changes, because my concern is
12 that if I am dealing with this issue for
13 a second time in two years, I can only
14 imagine the amount of parents who are
15 dealing with this issue across the City
16 and we just don't know because they don't
17 know to let someone know.

18 Obviously because I was born and
19 raised in Philadelphia, I'm a product of
20 the School District, I've worked at the
21 School District, I have children in the
22 School District already, I intimately
23 know about the School District of
24 Philadelphia. And so, I want to be real
25 clear about this, that if this was

1 something that was easy, I feel as though
2 it should have been fixed from two years
3 ago when I brought this to everyone's
4 attention.

5 I did not make a big deal out of
6 it at that time because I had assurity
7 that this issue would be resolved. And
8 here we are again two years later and
9 still nothing. And so, I'm concerned
10 that this is messing with our projected
11 enrollment numbers, which then impacts
12 the staffing that we need for each
13 particular school and then it impacts
14 when you all will turn around and say,
15 oh, we don't have enough students to keep
16 this school open.

17 I just feel like it's sort of a
18 self-fulfilling prophecy that we need to
19 avoid if the District is ensuring that
20 every family that seeks to enroll their
21 student in the District is able to do so
22 and it should not be this hard to enroll
23 your child in your closest local public
24 school. It should never be this hard.
25 And I'll go on the record and say that I

1 haven't even enrolled my son in
2 kindergarten yet because I can't. The
3 system won't even allow you to do so.

4 And so, I really need you all to
5 walk us through this process and help us
6 understand what is wrong, how can you
7 identify everywhere in the City where
8 these boundaries need to be updated so we
9 can get this fixed because it's
10 preventing young people from getting into
11 the School District.

12 DR. HITE: Karyn.

13 MS. LYNCH: Thank you. So,
14 Councilwoman, very, very quickly because
15 I've been asked to be brief, I'll say a
16 couple of things. One, the issue that
17 we're talking about is a feeder pattern
18 issue. From your address, Renaissance
19 Charter School is the identified feeder
20 and there's an agreement with that
21 charter school for the addresses that
22 feed to that school.

23 And from that school, the
24 students feed into Blankenburg, they
25 don't -- even when they live very, very

1 close to Gompers. And so, changing the
2 feeder pattern is a process that
3 typically school districts go through
4 where they involve parents, they involve
5 community. They talk about the boundary
6 changes and what's going to happen and
7 what schools and what locations and what
8 addresses --

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

10 Karyn, with all due respect to the
11 response and the work I know you all have
12 been seeking to do, why hasn't that
13 happened over the last two years?

14 MS. LYNCH: It didn't happen
15 over the last two years because of COVID
16 and engaging parents during that time to
17 do a boundary change was just something
18 (inaudible) all over the City. But right
19 now you heard earlier about the
20 Facilities Planning Master Plan project
21 where we are engaging parents where we're
22 looking at the capacity of schools, it
23 will be rolled into that process and we
24 will be able to look at feeder patterns
25 like this.

1 I just want to point out in this
2 instance we're talking about signing up
3 online, and the way that we solve the
4 problem was to manually contact the
5 families within that community and ask
6 them what option would they like to take.
7 That's how we solved it the last time.
8 That's how we will address it this time,
9 but it's a manual process. It's not a
10 process where you can sign on and sign
11 up, enroll for the school that you would
12 like to enroll.

13 If we allowed through the
14 process anyone to sign up for the school
15 that's closest to them and not the school
16 that is assigned to them, we would have
17 great challenges. What we can do is try
18 and identify instances where we can
19 manually contact, as we did in your
20 instance, families that are closest to a
21 school and make that opportunity
22 available.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
24 And I heard the bell so I will respect
25 the time because I want to be respectful

1 of the public that is seeking to testify
2 with us.

3 Council President, I really
4 needed to get this on the record today
5 because I will tell you, if I did not
6 reach out and say something, this is the
7 second time this has happened. It wasn't
8 that the School District reached out to
9 me because I went into the system and
10 suddenly there was an issue. No, I had
11 to reach out to you all again. No, it's
12 not independently happening.

13 And I'm telling you if it's
14 happening to me in this way for the
15 second time in two years, it's happening
16 all across the City of Philadelphia. And
17 if we don't fix this, we're going to be
18 in a spot like we were in 2008 and 2009.
19 I was here. I was a legislative aide in
20 City Council and everyone was talking
21 about these closures because of the lack
22 of funding and enrollment challenges, but
23 you all with all due respect are creating
24 and causing this issue. You know it's an
25 issue and no one is fixing it --

1 MS. LYNCH: Councilwoman --

2 sorry.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

4 And I needed to get this on the record

5 publicly because if not, I fear that no

6 one will do anything about it. And I

7 have to give kudos to Dr. Watlington

8 because he's already reached out and I

9 let him know that this is an issue. I'm

10 happy that he is communicating directly

11 with members of Council, but I know and

12 understand this issue intimately. And

13 I'm telling you for sure if it's

14 happening to me, it is happening all

15 across the City.

16 Your projected enrollment

17 numbers and "challenges with enrolling

18 young people at certain schools" will

19 then turn into the basis of you saying

20 you have to close more schools and say

21 it's nothing we can do about it. But you

22 can do something about it now and no

23 one's doing anything about it, and it's

24 been two years. And I understand it's

25 been a pandemic, but it was okay to do

1 engagement with the new Superintendent
2 search. That happened during the
3 pandemic.

4 It was okay to do "parent
5 engagement when you had the special
6 admission process situation," which it
7 wasn't much engagement. You all
8 announced and then you dug heels in and
9 didn't want to hear from anybody because
10 I know how that process works because I
11 went to Masterman. And I have a child in
12 the Special Admission School who came in
13 under the old process on her own merit.

14 So I hear what you're saying,
15 but what you're saying and I say this all
16 the time, we listen to what you say but
17 we are watching what you do. And you
18 will say anything on these public
19 hearings to pacify us and make it seem as
20 if this is okay, but it is not okay. And
21 if this is a root issue that we need to
22 address, then we need to address it and
23 we need to have a commitment from the
24 School District to address it. Because
25 while Dr. Hite is ending his 10-year

1 tenure, okay, of excellent service to our
2 schools, someone else is coming in, okay.
3 And a lot of the folks that are there
4 internally will still be there and we
5 will still have to work with all of you.
6 And so, that is the challenge that I am
7 seeking to address today. And I'm
8 fearful that if I do not get this on the
9 record with all due respect to those that
10 are waiting to give public testimony and
11 to my colleagues and our leadership team,
12 I fear that you will not do anything
13 about it for another two years. And then
14 two years later you'll say we have to
15 close 10 more schools and 20 more schools
16 and 30 more schools, and it's
17 unacceptable.

18 I want to continue to talk about
19 this and I am respectfully requesting of
20 our leadership team at this time that we
21 have callbacks that include the School
22 District of Philadelphia, the entire
23 administration, so that we can have
24 additional time to probe these issues and
25 some of the other issues that we must get

1 on the record as a part of this budget
2 process. I am not comfortable with
3 moving past this moment without some
4 level of assurity that we can bring the
5 School District of Philadelphia and the
6 administration back before City Council
7 in a public format to address these
8 concerns.

9 MS. LYNCH: So, Councilman --
10 Councilwoman, I just want to say one
11 thing, one last thing about this matter.
12 When you say it's a GIS issue, this is
13 not a matter of signing onto the system
14 and not being able to enroll in schools.
15 Parents are absolutely able to enroll in
16 schools. And I want you to know that I
17 hear --

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
19 I absolutely disagree with that comment
20 and I am reclaiming my time. And I
21 respectfully disagree with that comment
22 because I have not been able to enroll my
23 son in school and I'm sure I'm not the
24 only parent who has not been able to do
25 that. And, yes, if they want to enroll

1 at whatever school you all have selected
2 for them, they will be able to do that.

3 MS. LYNCH: Exactly.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

5 But that doesn't make it right. My
6 closest local public school that is .7
7 miles away versus 2.1 miles away, we know
8 the school, okay. And so --

9 MS. LYNCH: (Inaudible).

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

11 No, I respectfully disagree, Karyn. With
12 all due respect to you and the work we
13 have done together, I disagree because
14 I'm not able to do that and so many other
15 parents are not as well. So again, I
16 respectfully request of our leadership
17 team and the administrative staff at the
18 School District of Philadelphia that
19 before this budget process concludes,
20 that you all come back before City
21 Council at a date that is yet to be
22 determined to publicly provide us with
23 answers to the questions we have of which
24 I have many. And I have waited all year
25 and several months for this process.

1 Thank you, Council President.

2 My sincere apologies for the delay.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
4 you, Councilwoman. Your request is duly
5 noted and we will be scheduling shortly
6 on callbacks.

7 Chair recognizes Councilman
8 Thomas.

9 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank you,
10 Council President.

11 And thank you to my colleague
12 for her passionate testimony yet again.
13 I know how it feels to be a parent and
14 struggle with trying to provide the best
15 service for your child. I'm going to
16 jump back into my line of questioning.
17 On Page 11 of your presentation today it
18 looks like you plan to spend \$350 million
19 in the focus area of support, educational
20 recovery and accelerated learning.

21 Of that \$350 million, please
22 tell me that you have about a 1 million
23 or 2 for Freedom Schools. Because I've
24 been in City Council now for years and
25 I've been screaming to the Administration

1 as well as to the School District that
2 not only is Freedom Schools a phenomenal
3 program as it relates to academic and
4 social support, but when we're talking
5 about this issue of poverty issues around
6 violence, Freedom Schools is the entire
7 gamut.

8 I have a resolution in City
9 Council right now calling on the City as
10 well as the state to invest in Freedom
11 Schools like Illinois is. Illinois is
12 using recovery dollars at the tune of 17
13 million to help address some of the same
14 issues that I just talked about. So I've
15 been saying it for years now at this
16 point, resolutions, hearings, meetings,
17 on the record, off the record. Please
18 tell me that out of the 350 million that
19 you plan to spend, that you do plan to
20 spend some on Freedom Schools.

21 DR. HITE: So, one, it's not
22 specifically the issue of Freedom
23 Schools, Councilman Thomas. Thank you
24 for the question. We are using a Freedom
25 School model. So that model is going to

1 be in place at Duckrey and we're
2 continuing to do work with Brother
3 El-Mekki and others who are helping us to
4 look at where those models could be a
5 part of our summer extended year
6 programming. And so, part of the \$350
7 million speaks to the extended year
8 programming. Freedom Schools is a part
9 of that. And one in particular is going
10 to be at Duckrey for K-3 this summer.

11 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Dr. Hite,
12 that was a phenomenal answer but it's
13 absolutely disappointing. That is 100
14 percent disappointing. Since we already
15 have the School District coming in on
16 callbacks courtesy of my colleague's
17 request, I'm going to ask that the
18 Administration join that because I'm
19 going to take a hard stand this time
20 around. I've been asking for it for two
21 years. We have issues around public
22 safety. We have issues around academic
23 support systems.

24 People always say fun programs
25 that work. I'm a living testament that

1 the program works, right. Not only me,
2 other members of City Council as well too
3 have been a part of the Freedom Schools
4 program in one capacity or another. When
5 I was in I'd say my junior year in high
6 school, maybe my junior or senior year,
7 we had 23 Freedom School sites across the
8 City of Philadelphia. At that time,
9 Freedom Schools employed over 200 high
10 school students all across the City of
11 Philadelphia, hundreds of college
12 students, thousands of young people
13 between the grades of Kindergarten
14 through 8th were participating in a
15 program.

16 And on top of that, I can tell
17 you if you look back at that time which
18 was about 20 years ago and look at the
19 young people who participated in that
20 program, because I know a lot of them and
21 where we are now as an adult, I can
22 assure you will not find another model
23 more successful than the Freedom Schools
24 model. It's a reason that Illinois
25 invested 17 million. There's a reason

1 that Marian Wright Edelman and folks out
2 of D.C. as well as leaders here locally,
3 Dr. Greg Carr, tons of other people have
4 been telling you. We had people testify
5 in Council last week talk about the
6 importance of Freedom Schools. So this
7 is partly to Dr. Hite, but this is to the
8 entire School District and more
9 importantly, to the Administration.

10 When I first won my City Council
11 seat, folks said, Isaiah, what's going to
12 be a priority to you? Freedom Schools.
13 I've been saying it for years. It's
14 too -- I don't know what else to do at
15 this point. I just wanted to put that on
16 the record first and foremost.

17 In the last week, I've been to
18 two public schools, Kenderton in the 8th
19 Councilmanic District of Councilmember
20 Bass as well as Southern High School in
21 the 2nd Councilmanic District of
22 Councilman Johnson. Outside of
23 advocating for this idea of games not
24 being at 3:15, right, because that's a
25 big thing, if we're going to start

1 schools later and we want to see game
2 times start later and we want to see a
3 safety plan around commuting home later
4 once it gets dark.

5 You all have 325 million that
6 you are looking at to improve facilities.
7 I've personally worked with the School
8 District to help get a scoreboard to
9 Frankford High School. I was at Southern
10 last week. I was at Kenderton last week
11 and the facilities there are not up to
12 par. My concern is that even when we do
13 get the items that we need and it's
14 purchased, the installment of those items
15 take months. We had the scoreboard at
16 Frankford High School well before
17 basketball season started. I want to say
18 in October or something like that, and
19 it's May and that scoreboard still hasn't
20 been installed. So I'm really worried
21 about what the plan is going to be moving
22 forward around sports.

23 And I do have several more
24 questions. But I don't know, Council
25 President, I'll wait, hold on, submit

1 them, come back for a third round,
2 whatever you prefer as it relates to the
3 work that we need to do. But, Dr. Hite,
4 if you could just help me with that last
5 thing. And then, Council President, I'll
6 follow your lead for the rest of my
7 items.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
9 you. Thank you. Quite a minimum,
10 Councilman, per request which we likely
11 were going to do anyway, I will have the
12 School District come back. It's just a
13 lot of issues. I really would like to
14 have them back when Dr. Watlington can be
15 available. And I know he won't know much
16 about the questions that are asked
17 because he will just be here, but he does
18 need to get a perspective, a headstart on
19 what it's like to be before the City
20 Council of Philadelphia and the
21 perspectives that we have and the
22 concerns and the questions that we have.
23 So we'll figure out the scheduling of the
24 follow-up meeting. Okay. But thank you,
25 Councilman. One way or another we'll get

1 responses to your questions. Thank you.

2 Chair recog --

3 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank you,
4 Council President. But can we get a
5 response on the record around this sports
6 and facility issue? Again, the start
7 time was one thing. I'm hoping that we
8 can get some commitment to that. But if
9 we can get something around
10 infrastructure in our schools, right.
11 Facility issues are big time and even
12 when we get the supplies we need, they're
13 not installed in time.

14 We can't just ask building
15 engineers to do this stuff. So is it a
16 staffing issue that we're facing and if
17 we are, what's the plan because you have
18 \$325 million that you plan to allocate to
19 improving facilities? And based on my
20 work, even when we do get it right, we
21 still get it wrong.

22 DR. HITE: Yeah. No, I
23 appreciate that, Councilman Thomas. But
24 I would also add that this goes back and
25 speaks a little bit to the environmental

1 stuff. And so, one of the things that we
2 wanted to make sure is that if, in fact,
3 anyone has to drill into anything, we
4 have to ensure that you're not going to
5 be disrupting something that's going to
6 cause a bigger problem. And so, yeah,
7 the scoreboard is going to be installed,
8 but there's a whole environmental process
9 that we also are engaged in whenever we
10 are installing new equipment that
11 requires drilling.

12 That could be anything from
13 cameras to scoreboards to signs, but we
14 just have to make sure we're being ultra
15 diligent around that issue not to create
16 another or a different environmental or
17 what may be an environmental problem at
18 the school.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Yeah.
20 Thank you. Thank you, Doc. Thank you,
21 Councilman.

22 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
23 Gym.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
25 very much, Council President.

1 So again, I think Councilmember
2 Gilmore Richardson and I have focused and
3 others have focused specifically on the
4 enrollment engagement issue. It's
5 critically important again. I think
6 Karyn Lynch had mentioned that if the
7 District enrolled children in the schools
8 that are closest to them, that the
9 District would have problems. And I'm
10 wondering if you can elaborate on what
11 you mean by that.

12 MS. LYNCH: I didn't -- that is
13 not what I said. And if that's what it
14 sounded like --

15 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Could you
16 clarify because I think you noted
17 about --

18 MS. LYNCH: I was talking about
19 the online process of enrolling online.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay.

21 MS. LYNCH: What happens in that
22 process. Because you know we have a
23 process that's 8 to 12 that allows for
24 students' families to apply annually to
25 attend a school that's outside of their

1 catchment. We have a process for choice,
2 right, and there are other means that are
3 related to choice. In this instance,
4 we're talking about a charter school and
5 enrolling in a charter school and whether
6 or not you could enroll in a charter
7 school from the School District's online
8 process of enrollment and that's not
9 possible to do.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Right. No, I
11 understand that. I think I was talking
12 more about proximity. Can a parent
13 enroll at a school that is most proximal
14 to where they live --

15 MS. LYNCH: I -- oh, sorry.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: No, go ahead.

17 MS. LYNCH: Online, from the
18 online registration enrollment process
19 you only have the option to enroll in a
20 school that is assigned to your address.
21 So you go into the system online and you
22 can -- the system will point to -- you
23 put in your address and it will point to
24 the school that has been assigned to your
25 address. And the reason that the system

1 online does that is so that we don't have
2 families that are trying to enroll in any
3 school that's located anywhere in the
4 City through the online process. That's
5 the point I was trying to make. Thank
6 you.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. That
8 helps clarify. I think one of the
9 questions though is about that proximity.
10 And if an individual and, you know,
11 making sure that there is a means to be
12 able to address certain issues so that
13 you don't want siblings to get split up,
14 for example, you want to make sure in
15 case catchment boundaries change, you
16 want to have consideration for proximity.
17 Again, these are some of the things that
18 we want, basic problems to be fixed.

19 We want the District to be
20 responsive when it's a reasonable
21 request. You're certainly not trying to
22 create inequities and privileges and
23 preferences, but it's something that as
24 we maintain enrollment engagement of
25 families it feels really important. I

1 won't even go into what I think was a
2 disastrous decision by the District to
3 take Carver families, for example, and
4 not allow them to enroll in 9th grade
5 when a promise was made for them. That's
6 like 66 families that could easily have
7 been accommodated in part because the
8 District overenrolled and added hundreds
9 of new students to their 9th grade and
10 did not include those students.

11 So I don't want go into that
12 whole thing, but this is another example
13 of where the District needs to, you know,
14 you want to fix problems and address
15 bigger issues like diversity, which
16 Carver didn't really have an issue with.
17 But we really need to be thoughtful and
18 these families, their choices that are
19 made, their children's lives, they don't
20 get to repeat them again. And so, it's
21 another reason why we are doubling-down
22 on enrollment engagement, fixing problems
23 that should be fixed, not incurring self-
24 owned. And it feels like we are still
25 struggling with that.

1 So I'm going to pivot a little
2 bit away, but I'm glad that we got to
3 clarify that. So I wanted to pivot a
4 little bit into following up with my
5 colleague on the gun violence issues.
6 Dr. Hite, as you know, we have drilled
7 down on supporting schools, identifying
8 them. Is the School District able to
9 follow up with us to share data analysis
10 on school enrollments of shooting
11 victims, the last known school that they
12 attended, additional supports that are
13 going into those particular school
14 communities? We want to particularly
15 understand the communities most impacted
16 by gun violence and whether any of that
17 has shifted.

18 DR. HITE: Yes. In fact, Karyn
19 can give us some information. But, yes,
20 to answer the first part of your
21 question, we can provide information
22 about the follow-up to the young people
23 who have been impacted or victims of gun
24 violence.

25 Then, Karyn, did you get the

1 second part of the question?

2 MS. LYNCH: If it could be
3 repeated, that would be helpful.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yeah. We're
5 just going to be asking to make sure that
6 the original data that we had from 2020,
7 has anything shifted? Are there new
8 Community Schools that we should be --
9 communities and/or schools that we should
10 be adding to that list as we start to
11 zero in on making sure that the City and
12 others are in support of those schools
13 and that we have a lot of attention and
14 additional resources that are going to
15 them if they're experiencing this, you
16 know, inordinately incurring the cost of
17 gun violence, especially as it involves
18 young people?

19 MS. LYNCH: We receive that data
20 from the police department, so we can go
21 back to the police department and ask
22 them. And my guess is that you know from
23 the Office of Children Youth and Families
24 the additional zip codes that they're
25 going to be using for the Community

1 Schools.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yes, we get
3 zip codes. We don't get schools. And
4 you definitely are the only entity that
5 has the school-related data because we've
6 asked for that. I think that the police
7 department has zip codes. But you're the
8 only one that can match a zip code with a
9 school. So what we're basically saying
10 is that in 2019, Dr. Hite or 2020
11 Dr. Hite shared with us the 25 schools
12 most impacted by gun violence with young
13 people.

14 And what we want to do is two
15 years later, two and a half years later
16 we want to review that data again and
17 make sure that we're paying attention to
18 any shifts and additional resources that
19 are going there. So is that something
20 that you can provide to us because I
21 don't think we're going to get it from
22 the police department or from Children,
23 Youth and Families because they don't
24 match with schools? You're the only one
25 that would have the school data.

1 MS. LYNCH: Will do. Thank you.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. Thank
3 you. And then I just want to put on the
4 record because I think we're only going
5 to have this second round, but again with
6 the issue around schooling we're really
7 concerned and have heard a lot of
8 concerns from principals about the
9 District's preparedness to support high
10 schools and students in meeting new
11 graduation requirements that are planning
12 to go into place next year.

13 So again, this is more reason
14 why we cannot see the loss of 350
15 teachers, especially at these schools as
16 they're going through it. So we want to
17 go back to the District. We'll put some
18 of these questions, but I want to put it
19 on the record, you know, 1 to 650
20 student-counselor ratio. So I'm glad
21 that a second school gets 650 students,
22 but 649 student high school only has one
23 counselor. And that is going to leave a
24 lot of students in the lurch when it
25 comes to meeting these requirements. So

1 we should be prioritizing schools with
2 higher numbers of off-track rising
3 seniors for additional counselors.

4 And we'll be asking the District
5 to provide back to us how many rising
6 seniors are in danger of not meeting the
7 various graduation requirements broken
8 down by schools. So obviously, I don't
9 want names but we want to deliver
10 resources specifically to those schools.
11 And then finally, to put on the record
12 once again, and this is my last one but
13 we have been really involved with SEPTA
14 and getting a Key Advantage program that
15 provides institutions a pilot
16 institutional path.

17 So for a significantly reduced
18 rate, the entity asks people and
19 individuals to sign up for all rail pass.
20 I know it was on your list of things that
21 you felt that maybe it's something that
22 you could get help with. And so, we had
23 developed this program we're piloting.
24 It's got enormously popular. We've seen
25 thousands of new riders and thousands of

1 new riderships coming onto the system.

2 But I guess this is one of the
3 questions that I would ask of you. This
4 is an incredible program. It's reduced
5 rates. We're hoping it will be
6 permanent, but has the District
7 considered trying to join the SEPTA Key
8 Advantage program, particularly for a
9 nonteacher-based staff? It could also
10 include your teacher-based staff, but
11 especially for the nonteaching-based
12 staff. That is a significant boost
13 potentially in appeal, in an employee
14 benefit. It's a frontline investment by
15 the District. So it can be one-time
16 spending in response to getting people
17 back in and all of that.

18 So just want to make sure that
19 the District knows about it, that it's
20 able to be in dialogue and whether it's
21 been considered at all. And I would
22 strongly support that effort and be more
23 than willing to help with it.

24 DR. HITE: Yes, we have
25 considered that, Councilwoman Gym. And

1 in fact, one of the things that the Board
2 President mentioned and things that could
3 be helpful is really looking for
4 opportunities to do more of those types
5 of things as just a recruitment and
6 retention strategy for many of our
7 colleagues and staff members, yes.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yeah. And
9 just want to re-emphasize once again,
10 this is a huge boost especially for some
11 of these hard-to-fill positions, bus
12 drivers, maintenance workers, cleaning
13 staff and others who would see a
14 signifi -- paraprofessionals, climate
15 staff, all the areas that you're going to
16 need to hire up for.

17 Those are all my questions for
18 right now. And thank you, Council
19 President.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
21 you. Thank you, Councilwoman.

22 Chair recognizes Councilman
23 Johnson.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
25 Council President.

1 I guess I'm going to go in a
2 different direction. I wanted to wrap up
3 on -- Council President, this is the last
4 round?

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I do
6 want to get to the community. We pushed
7 them back once. I don't --

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: That's
9 cool. They're a priority.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: We'll
11 have a callback.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yup, no
13 problem. So I'll address the additional
14 public safety issues later on, and I can
15 just call Bethel and have a conversation
16 with him off the record regarding this
17 issue because this is not for show. But
18 I do want to ask questions about
19 diversity and inclusion. I remember
20 asking the question before in the past to
21 Uri.

22 I just want to get an idea in
23 terms of the School District of
24 Philadelphia's procurement on diversity
25 and inclusion numbers, what their process

1 looks like. I remember also having a
2 brief response regarding some
3 negotiations with the union in the past
4 regarding them kind of giving the
5 District some leeway on I guess the
6 process in terms of how y'all contract
7 with other individuals so it doesn't be a
8 burden on the District.

9 And so, can you just give us an
10 update on what the diversity and
11 inclusion numbers look like regarding
12 procurement and contracts and doing
13 business with the School District of
14 Philadelphia and what that dollar figure
15 looks like?

16 MR. MONSON: Good afternoon,
17 Councilman Johnson, yes. So thank you
18 for the question. First of all, we put
19 out that data in our quarterly report.
20 And actually our next quarterly report
21 which I don't have because we're not --
22 it comes out in about 10 days. So I'll
23 have the update through the third
24 quarter, but we've been doing this for
25 six years I think with the quarterly

1 report, so the data's out there.

2 And just to give a sense, I'm
3 trying to pull up the most recent one
4 while we're talking. I do want to
5 highlight that we have -- okay, here we
6 go. So this is from the midyear and
7 through Quarter 2. And we break it down
8 not just overall awards, but construction
9 contract, constructed professional
10 services and professional services and
11 purchasing, so you can see all the
12 different areas.

13 So for example, for the first
14 half of this year out of \$184 million in
15 total award contracts, there were 63
16 million, about 34 percent went to M/WBE,
17 and then there's further breakdowns. And
18 I know it's limited time here, so I don't
19 want to take -- but it is available on
20 the website and we can send you a copy of
21 the quarterly report. And again, the new
22 one, update will come out in about 10
23 days.

24 I do want to point out that it's
25 not too often, and this is true for a lot

1 of public sectors, we focus on what was
2 awarded and not what actually happens.
3 So one of the things we've been doing and
4 we set up our new ERP system because
5 there's a self-service portal is that we
6 want the subcontractors, particularly
7 where there are subs in a lot of the
8 construction projects, they actually
9 report themselves when they got paid and
10 that they got paid and that they did the
11 work, so we're not reliant on a general.
12 Because very often you get into the,
13 well, we said we were going to do it, we
14 actually do it.

15 So we actually have the minority
16 vendors themselves and women-owned
17 vendors themselves able to report to us
18 so we can track it, hold generals
19 accountable to make sure that what they
20 claimed was going to happen did happen,
21 that we can use that when we consider
22 them for future contracting. The other
23 piece is we had started robust outreach
24 right before the pandemic in a number of
25 opportunities.

1 We actually have one coming up.
2 It's towards the end of May. I don't
3 remember the exact date, but we'll get
4 that information to you and to all of
5 your colleagues to help us spread the
6 word, but we're trying to do a lot of
7 outreach to minority vendors, women-owned
8 vendors and local vendors and ones who
9 may not traditionally have done business
10 with the District, to explain how our
11 systems work, what opportunities are
12 there for them because it's got to be a
13 combination of making sure that folks are
14 aware of how they access the
15 opportunities because we need them to
16 apply in order to respond to proposals.
17 We want to do that and do as much
18 outreach and support so they can
19 familiarize the systems, know the
20 opportunities are out there, how to gain
21 the opportunities.

22 I think we're doing it at every
23 level. There's the public reporting out,
24 the quarterly reports. There's making
25 sure that we're hearing from the vendors

1 themselves and also the outreach. That's
2 kind of the three-pronged approach we
3 have right now, but I will definitely
4 reach out again to you and through the
5 Council President about the upcoming
6 event because that's our first sort of
7 inperson post -- we've been doing smaller
8 things during the pandemic, but post-
9 pandemic I think it's kind of the first
10 thing of what we want to do. But we'll
11 get that information out to you.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And the
13 second part of that question, I know
14 there was a brief conversation before. I
15 know also the School District President
16 talked about it as well. There was some
17 type of negotiation with the union and
18 the union was going to kind of give the
19 District a little more leeway to kind of
20 do I guess various negotiations with I
21 would think contractors, because that
22 would be the only interest they would
23 have.

24 Can you give me an update on
25 that particular process or should I call

1 the President to kind of refresh that
2 conversation?

3 MS. WILKERSON: Um --

4 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Joyce, do
5 you remember some time ago we talked
6 about the unions and its role --

7 MS. WILKERSON: Yeah. So I
8 guess we have a couple issues moving.
9 One is project labor agreement --

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

11 MS. WILKERSON: -- and there's
12 still an ongoing conversation between the
13 District and the Building Trades around
14 project labor agreements. The Board is
15 looking for expanded opportunities for
16 students coming out of our schools, not
17 to get into pre-apprenticeship programs
18 but actually apprenticeship programs.
19 We're looking for a higher trigger right
20 now. What we had was triggered at
21 \$5,000. That's unreasonable. So we're
22 looking to negotiate around that, around
23 the percentages and we wanted demographic
24 information. So we wanted to know that
25 we were making progress. And so, wanted

1 to know what the minority enrollment in
2 the Building Trades was.

3 And the final --

4 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Are we
5 making progress, Joyce? I just want to
6 ask that because it's been a while since
7 I asked you this, maybe a year ago.

8 MS. WILKERSON: Yeah. I've had
9 conversations within the last couple of
10 months and I know Dr. Hite has had
11 additional conversations so I don't know
12 what that progress is, but there are
13 ongoing conversations. On the other
14 thing you're talking about is the four-
15 part bidding. So we pay probably 15, 20
16 percent more on our construction because
17 we have to bid out the individual trades
18 separately. And hopefully, that's, you
19 know, if we can get a project labor
20 agreement getting some movement on the
21 four-part bidding would be part of, you
22 know, would be an outcome of that as
23 well. I can update you privately on it
24 with more detail.

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.

1 Thank you. And I want to ask the
2 question, is the Mayor's Office of Labor
3 a part of this process as well?

4 MS. WILKERSON: I'd have to ask
5 Dr. Hite that.

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Dr. Hite,
7 are you on, sir?

8 DR. HITE: I am, Councilman.
9 And, yes, they are part of the
10 conversation. Yes, sir.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay. Now,
12 I just wanted because I know part of this
13 presentation early on and I listened to
14 the Board, you know, each member talked
15 about the Board's perspective and always
16 talk about diversity, inclusion,
17 institutional racism, breaking down those
18 types of structures. And I'm not saying
19 this is the case, but particularly when
20 you talk about diversity and inclusion,
21 obviously there's been historical lack of
22 inclusion if I would be direct in saying
23 in terms of our young people having
24 opportunities to participate in that
25 process.

1 And I know I asked this question
2 maybe either the last budget cycle or the
3 cycle before. And so, in terms of a
4 level of urgency where again if we don't
5 want young children standing on the
6 corner carrying guns, we have to give
7 them opportunities.

8 DR. HITE: Right.

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: We talk
10 about the City of Philadelphia being the
11 number one big city when it comes to
12 poverty, we got to give young people an
13 opportunity. And so, in this particular
14 area I just wanted to see the level of
15 progress that we're making, the
16 (inaudible). I'll reach out to you
17 offline to have this conversation and see
18 how we can be supportive and maybe
19 working with the new head of the Building
20 Trades to see how we can push this
21 process forward. Because ultimately,
22 these are our children and they deserve
23 an opportunity to participate and this is
24 taxpayer dollars, so if we want to award
25 the funding to these individuals, then to

1 ensure they can hire our young people as
2 well.

3 MS. WILKERSON: We agree
4 completely. We put too much money out on
5 the street for there not to be meaningful
6 opportunities for our children. So we
7 have reason --

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Listen, I'm
9 game so I will follow up with you.

10 Thank you very much, Council
11 President, for allowing me the time.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
13 Absolutely. Thank you, Councilman.

14 Chair recognizes Councilman
15 Domb.

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Council
17 President, I don't think I was in the
18 queue.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Okay.
20 Let me go again. Chair recognizes
21 Councilwoman Brooks.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Thank you,
23 Council President. I think my question
24 is kind of following up on some of the
25 things that Councilmember Gym and

1 Councilmember Johnson talked about. So
2 in addition to the data requested by
3 Councilmember Gym, we would love to see a
4 comprehensive plan for staffing and
5 support for those schools most affected
6 by gun violence.

7 I brought this up last year
8 during budget season in reference to a
9 specific program in 19140 which is called
10 Cure Violence through Temple and I had
11 mentioned they had skipped a school that
12 was in the 19140 area and extended it
13 over to another school, and I still
14 haven't gotten a clear answer if Steele
15 School will be included into that Cure
16 Violence program and what's the plan
17 around that?

18 But part two of that is about
19 restorative practices. One of the
20 specific questions around this is, I know
21 that there has been additional money
22 allocated for restorative practices in
23 schools in this budget, but I was
24 wondering what is the state of the
25 restorative practices and school process

1 and how many schools have it, how many do
2 not, how are the schools selected and how
3 are we spending any additional funds and
4 selecting schools in this plan?

5 DR. HITE: Karyn, you want to
6 take the restorative practice piece.

7 MS. LYNCH: Yes. Councilwoman,
8 schools annually prepare a school
9 improvement plan and as part of that
10 effort, various parts of the District
11 Central Office are involved, but school
12 leaders identify based on the data that
13 they have which of the frameworks that
14 they'd like to implement in the following
15 year. So I can't tell you the exact
16 number of schools that we have right now
17 that have selected as part of their
18 school improvement plan over the last few
19 years restorative practices. I can get
20 that information for you fairly quickly.
21 Each year they sign up and that's how
22 they're selected. So --

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Can you
24 send over whatever data you have, because
25 this is my concern and I'm going to give

1 a real-life situation. I had a teacher
2 call in reference to students that she
3 felt were in crisis that immediate
4 weekend in terms of issues that were
5 happening in the community and they
6 opened up and shared it with her. She in
7 turn shared it with the school staff.
8 They didn't see it rising up to urgency.
9 I reached out to another City department
10 and they said they couldn't do anything
11 unless the School District did something.

12 Consequently after that, the
13 kids did not show up to school for about
14 three, four weeks. They're still okay,
15 but that should not be the norm. It has
16 to be something in place to help these
17 young people right now. And to
18 Councilmember Johnson's thought, why
19 don't we have PAAN and some of these
20 other groups that are actively involved
21 in communities ready to step in
22 immediately if the school staff doesn't
23 see it rising up to importance, because
24 the reality, the specific teacher that
25 mentioned this incident as well as me and

1 everyone in the neighborhood was ready to
2 do something, but we kept getting blocked
3 by bureaucracy.

4 And my fear is that we're going
5 to miss out and continue to lose young
6 kids because adults are adulting. And as
7 we go into the summer months, we need to
8 see something else. So I would like to
9 see what the comprehensive plan looks
10 like for some of these areas that are
11 drastically hit by gun violence, that
12 we're going to see God forbid more over
13 the summer, and what can we do to be
14 proactive.

15 We have already invested time
16 and Councilmember Gym and I have went
17 directly into schools in those areas to
18 help kids register for summer schools and
19 summer jobs, worked directly with PYN and
20 our staff, DHS, making sure they can have
21 these jobs, but it has to be an
22 all-hands-on-deck because the fear is
23 summer is here and is happening
24 immediately. And when I hit bureaucracy,
25 I get very upset. Because thank God the

1 little boys are still around, but suppose
2 they didn't make it through the weekend
3 after we reached out for help.

4 MS. LYNCH: I agree with you 100
5 percent. I make myself available.
6 Kevin's on and he makes himself
7 available, but I do agree with you, we
8 need to have a communication plan so that
9 when we know that a student is in
10 crisis -- it's more than just restorative
11 practices that's available. There are
12 various opportunities and I think you're
13 absolutely right.

14 MR. BETHEL: (Muted).

15 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: You're on
16 mute.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
18 You're on mute.

19 MR. BETHEL: I want to quickly
20 say we're doing that every night, 24
21 hours, seven days a week. School leaders
22 are contacting our dispatch. We have a
23 threat assessment protocol. We will go
24 out to the school and make an assessment
25 of whether that threat is moderate or

1 just a transient threat. We will
2 immediately and often times working with
3 Karyn Lynch's team because the child --
4 most recently moved the child from a
5 school because it wasn't safe for him to
6 be at that school, and we provide that
7 information to ensure that the student
8 supports and Rachel Holzman's team can
9 move that child.

10 But often times I think what
11 happens it gets stove-piped and not bring
12 it up to the school leaders. I mean, the
13 assistant superintendents are calling me
14 and we've been on the ground since school
15 started as you know, just even because of
16 the social media threats we're getting.
17 Kids are showing guns on social media and
18 there's a fear that the parent will see
19 it. They will call the Safe2Say program
20 or they will call into the school and
21 say, I saw this kid with a gun, he's
22 threatening my child.

23 We've been very, very proactive
24 working with the police department. And
25 other leaders going to homes doing home

1 checks to see if they have access to a
2 weapon. So I do want you to walk away
3 from here knowing that we are, myself,
4 Karyn, the entire team, my staff has done
5 an amazing job, police department in
6 really being very proactive in that
7 space. And they should really call their
8 school leader, their principals. Most of
9 them are very versed on our protocols,
10 around threat assessment protocols, on
11 what to do in those protocols and to
12 contact us immediately if there's a
13 threat, particularly violence, gun
14 violence and we act very quickly with the
15 support of the police department to
16 address those.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Thank you.
18 My time is up so I guess I'll wait for
19 the callbacks for any additional
20 questions. But I just would like, can
21 you send over the protocol in writing so
22 I'll know how to best support any school
23 staff or families that call me with this
24 again because it was very
25 disheartening -- and we were able to

1 navigate -- I was able to navigate the
2 system to get some support but I felt
3 that it shouldn't have to leave the
4 school building.

5 DR. HITE: I agree.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: The
7 support should have been readily
8 available in the school where I didn't
9 feel like I had to go everywhere else to
10 get what I needed.

11 DR. HITE: Yes --

12 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Thanks so
13 much.

14 DR. HITE: -- we'll get that
15 over to you, Councilwoman Brooks.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
17 you. Thank you, Councilwoman.

18 Councilman Jones I believe just
19 logged on.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Sir
21 (inaudible).

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
23 Councilman Jones, go ahead.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: (Muted).

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

1 You're on mute, Councilman.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
3 Mr. President. And I want to for the
4 record apologize for being in a car, but
5 I was on my way to the Police and Fire
6 Memorial representing Public Safety
7 Committee. So technology allowed me to
8 do that, but I am back at the stable.

9 One of the things that Member
10 Brooks talks about, which is something
11 that comes up often in my discussions
12 with principals and staff is the
13 connectivity between social service
14 programs, DHS and others, that should be
15 more present or if they are present, a
16 lot of the administrators don't know
17 where the handbook of protocols are for
18 different, different things.

19 It seems -- I don't know and
20 maybe it's a school-by-school basis, but
21 there should be some formalization of
22 what social services, CUAs give to assist
23 School District personnel and how can we
24 better integrate that kind of knowledge
25 so that principals have it at the ready

1 when they are faced with crises by the
2 student population?

3 MS. LYNCH: Councilman, we do
4 have such available. And to your point,
5 I'm sure we can always make it better and
6 we'll do so. We'll look at it. We'll
7 talk about it. Would you like to have
8 input in that?

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Well, yes.
10 But what I'm looking for is if I'm the
11 substitute teacher and I come in or I'm
12 the new counselor at Overbrook High
13 School, there should be a manual, a
14 manual of things that say in case of
15 child abuse, here's what we do, in case
16 of bed bugs, here's what we do, in case
17 of mental duress, here's the agency you
18 should call, and that should be more --
19 it shouldn't be -- it should be readily
20 available so that it's a common knowledge
21 thing.

22 And I know we're going to do
23 better, but those are specific things
24 that I hear from school administrators
25 saying they wish they knew more about.

1 So that along with things like -- I don't
2 know whatever happened to the Parent
3 University and how we can move that into
4 individual schools to kind of get parents
5 who might not know all of the answers
6 some of the answers.

7 MS. LYNCH: Thank you. We moved
8 Parent University online. Most of those
9 courses are taking place virtually and
10 have provided an opportunity for parents
11 all over the City to be able to
12 participate. But, yes, we notify schools
13 about that and do a great outreach to
14 families about that. We can include you
15 on the list if you'd like to know more
16 about it.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yeah, I
18 actually would because at those 7:00 a.m
19 roll calls, someone from a school will
20 say, well, this is the scenario and I
21 don't know what to do. And to the
22 Commissioner over at DHS, they came on
23 with those 12 or so schools and started
24 going through it, but what they did not
25 have was a comprehensive list of the

1 types of match problems, solutions --

2 (Background interruption.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

4 CP, Council President, you're not on

5 mute.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: You're not on

7 mute, sir.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Yeah.

9 Okay. I heard you guys. All right.

10 We're discussing the next chapter of our

11 hearing which will be public testimony.

12 Councilman, are you done with

13 the questions?

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes, I am.

15 But if there is such a website, a manual

16 that we can distribute to those

17 respective schools, those respective

18 parents, I think that would be

19 invaluable.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Okay.

21 Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank

24 you, Councilman. All right. That is the

25 last person, Councilmember in the queue.

1 We're going to take a 5-,
2 10-minute break to make sure that all our
3 witnesses for our public comment session
4 are connected, and then we'll come back
5 shortly. So, Modesto, we can take like
6 around a 5-, 10-minute break so you guys
7 can do what you need to do to get our
8 people connected. Thank you all very
9 much.

10 And, School District members, if
11 you can continue to monitor the
12 activities of the day, it may be helpful
13 for us. And please understand that you
14 will be given a call from us for one of
15 our callbacks. All right. Thank you.
16 Thank you very much.

17 DR. HITE: Thank you, Council
18 President.

19 (Brief recess.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
21 Thank you. We are now going to resume
22 the School District budget hearings and
23 the bi-annual meeting between the City
24 Council of Philadelphia and the School
25 District of Philadelphia.

1 Before we resume the public
2 hearing portion of our hearing, I want to
3 proceed with some ground rules. The
4 testimony, we are here today to hear from
5 you about the School District's proposed
6 budget and where we believe the School
7 District should focus its spending
8 priorities.

9 Due to the COVID-19 emergency,
10 we have implemented special procedures
11 with respect to public comment, which was
12 advertised and posted on Council's
13 website and sent out in our press
14 release. Speakers interested in giving
15 testimony were asked to call or email us
16 by 3 o'clock yesterday so that we can
17 take the technical steps necessary to
18 provide an opportunity for public comment
19 in a virtual environment.

20 To ensure that there is an
21 opportunity for everyone here to be
22 heard, certain ground rules have to be
23 established and they are as follows:
24 Your testimony should be about School
25 District budget and proposed spending

1 priorities. All of those who signed up
2 to give public comment were telephoned at
3 the beginning of this hearing.

4 We want to apologize. We know
5 we are delayed in the public part of this
6 testimony and we ask that you cooperate
7 with us as we have tried to accomodate a
8 very robust conversation this morning.
9 You've been invited to join the hearing
10 if you signed up for testimony. Please
11 make sure that your phone is muted at the
12 time and until it is your turn to speak.
13 Your name will be called in the order in
14 which you have signed up.

15 Once your name is called, please
16 unmute your phone. You will then have up
17 to three minutes to speak. In order to
18 be fair to all those wishing to speak, I
19 intend to hold faithfully to the three-
20 minute limit. You will hear the bell
21 ring. Once you are asked to begin your
22 testimony, a timer will be started.
23 There will be 30 seconds -- when there's
24 30 seconds remaining to your time, you
25 will be reminded of this.

1 Once your allotted time has been
2 passed, you will be asked to conclude
3 your remarks. At which time, please mute
4 your phone and stay on the line until the
5 hearing is complete. I'm going to ask
6 the Clerk to read off the names of the
7 speakers. Once again, I apologize. I
8 know many of you were prepared to testify
9 early. Some folks will not be able to
10 accommodate this new time.

11 I just want to notify folks for
12 the record that it was officially stated
13 at the earlier part of our conversation
14 that the School District will be asked to
15 return as part of the City Council
16 callbacks and there will be another
17 opportunity for public testimony.

18 With that, Mr. McDermott, can
19 you please read the name of our first
20 speaker.

21 THE CLERK: The first person to
22 testify is an Andi Johnson.

23 THE CLERK: Mr. Johnson, are you
24 there --

25 MS. JOHNSON: Thanks you for

1 the -- I'm here. Can you hear me?

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Yes, we can. Please state your name for
4 the record and proceed with your
5 testimony.

6 MS. JOHNSON: My name's Andi
7 Johnson. Thanks for the opportunity to
8 comment. I am a Philadelphia resident
9 and a faculty member at the University of
10 Pennsylvania and I have joined you today
11 to urge the City Council to work with the
12 Mayor and with the University of
13 Pennsylvania's Board of Trustees to
14 guarantee that our enormously wealthy
15 university pay at least 40 percent of
16 what it would pay in property taxes on
17 its noncommercial real estate to support
18 Philadelphia public schools.

19 The University benefits
20 enormously from its location in Philly
21 and our City simply cannot flourish
22 without well-resourced public schools
23 across the City. Philadelphia has the
24 highest poverty rate of the 10 largest
25 cities in the U.S. It's also by many

1 health metrics the sickest. Our children
2 and teachers face overcrowded,
3 underventilated classrooms with
4 dilapidated conditions that often create
5 toxicity.

6 Our schools lack access to
7 critical resources, from art and music
8 classes to nurses and guidance
9 counselors. Many children in this City
10 are suffering as a result and some are
11 literally dying as a result of
12 preventable conditions that range from
13 asthma to gun violence. The current
14 funding from the School District from
15 both the state and City property taxes is
16 inadequate.

17 The University of Pennsylvania
18 claims it makes its contribution with
19 earmarked funds and projects, but there's
20 no substitute for reliably, safe, healthy
21 public schools available to all, financed
22 by all and capable of being held
23 accountable through public procedures
24 that guarantee the City's future. It's
25 time to put an end to systems of finance

1 that enrich wealthy, private, majority
2 White institutions like ours while
3 underfunding public institutions and
4 public services for this City's citizens,
5 especially its communities of color and
6 low-income residents.

7 Wealthy nonprofits like the
8 University of Pennsylvania should be
9 making contributions called pilots. They
10 should be making regular predictable
11 payments in lieu of taxes to our City's
12 budget to support our City's schools.
13 Thank you.

14 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
15 Thank you for your testimony and for your
16 patience today.

17 Mr. McDermott, the next witness
18 please.

19 THE CLERK: The next witness to
20 testify is Ann Farnsworth-Alvear.

21 MS. FARNSWORTH-ALVEAR: Hello.
22 Good afternoon. Thank you for allowing
23 me to testify today. My name is Ann
24 Farnsworth. I'm a parent of three, all
25 of whom have attended public schools in

1 the City from 1st grade to 12th grade.
2 My youngest is about to graduate. I'm
3 also a professor at the University of
4 Pennsylvania. I live on Regent Street
5 near 48th and Kingsessing, and I'm
6 testifying today to urge City Council to
7 work with the Mayor to guarantee that
8 wealthy nonprofits like my employer pay
9 pilots, meaning at least 40 percent of
10 what they would pay in property taxes on
11 their noncommercial real estate.

12 I want to see pilots paid to
13 support Philadelphia's public schools.
14 The City cannot flourish without public
15 schools. Penn is part of the City. I am
16 proud to be associated with both the City
17 and the University. I am prouder still
18 to be a citizen engaged with the
19 democratic process. In my opinion, it is
20 our duty as residents of the City to
21 advocate for the public good and the
22 public purse.

23 Our children and our teachers
24 face overcrowded, underventilated
25 classrooms with dilapidated conditions.

1 My child attends a school with no
2 sprinkler system. And public documents I
3 have seen show that a point of fact that
4 the District of Philadelphia, School
5 District of Philadelphia, pays an
6 insurance premium because fire safety
7 systems have not been updated. Funds for
8 modernizing buildings are short.

9 Our schools also lack access to
10 other critical resources, nurses,
11 guidance counselors, art and music
12 teachers, all of these should be budget
13 priorities. The budget must be
14 increased. City children are failing to
15 thrive. Many are dying as a result of
16 preventable conditions with gun violence
17 at the top of that list. The University
18 of Pennsylvania claims it contributes to
19 public education by providing research-
20 based interventions and special earmarked
21 funds, but there is no substitute for
22 good, safe public schools available to
23 all, financed by all and capable of being
24 held accountable through public
25 procedures.

1 I pay my property taxes as a
2 resident. I would like to see my
3 employer pay pilots. It is time to put
4 an end to systems of public finance but
5 enrich wealthy institutions such as the
6 University of Pennsylvania, while
7 underfunding public institutions and
8 public services to the mass majority of
9 the City's communities of color and
10 low-income citizens. UPenn should be
11 making regular predictable payments in
12 lieu of taxes to our City's budget to
13 support our City schools. Thank you.

14 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
15 Thank you again for your patience and
16 your testimony this afternoon.

17 Mr. McDermott, the next
18 testifier.

19 THE CLERK: The next witness to
20 testify is Hita Garcia.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
22 Ms. Garcia or is it Heidi Garcia?

23 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT: This
24 participant, we could not get in contact
25 with her.

1 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

2 Okay. Thank you. We will proceed to the
3 next one. The next testifier.

4 THE CLERK: Bridget Powell.

5 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

6 Good afternoon, Ms. Bridget Powell. Are
7 you on the line? Ms. Powell, are you on
8 the line and ready to testify?

9 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT:

10 Ms. Powell is not on the line currently.

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

12 Proceed to the next name.

13 THE CLERK: Tasia Hill.

14 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

15 Tasia Hi --

16 MS. HILL: Good --

17 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

18 Good afternoon. Please state your name
19 for the record and proceed with your
20 testimony. Thank you for your patience.

21 MS. HILL: For the record, my
22 name is Tasia Hill. Good afternoon. I'm
23 a City Year Philadelphia AmeriCorps
24 member. I appreciate the opportunity to
25 provide testimony today and to share the

1 important work in nearly 200 City Year
2 Corps members serving in 17 Philadelphia
3 schools city-wide. I serve the school
4 community and scholars of James G. Blaine
5 Academics in the 5th Council District
6 represented by Council President Clarke.

7 Each day my City Year team faces
8 many challenges in the schoolhouse like
9 the need for more resources, more
10 resources like computers, smartboards,
11 access to the library and even school
12 staff. Yet my team works hard to address
13 these challenges by supporting and
14 engaging closely with our students, doing
15 so through individualized attention that
16 helps them feel valued in their learning.

17 City Year Corps members are
18 student success coaches who serve full-
19 time every school day mentoring and
20 tutoring in math to English as well as in
21 attendance and social and emotional
22 learning. And we're integrated in the
23 school community, organizing school-wide
24 events and running the afterschool
25 programs. Every day I work toward

1 educational equity by both uncovering and
2 supporting my students' passion to be
3 learners. Learners who can contextualize
4 information, recognize the significance
5 the information has in the real world and
6 to persevere through hurdles and other
7 obstacles.

8 Why do I serve as a City Year
9 Philadelphia AmeriCorps member, I serve
10 so my students not only achieve their
11 academic goals, I serve to support their
12 thriving outside of school and throughout
13 life. Through the lens of City Year, the
14 importance of my own preventional
15 development, civic involvement and belief
16 in our youth keep me driven to embrace
17 these values by beginning to study for my
18 LSAT. So that once I finish serving with
19 City Year, I will continue to advocate
20 for educational equity through my own
21 future career in public policy.

22 These are the many reasons that
23 I will be returning in the fall to serve
24 a second City Year in Philadelphia
25 schools. On behalf of all City Year

1 Philadelphia AmeriCorps members, I look
2 forward to City Council's increased
3 support of the great work we do each and
4 every day in the schoolhouse. Thank you.

5 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

6 Thank you so much and thank you for your
7 service. I know I speak for
8 Councilmember Johnson who is a strong
9 advocate of City Year in saying we
10 appreciate your collaboration and your
11 support and very proud of you.
12 Congratulations and good luck on that L-1
13 year.

14 Our next testifier.

15 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
16 Lou Kotsetter.

17 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

18 Mr. Kotsetter --

19 MR. KOTSETTER: Hi. Good
20 afternoon. This is Luke Hostetter, yes.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

22 Yes. Proceed with your testimony. Thank
23 you very much for your patience.

24 MR. HOSTETTER: Hi. Good
25 afternoon. My name is Luke Hostetter and

1 I'm here as a witness that as the proud
2 principal at Baldi Middle School, the
3 largest middle school in Philly, that I
4 wouldn't be here today without the
5 experience of City Year. I was a member
6 of the Corps in 2008 and as an active
7 resident in District 1 with Councilmember
8 Mark Squilla, I am now a homeowner, a
9 taxpayer for the last 13 years and have
10 moved to the City and lead in the City
11 because of City Year.

12 I want to say a quick hello to
13 Councilmember Brian O'Neill, Member Gym,
14 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson for all
15 of their tremendous support to Baldi, and
16 also thank you Councilmember Mark Squilla
17 who has remarkably responded to every
18 email I sent as a concern if it's 3
19 o'clock in the morning.

20 It is a privilege to speak
21 today. Now, a decade removed from my City
22 Year Corps experience, I'm able to
23 reflect on how essential and informative
24 this was to my career path and
25 professional growth to experience working

1 in schools, and leading a team gave me
2 the perspective, inspiration to teach,
3 pursue leadership and ultimately become a
4 principal.

5 More so coming from Richmond,
6 Virginia, the Corps City Year connected
7 me intimately with Philadelphia and not
8 just because in 2008 the Philly won the
9 World Series, I'd like to think I had
10 something to do with that, but the year
11 also inspired and developed my civic
12 responsibility. I was able to understand
13 the depth of poverty and societal
14 complexities of life in Philadelphia and
15 how essential education and service to
16 communities is.

17 Personally, the experience also
18 built a conceptual framework for me in
19 giving back and serving others. As a
20 White man predominantly working alongside
21 people of color, the whole year was an
22 intense privilege check and opportunity
23 for me to expand my view of the world and
24 my place in it. I distinctively recall
25 my SEPTA commute from 51st and

1 Kingsessing to Lawncrest.

2 It took about an hour each way.

3 I was literally on opposite sides on the
4 map. And during this commute, this hour
5 allowed me to absorb so much of Philly,
6 the promise and the challenges. City
7 Year is deeper than the impact on school
8 and students. The impact on the young
9 people who have served and sign up and
10 who've become leaders, who often gain
11 perspective in understanding it is
12 lifechanging, and it is lifechanging for
13 our City.

14 There are so many members of my
15 Corps Year that continue to give back to
16 the City in positive ways and now lead.
17 City Year is a civic boot camp for future
18 generations and leaders in Philadelphia.
19 I implore you to increase your support
20 for City Year Philadelphia. City Year
21 Corps members not only make a difference
22 in the lives of students they support,
23 their service build valuable skill and
24 experiences that prepare to be our City's
25 next professionals in civically engaged

1 leadership. Thank you.

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Thank you, and thank you for your service
4 and for your testimony. Councilmember
5 Jones almost jumped off of his seat. You
6 said, boot camp. He said, whoa, wait a
7 minute, we just did that, okay. Thank
8 you so very much.

9 The next testifier please.

10 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
11 Darryl Bundrige.

12 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

13 Darryl, are you connected?

14 MR. BUNDRIGE: Good afternoon.

15 Yes, I am. I hope you can hear me.

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

17 Yes, we can. Say your name for the
18 record and proceed with your testimony.

19 Thanks again for your patience.

20 MR. BUNDRIGE: Yes. My name is

21 Darryl Bundrige. Thank you, Council
22 President and members of the Council for
23 listening to my testimony and thank you
24 for your support of City Year. Again, my
25 name is Darryl Bundrige and I'm the proud

1 Executive Director at City Year
2 Philadelphia, a 24-year old Philadelphia
3 education nonprofit committed to
4 supporting students, families and
5 communities throughout our City.

6 This year we served 9,000
7 students in 17 schools with 130 Corps
8 members. Despite the openings and
9 closings of schools and the ongoing COVID
10 exposures and revenue changes for us, we
11 showed up for the students helping them
12 adjust to being back in the classroom,
13 working with their peers and restart
14 their inperson learning.

15 And we are having an impact.
16 Over 50 percent of the students who we've
17 worked with at City Year improve their
18 math grade or literacy grade to at least
19 a C or better. 82 percent of our
20 teachers are highly satisfied with the
21 quality of service provided. 88 percent
22 of our principals feel the same way.

23 And a few facts about our
24 alumni: 75 of our alumni are educators,
25 health care professionals, lawyers,

1 social workers and nonprofit
2 professionals in Philadelphia, and 40
3 percent of our alumni who teach in the --
4 I'm sorry, 40 percent teach in the
5 communities in which they serve like our
6 Principal Hostetter. While we are proud
7 of our Corps members in the impact each
8 year, 24 percent of our candidates who
9 want to serve must turn down our
10 invitation to serve because they cannot
11 afford to do so on the current cost of
12 our living stipend.

13 Our peer organizations have all
14 increased their living stipend from
15 \$22,000 to \$33,000 depending on their
16 markets, and it's time for City Year to
17 increase ours as well so we can enable
18 more young people like Tasia Hill, who
19 you heard from earlier, to serve our City
20 and have their basic needs met regardless
21 of background or economic status. So
22 we're asking for your help to make this
23 possible while helping our students
24 realize their potential and our Corps
25 members to do the same.

1 Please help make our efforts to
2 have more Corps members join and stay in
3 City Year Philadelphia by increasing your
4 FY23 allotment. Thank you very much.

5 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

6 Thank you, Darryl. Real quick, a couple
7 questions since you put out an appeal to
8 us. We all want to support a cost of
9 living increase for your members. By the
10 way, congratulations. I know tomorrow's
11 your Red Jacket Gala. What exactly is
12 the amount that you're asking for
13 increased allocation from the School
14 District?

15 MR. BUNDRIGE: The allocation
16 from the School District and we're in
17 conversations with them of at least I
18 believe at least between \$160,000 and
19 \$260,000 I believe is the ask we've made
20 of the School District. And just to be
21 clear, we're asking for the support from
22 the District as well as the City and
23 private revenue, so we're making that ask
24 across all sources.

25 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

1 Okay. Thank you so very much, Darryl,
2 for all your service. And thank you so
3 much for your patience this afternoon.

4 Mr. McDermott, our next witness.

5 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
6 Andrew Lukov.

7 MR. LUKOV: Good afternoon. Can
8 you hear me?

9 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
10 Yes, we can --

11 MR. LUKOV: Hello?

12 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
13 -- proceed with your -- yes, we can.

14 Proceed with your testimony. Thank you.

15 MR. LUKOV: Excellent. Good
16 afternoon to the President and members of
17 City Council, including our local and
18 very supportive Councilperson Councilman
19 Squilla. My name is Andrew Lukov and I
20 am the principal of Southwark School. My
21 testimony today will give you a snapshot
22 of an average day this past Monday, May
23 2nd, and demonstrate just how involved,
24 invested and integrated City Year is at
25 Southwark School.

1 The day began with our red
2 jacketed and energetic Corps members
3 providing a power greeting to our
4 students. Afterwards the students lined
5 up for arrival. There's a common sight
6 of Corps members talking and laughing
7 with the Southwark students they serve.
8 These strong bonds get our students
9 coming to school.

10 Soon afterwards I reviewed our
11 attendance data and satisfyingly exhaled
12 because our attendance increased for the
13 third month in a row. January was a
14 brutal COVID month, so it was tremendous
15 to see that our interventions, which are
16 heavy with City Year support have been
17 successful. Late morning I had a quick
18 meeting with Sarah Richman, our City Year
19 Impact Manager, where we discussed two
20 City Year-led events, the Social Justice
21 Arts Fair taking place on May 13th
22 featuring a variety of student art
23 centered around social justice issues and
24 our Annual Southwark Got Talent event
25 taking place May 24th where students and

1 staff will sing, dance and perform their
2 way to the winner's circle.

3 In the afternoon, I had to
4 finalize my order for gym equipment and
5 that meant a check-in with Corps member
6 Damir Leswick. Why Damir? Because we
7 have just hired him to be our new health
8 and phys. ed. teacher beginning this
9 September. Soon it was dismissal where
10 the day is not even over yet because
11 large groups of students line up with
12 Corps members to participate in City
13 Year's afterschool programming.

14 Did you know that City Year
15 serves in our building from 7:30 a.m to
16 5:30 p.m., an average day that yields
17 exceptional results for our students.
18 City Councilmembers, I implore you to
19 increase your support of City Year.
20 Thank you for your time and attention
21 today.

22 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

23 Thank you. Thank you for your service.

24 Mr. McDermott, our next witness.

25 THE CLERK: Our next witness is

1 Kyle Czarnecki.

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Kyle, are you available?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

6 Kyle, are you available?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

9 Do you want to proceed with the next
10 person please.

11 THE CLERK: The next witness is
12 Amy Offner.

13 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

14 Amy.

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

17 Can you repeat that name for me, Amy --

18 THE CLERK: Amy Offner.

19 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

20 Amy Offner, are you connected?

21 MS. OFFNER: Can you hear me?

22 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

23 We can now --

24 MS. OFFNER: Hello. Can you
25 hear me --

1 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

2 Yes. Thank --

3 MS. OFFNER: Okay. Thank you
4 very much.

5 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

6 -- you for your patience. Proceed with
7 your testimony.

8 MS. OFFNER: Thanks. My name is
9 Amy Offner. I'm a resident of
10 Philadelphia. I'm also a professor at
11 the University of Pennsylvania and I too
12 am concerned about the chronic
13 underfunding of the public schools. And
14 I want to testify about one important
15 piece of the solution and, that is,
16 ensuring that Penn and other wealthy
17 nonprofits make payments in lieu of taxes
18 or pilots to the public schools equal to
19 40 percent of what they would owe in
20 property taxes.

21 Penn is the largest private
22 property owner in Philadelphia. But as a
23 tax-exempt institution, it pays no
24 property taxes on billions of dollars
25 worth of noncommercial property. We know

1 that property taxes are the main source
2 of local revenue that funds our schools.
3 And when wealthy institutions like Penn
4 don't pay their fair share, it means that
5 taxes fall more heavily on those who are
6 poor and it means that public schools,
7 students, teachers and staff simply go
8 without.

9 These concerns are the reason
10 that for years now members of our
11 community, including those of us who live
12 in the City and those of us who work at
13 Penn, have called on Penn to pay 40
14 percent of what it would owe in property
15 taxes to the School District. I want to
16 urge the City Council and the Mayor to
17 get this commitment written into this
18 year's City budget.

19 I hope that you will reach out
20 to Penn's leadership, including Penn's
21 Board of Trustees and work together to
22 get a commitment from Penn to pay 40
23 percent of what it would owe in property
24 taxes to the School District and write
25 that into the budget. I also want to

1 address the fact that two years ago Penn
2 under immense pressure did agree to pay
3 \$10 million a year to the schools for a
4 limited period of 10 years in order to
5 abate asbestos and lead.

6 While this was a step in the
7 right direction and it shows the effects
8 that our efforts can have, it didn't go
9 far enough. If Penn paid 40 percent of
10 what it owed in property taxes, based on
11 figures in the University's 2016 budget,
12 that would be about 40 million dollars a
13 year. That is four times what the
14 University has pledged for asbestos and
15 lead abatement. And with this year's
16 property assessments revealing large
17 increases in property values, it's
18 possible that Penn owes even more than
19 that.

20 The last thing I want to say is
21 that Penn has an endowment of over \$20
22 billion. It simply is not right that
23 such a wealthy institution should be
24 subsidized by the poorest big city in the
25 United States through the act of tax

1 exemption. Paying pilots is not a matter
2 of charity but a matter of justice and
3 the fundamental civic responsibility.

4 Penn owes a debt to the City for the many
5 years of tax exemption that it's enjoyed.

6 So I hope that the City Council
7 will act swiftly this spring to make sure
8 that Penn pays its fair share to the
9 public schools this year and every year.

10 Thank you.

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

12 Thank you for your testimony and your
13 advocacy.

14 The next testifier please.

15 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
16 Yung Chang.

17 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

18 Yung Chang, are you connected?

19 MR. CHANG: Hello. Are you able
20 to hear me?

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

22 Yes, we are. Thank you for your
23 patience. Proceed with your testimony.

24 MR. CHANG: Fantastic. My name
25 is Yung Chang. I'm a student, a medical

1 student at Thomas Jefferson University.
2 I'm here today to urge City Council to
3 work with the Mayor and the City's
4 wealthy nonprofits like Thomas Jefferson
5 University to guarantee that they pay at
6 least 40 percent of what they would pay
7 in property taxes on their noncommercial
8 real estate to support Philadelphia's
9 public schools.

10 And I'd like to read part of a
11 short statement that has the support of
12 123 students, alumni staff and faculty
13 from Jefferson. In recent years
14 Jefferson's been expanding its presence
15 in Philadelphia health care by acquiring
16 major health systems in the area,
17 including the Einstein System in North
18 Philadelphia. The enterprise currently
19 has more than \$5 billion in annual
20 revenue which stands to grow with this
21 latest acquisition.

22 COVID-19 has of course impacted
23 that revenue as it has for health systems
24 around the country. In spite of these
25 losses, Jefferson is not only continuing

1 with its plans to merge with Einstein and
2 actually has completed that merger, but
3 it's also building a new outpatient
4 medical building in Center City valued at
5 \$762 million.

6 Jefferson's growth will
7 eventually yield more revenue. As it
8 continues to expand, we advocate for the
9 inclusion of pilots in its budget and a
10 commitment to Philadelphia public
11 schools. We recognize that the
12 expansions are driven by Jefferson's
13 mission to improve lives throughout the
14 City of Philadelphia, but we challenge
15 the notion that increasing its square
16 footage is the only way to accomplish
17 that mission.

18 Instead we propose that
19 Jefferson can also improve lives by
20 creating room in their budget for
21 Philadelphia's public schools, which
22 require at least \$125 million to
23 remediate the lead and asbestos exposure
24 that students face as well as \$5 billion
25 for all of the necessary repairs to make

1 schools safe. Accessibility to quality
2 health care and sustained well-being can
3 not only consist of increasing the number
4 of health facilities in the community,
5 the educational environment has a
6 significant impact on children's ability
7 to learn and succeed.

8 We know that educational
9 achievement and resources are crucial to
10 current and future health outcomes. We
11 know that this is not Jefferson's
12 responsibility alone. But if Jefferson
13 is truly committed to the public health
14 of Philadelphia, it must consider the
15 consequences of continued inaction.

16 School-aged children in Philadelphia are
17 three times more likely than the national
18 average to have asthma, and children in
19 our most underserved communities have an
20 average life expectancy 20 years shorter
21 than children in other zip codes.

22 By committing 40 percent of its
23 foregone property taxes in pilots, which
24 is really a small percentage of its
25 operating budget, we estimate less than

1 0.5 percent, but by committing these to
2 school repairs rather than new buildings
3 and acquisitions, Jefferson could address
4 this mounting public health crisis which
5 only stands to get worse as schools are
6 facing an increasing budget deficit and
7 necessary repairs become more and more
8 delayed.

9 If Jefferson can commit \$44.2
10 million to renovate its executive offices
11 in 2020, it can certainly evaluate
12 whether it can make a more substantial
13 contribution to the health of
14 Philadelphia's children. Paying pilots
15 would go a long way toward fulfilling
16 Jefferson's mission to improve lives and
17 reduce health disparities in its home
18 city. Thank you very much for the time.

19 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
20 Thank you. Thank you for your testimony.

21 Mr. McDermott, the next witness.

22 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
23 Lisa Haver.

24 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
25 Good afternoon, Ms. Haver. Are you

1 connected?

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

4 We'll move on to the next one.

5 THE CLERK: The next witness is

6 Laurie Mazer.

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

8 Laurie Mazer, are you connected?

9 MS. MAZER: I am here. Can you
10 hear me?

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

12 Yes, we can. Thank you for your
13 patience. Proceed with your testimony.

14 MS. MAZER: Hi. I'm Laurie
15 Mazer. I'm a parent of two children who
16 attend their neighborhood school in South
17 Philly in Councilmember Squilla's
18 District. And I've been testifying at
19 budget hearings and around school
20 facilities and building issues for the
21 last five years since 2017. And I guess
22 I have used the statement that budgets
23 are a moral document and I've gotten
24 angry and I've gotten sad.

25 But today I wanted to come from

1 a different angle, which is what if we
2 imagine this budget is a love letter, a
3 love letter to the students and families
4 of Philadelphia. And what if we as City
5 Council decided to send this love letter
6 with all the things that our children and
7 families deserve, including more funding
8 for our libraries.

9 I think there's currently very
10 little in the budget for them, and they
11 provide a huge backbone to our school
12 system by providing afterschool care and
13 homework help. And I think you all have
14 the potential with the money that you
15 contribute to the School District budget,
16 you can earmark some of that money for
17 the Sarah pool and you can send that
18 community and our children the note that,
19 yeah, we really care about you.

20 I also want to say that the
21 benefit of making these promises and
22 these commitments to our students is that
23 it will fix some of the issues that the
24 District seems to be really plagued with
25 right now, which is around enrollment.

1 It is incredibly hard to imagine that you
2 are going to get a whole bunch of
3 families excited about your schools when
4 you are releasing useless dashboards that
5 tell us everything we already know, that
6 enrollment is dropping, that people are
7 not attending our public schools and that
8 the buildings are in total disrepair.

9 So I guess that's the whole
10 thing that I'm asking, is to really with
11 this budget tell the School District what
12 you want them to spend the money on.
13 I've listened and asked and questioned
14 many times for Mr. Monson and others and
15 Superintendent Hite to tell us exactly
16 what they've spent the COVID money that
17 was earmarked for facilities on, and how
18 they picked those schools and what
19 facilities (inaudible) and we don't have
20 that information at all.

21 We have a facilities planning
22 process which is taking over from where
23 CSPR happened. It really seems even more
24 obvious this time to be about closing
25 schools. You have like this utilization

1 metric about how many of our kids are
2 going there. And I would just really
3 invite this body to take a different
4 angle to think about what you want to
5 express to our communities about how
6 deeply you value them, how you want to
7 entice them to come back to our schools,
8 tell them how you're going to spend the
9 money, exactly what you're going to hold
10 the District accountable to, where you
11 want to see investment made and to really
12 give our kids the things they deserve,
13 which is librarians in their schools,
14 libraries that are open on weekends and
15 afterschool pools, summer activities.

16 (Timer bell sounded.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

18 You can complete your testimony.

19 MS. MAZER: Yeah, thank you.

20 Summer activities and all those things
21 that we know that will really impact
22 them. So I guess I think it's time for
23 this love letter to come with some
24 accountability, which I think is actually
25 a secret of every wonderful relationship.

1 You need to hold the School District
2 accountable. You need to say this
3 dashboard is useless and you need to say,
4 come to us with line item expenditures on
5 exactly how you're prioritizing every
6 school and tell us what you're doing to
7 make these appealing wonderful learning
8 spaces that our children and our families
9 and our staff really deserve.

10 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

11 Thank you, Laurie, for your advocacy,
12 your consistent advocacy and your love
13 letter suggestion. Thank you so very
14 much. I appreciate it.

15 MS. MAZER: Thank you.

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

17 Mr McDermott, our next witness.

18 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
19 Symbol Lai.

20 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

21 Symbol Lai, are you connected?

22 MS. LAI: Yes, I'm here. Can
23 you hear me?

24 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

25 Yes. Thank you for your patience.

1 Proceed with your testimony.

2 MS. LAI: Thank you for the
3 opportunity to testify. My name is
4 Symbol Lai. I am the Philadelphia
5 Mobilization and Policy Director at
6 Children First. I'm here today on behalf
7 of GPAC, the Greater Philadelphia
8 Extracurricular Collaborative, a network
9 of Out-of-School Time or OST providers
10 and allied funders.

11 According to a 2017 Research for
12 Action Report, the City allocates about
13 41 million to OST providers. As you
14 consider next year's budget for the
15 School District and the new
16 Superintendent, I urge you to advocate on
17 behalf of the OST sector for the creation
18 of an office of extracurricular
19 partnerships in the School District of
20 Philadelphia.

21 This is an office that can serve
22 as the primary point of contact for OST
23 providers working in Philly schools
24 cross-funding streams. This is an office
25 that can ensure the funding you, City

1 Council, appropriate works to its
2 greatest potential. In Philly we're
3 fortunate to have a vast network of
4 (inaudible) so that students thrive. Yet
5 there's no single point of contact for
6 OST providers working in Philly schools
7 and cross-funding streams. (inaudible)
8 to lead coordination at the District, two
9 problems occur:

10 First, conditions generating an
11 inequitable distribution of resources are
12 left to continue. As it stands,
13 principals at resource schools can better
14 utilize a robust network of OST
15 providers. Principals at resource poor
16 schools have more limited capacity,
17 facing other problems like flagging
18 school attendance, teacher turnover or
19 community violence. They have less
20 support to initiate providers into their
21 school setting. Some schools therefore
22 have an abundance of OST programs. While
23 others have none despite great need. Too
24 much is left to individual effort and
25 chance.

1 Second, communication is too
2 fractured for providers, schools and
3 district offices. To stand up a program
4 at a school, a provider may potentially
5 interact with the Office of Children and
6 Families, different offices at the
7 District and school principals
8 themselves. Multiple messages are
9 communicated and parties are less likely
10 to share a common understanding on
11 important protocols impacting everyone's
12 ability to implement quality programs.

13 In this context, much energy is
14 spent on deciphering rules, less on
15 servicing students and families. An
16 office of extracurricular partnerships
17 can mitigate both resource inequities and
18 operational challenges. Situated within
19 the District, this office can take a
20 bird's-eye view to the allocation of
21 extracurricular activities. It can
22 identify schools that are in need of
23 extra support and facilitate the
24 relationship between principals and
25 providers to align resources.

1 Charged with coordinating
2 digital communication, the office can
3 further give providers and schools one
4 message but then guides program
5 implementation. Philadelphia schools
6 need more OST activities, especially now
7 when they face traumas associated with
8 the pandemic and escalating gun violence.
9 Research shows that OST programs are an
10 ingredient for academic success by
11 offering a safe environment to engage in
12 hobbies or extending the time the student
13 spends with an adult, extracurricular
14 activities help students be happier,
15 healthier and better able to learn.

16 City Council can help create a
17 robust extended school community that
18 positions Philadelphia students for
19 success. Please encourage the School
20 District to create an office of
21 extracurricular partnerships. Thank you
22 for your time.

23 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

24 Thank you, Symbol, for your advocacy.

25 Mr. McDermott, the next witness

1 please.

2 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
3 Tomea Sippio-Smith.

4 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
5 Tomea Smith, are you connected?

6 MS. SIPPPIO-SMITH: Hello. Can
7 you hear me?

8 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
9 Yes, we can. Thank you for your
10 patience. Proceed with your testimony.

11 MS. SIPPPIO-SMITH: Thank you so
12 much. Good afternoon. My name is Tomea
13 Sippio-Smith. I'm the K-12 Education
14 Policy Director at Children First.

15 Clearly, this has been a rough two years
16 for our Philadelphia's children. Like
17 all of us, they have continued to
18 struggle to adjust to their new normal.

19 We implore the Council and the
20 District to adopt budgets that continue
21 to support our children into specific
22 areas with access to technology and
23 ensuring that students continue to
24 receive tools, services and resources
25 they need to succeed. While federal

1 funding last fiscal year allowed the
2 District to add school counselors,
3 one-on-one technology and more special
4 education teachers and therapists, now is
5 the time to ensure that students have
6 more of what they need, not reduce
7 access, especially when the District is
8 projecting a more than \$500 million
9 surplus next year.

10 First, we urge the District to
11 continue to fund one-to-one technology
12 and supports for every student. In this
13 new world, consistent access to
14 technology and programming to facilitate
15 learning and narrow achievement gaps is a
16 must. High-speed Internet is no longer
17 optional. It's a necessity, and students
18 must have access to the technology and
19 supports to ensure that every student and
20 family remain connected.

21 Second, while the District is
22 critically and chronically underfunded,
23 it has more funding to address more of
24 the issues students are facing than in
25 years past. We implore the student --

1 excuse me, the School District to use
2 funds on needed supports for students.
3 We recognize that the District will spend
4 about \$1 billion in charter school
5 payments and those costs continue to
6 rise, but we must still ensure that
7 school students are enrolled in healthy
8 faith schools that meet their needs.

9 They're having difficulty
10 controlling their behavior and remain in
11 dire need of emotional support, so
12 increasing climate staff hours is helpful
13 but having a positive climate and enough
14 school nurses, counselors and
15 psychologists in every building is
16 imperative. And clearly, our students
17 are still facing academic hurdles. Our
18 youngest learners need access to high
19 quality options from the beginning.

20 Students stand to gain the most
21 academically if they have access to high
22 quality kindergartens, elementary, middle
23 and high schools. Students and teachers
24 need class sizes that are small enough to
25 ensure that each teacher can work with

1 students to support their needs. Our
2 students need school-based specialists to
3 support their academic growth in reading,
4 math and science.

5 Students continue to need
6 assistant principals to ensure that there
7 are enough adults in the building to
8 support a safe and positive climate for
9 them. And for decades we fought for
10 Philadelphia schools to get every child
11 because we know the arts not only foster
12 creativity, but support their growth.
13 Our students have already lost too much.
14 We can't afford to strip resources away
15 from children during the toughest years
16 of their lives.

17 We should bolster their support
18 levels while we have the funds to do so.
19 We implore the Council to support the
20 District to allocate the money now to
21 address student needs to have what they
22 need when they need it. Our students are
23 far more likely to succeed. Thank you.

24 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
25 Thank you so much. Thank you for your

1 patience this afternoon and for your
2 advocacy.

3 Mr. McDermott, our next
4 testifier.

5 THE CLERK: I've been told that
6 Lisa Haver is now available. Lisa.

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
8 Ms. Haver, are you connected?

9 MS. HAVER: I am connected. Can
10 you hear me?

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
12 Yes. Thank you for your patience.
13 Proceed with your testimony.

14 MS. HAVER: Thank you,
15 Councilmember (inaudible) Sanchez. Good
16 afternoon. My name is Lisa Haver. I'm a
17 retired teacher. I'm Co-founder and
18 coordinator for APPS, a grassroots
19 organization established to defend public
20 education. Over the past weekend, our
21 members joined with national allies in
22 that fight at the annual conference of
23 the Network for Public Education held
24 this year in Philadelphia.

25 APPS presented a history on the

1 past 20 years of corporate education
2 reform and its harmful effects on the
3 District, this City and our school
4 children. We were honored to have as
5 keynote speaker and member of our panel
6 Councilmember Kendra Brooks. We
7 documented how the conservative lobbying
8 for school privatization has had
9 devastating effects on our public schools
10 by diverting money to privately managed
11 schools.

12 These were the spending
13 priorities of the SRC and unfortunately,
14 in many ways the spending priorities of
15 this Board of Education. This cycle of
16 sending public money to private companies
17 with nowhere near the oversight needed
18 must end. APPS members join with our
19 allies in our City, our schools, in
20 demanding major appropriation to
21 remediate toxic conditions in schools.

22 APPS members also join with the
23 members of CASA, the union of District
24 administrators and demanding that the
25 District fund five core positions at

1 every school. We add to their list a
2 sixth position, a certified school
3 librarian in every school with a
4 functioning library. APPS members and
5 our allies, both local and national,
6 continue to advocate for healthy,
7 non-toxic schools and for adequate
8 teaching staff and support staff, but the
9 Board speaker suppression policies are
10 designed to silence that advocacy.

11 Parents, educators and community
12 members, the people that you are hearing
13 from today, many of whom attend all Board
14 of Education meetings have been kept from
15 speaking on these crucial issues and been
16 barred from speaking at some Board action
17 meetings. This is a documented fact.

18 Despite their rhetoric today and on other
19 days, the Board sees the community not as
20 allies in fighting for better funding and
21 safer schools, but as adversaries to be
22 silent.

23 We call on the members of City
24 Council whose authority over the board
25 was expanded in the most recent changes

1 in the City's Home Rule Charter to direct
2 the Board to reverse its speaker
3 suppression policies now. Thank you.

4 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

5 Thank you, Ms. Haver. Thank you for your
6 patience this afternoon. Thank you so
7 much for your advocacy.

8 Our next testifier,

9 Mr. McDermott.

10 THE CLERK: Our next witness is

11 Linda Rubin.

12 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

13 Linda Rubin, are you connected?

14 MS. RUBIN: Yes, I am. Can you
15 hear me?

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

17 Yes, we can. Thank you for your
18 patience. Proceed with your testimony.

19 MS. RUBIN: Thank you. My name
20 is Linda Rubin. I'm a retired K-8 school
21 counselor and who served in one school
22 for 38 years and I'm also a member of
23 Alliance for Philadelphia Public Schools,
24 APPS. John Krill, Attorney for PA
25 Senator Jake Corman recently asked what

1 use would a carpenter have for biology,
2 what use would someone on the McDonald's
3 career track have for Algebra 1.

4 And Krill continued by saying
5 that the Commonwealth has many needs,
6 including retail workers and people who
7 know how to flip a pizza crust. Is that
8 how they view Philadelphia students? Are
9 we in a Charles Dickens novel. But if we
10 look down on Philadelphia students by not
11 showing them we're really invested in who
12 they are and who they can become, we may
13 as well go back to the old days of
14 reading, writing and arithmetic. Without
15 having staff, they really trust to be
16 available to help them to make sense of
17 their lives and emotions, discover
18 abilities and interests they never knew
19 they had and how to bounce back from
20 disappointment, even grief, students lose
21 hope and give up. Shame on us.

22 Public education today must be
23 about developing trust and rapport with
24 students who are already living with
25 debilitating violence, low pay and

1 expectations not of their making. This
2 requires in every school and available
3 assistant principals, lead reading and
4 math teachers to coordinate in-school
5 supports for teachers and students,
6 counselors, climate managers, a special
7 ed. teachers trained in helping children
8 learn, however that is for them, and to
9 support their families to support their
10 children. Special ed. compliance
11 managers to do the mountains of federal
12 paperwork and to support complex special
13 education needs of teachers and students.

14 Children new to this country
15 from all over the world have so much to
16 give, but need help in understanding
17 English in order to understand our
18 curriculum. Certified school teacher
19 librarians who once were a staple in
20 schools provide a backbone in reading and
21 research skills for both children and
22 teachers learning success more than
23 you'll ever know. Computerize-everything
24 education as we have now, paying
25 businesses to do our staff development

1 and ignoring the need for a stable well-
2 educated teaching force who truly
3 understands that all children can learn,
4 just not in the same way and on the same
5 day and how to accomplish that.

6 We must right-order our
7 priorities. Testing, testing and
8 teaching the test will not create any
9 spark in minds and imaginations of our
10 students to feel that they can succeed.
11 It will only limit many students opinions
12 for their futures while making testing
13 companies rich. Children need
14 educational success to feel that they
15 have a reason to steer clear of City
16 violence.

17 We must rebuild our schools from
18 the bottom up, not the top-down approach
19 that only makes administrators look good
20 but doesn't help students become whoever
21 they could be. We owe our students and
22 our City's future that much. Thank you.

23 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
24 Thank you, Ms. Linda Rubin. And again,
25 thank you for your patience this

1 afternoon.

2 The next witness, Mr. McDermott.

3 THE CLERK: The next witness is

4 Stephanie King.

5 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

6 Stephanie King, are you connected?

7 MS. KING: Yes. Can you hear

8 me?

9 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

10 Yes, we can. Thank you for your patience

11 and proceed with your testimony.

12 MS. KING: Thank you,

13 Councilmembers, for allowing me to speak

14 today. My name is Stephanie King and I'm

15 the parent of a 6th grader and 2nd grader

16 at General Philip Kearney School in

17 Northern Liberties. Philadelphia's

18 proposed City budget is an egregious

19 example of how every dollar you spend in

20 the wrong place is a dollar you cannot

21 spend in the right place.

22 Our City budget gives three

23 quarters of \$1 billion to the

24 Philadelphia Police while failing to

25 adequately support our schools, our

1 libraries or our rec centers to be fully
2 functioning the way they need. We should
3 not only have adequate funding in our
4 schools when there are emergency federal
5 dollars on the table.

6 I applaud the job Mr. Monson has
7 done to use these funds most
8 appropriately, but this City needs to
9 ensure that these programs and staffing
10 do not come and go when federal dollars
11 dry up. Let me ask the members of
12 Council, if you were a Philadelphia kid
13 on the street who wanted to be good, how
14 would you do it?

15 What this City gives kids who
16 are poor and families who are struggling
17 is a present day that is inadequate and
18 says we don't care about your future.
19 This City says, it is okay for our kids
20 to walk down trash-strewn streets to
21 schools that are crumbling due to
22 asbestos and understaffed because of
23 leveling and cuts. This City says it is
24 okay to only care about a handful of
25 magnet schools and then pats itself on

1 the back for Masterman and Central's
2 ratings while throwing our neighborhood
3 schools under the bus and then wonder why
4 kids are falling for the allure of drugs
5 and guns after we've basically said, we
6 can't be bothered to give them decent
7 schools in their own neighborhoods.

8 The District shuttles kids
9 around town in needless choice programs
10 rather than investing in the schools in
11 our communities. The City expects kids
12 to stay out of trouble and off the
13 corners when there are no libraries to go
14 to on the weekends and your parents have
15 to be able to camp out in lawn chairs to
16 get you a spot in one of our limited
17 afterschool programs or summer camps, but
18 there's always money for more cops who
19 will shoot a 12-year-old in the back or
20 tear gas off if we protest or refuse to
21 be accountable to anyone while I have to
22 fundraise for paper for my school.

23 A budget is a moral document and
24 this City should be ashamed. Our City
25 budget needs to prioritize the schools

1 and services this City's children need so
2 that we can all have the better future
3 that Philadelphians deserve. Thank you.

4 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

5 Thank you very much, Ms. Stephanie King,
6 for your advocacy and your patience this
7 afternoon.

8 Our next witness, Mr. McDermott.

9 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
10 Mary Summers.

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

12 Mary Summers, are you connected?

13 MS. SUMMERS: Yes, I am. Thank
14 you.

15 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

16 Thank you for your patience. Proceed
17 with your testimony.

18 MS. SUMMERS: My name is Mary
19 Summers. And I want to start by thanking
20 you for holding public hearings on this
21 critical question of the School
22 District's budget. I am a senior fellow
23 with the Fox Leadership Program and a
24 lecturer in political science at the
25 University of Pennsylvania. I have

1 taught academically-based community
2 service classes which have involved
3 college students and working in
4 Philadelphia's classrooms, cafeterias and
5 at recess for almost 20 years.

6 I am also a member of Penn for
7 Pilots, a group of almost 1200 University
8 of Pennsylvania faculty and staff who
9 have signed a petition stating that our
10 university should be making yearly
11 payments in lieu of taxes to support our
12 City schools. You have heard from
13 several of us today urging you to engage
14 the City's wealthy nonprofits in doing
15 their part in supporting public education
16 by paying at least 40 percent of what
17 they would pay in property taxes on their
18 noncommercial real estate to support
19 Philadelphia's public schools.

20 Philadelphia has the highest
21 poverty rate of the 10 largest cities in
22 the United States. Our children and
23 teachers face overcrowded,
24 underventilated classrooms with
25 dilapidated toxic conditions. They also

1 lack access to critical resources from
2 nurses, guidance counselors and
3 librarians to art and music.

4 Many children in the City are
5 failing to thrive. Some are literally
6 dying as a result of preventable
7 conditions that range from asthma to gun
8 violence. The current funding for the
9 School District from both the state and
10 City property taxes is inadequate for
11 addressing these conditions. The
12 University of Pennsylvania claims that it
13 makes its contribution with earmarked
14 funds and projects like the classes I
15 have loved teaching for so many years.
16 But we all know that these funds and
17 projects are no substitute for good, safe
18 public schools available to all, financed
19 by all and capable of being held
20 accountable through public procedures and
21 guaranteeing the City's future.

22 It is time to put an end to
23 systems of public finance in which
24 wealthy private majority White
25 institutions like Penn while underfunding

1 the public institutions that serve all of
2 Philadelphia's residents. Wealthy
3 nonprofits like Penn should be making
4 regular predictable payments in lieu of
5 taxes to our City's budget to support all
6 our City's public schools. Thank you so
7 much.

8 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

9 Thank you for your testimony and your
10 patience this afternoon.

11 Our next witness, Mr. McDermott.

12 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
13 Gwendolyn Beetham.

14 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

15 Gwendolyn, are you connected?

16 MS. BEETHAM: Yes, I'm here.
17 Thank you.

18 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

19 Thank you so much. Thank you for your
20 patience. Proceed with your testimony.

21 MS. BEETHAM: Thanks so much and
22 thank you for allowing me to testify
23 today. My name is Gwendolyn Beetham, and
24 I'm the parent of a 4-year-old, a
25 resident of West Philadelphia and a staff

1 member at the University of Pennsylvania.
2 And I'm joining my colleagues and
3 neighbors who've already testified here
4 today and urging the Council to work with
5 the Mayor and the University of
6 Pennsylvania's Board of Trustees to
7 guarantee that our extremely wealthy
8 university pays at least 40 percent of
9 what it would pay in property taxes on
10 its noncommercial real estate to support
11 Philadelphia's public schools.

12 The University benefits
13 enormously from its location in
14 Philadelphia. I pay my taxes here and
15 the University should as well.
16 Philadelphia has the highest poverty rate
17 of the 10 largest cities in the United
18 States. Our children and teachers face
19 overcrowded, underventilated classrooms
20 with dilapidated conditions that often
21 create toxicity. Many schools have no
22 sprinkler systems.

23 Our schools also lack access to
24 critical resources from nurses and
25 guidance counselors to art, music and

1 libraries. Many children in this City
2 are failing to thrive and some are
3 literally dying as a result of
4 preventable conditions that range from
5 asthma to gun violence. The current
6 funding for the School District from both
7 the state and City property taxes is
8 inadequate for addressing these
9 conditions.

10 The University of Pennsylvania
11 claims that it makes its contributions
12 with special funds and projects, but
13 well-intentioned tutoring programs and
14 earmarked funds for a handful of schools
15 is not a substitute for quality, safe
16 public schools available to all, financed
17 by all and capable of being held
18 accountable for public procedures in
19 guaranteeing the City's future.

20 It is time to put an end to
21 systems of finance that enrich wealthy,
22 private majority White institutions like
23 ours while underfunding public
24 institutions and public services for the
25 City's citizens, especially its

1 communities of color and low-income
2 residents. Wealthy nonprofits like the
3 University of Pennsylvania should be
4 making regular predictable payments in
5 lieu of taxes to our City's budget to
6 support our City schools.

7 Finally, I want to acknowledge
8 that today's hearing is being held during
9 Teacher Appreciation Week. A key way
10 that we can show our teachers that we
11 appreciate them is to fully fund our
12 schools. Thank you for your time.

13 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
14 Thank you for your patience and your
15 testimony this afternoon.

16 Our next witness, Mr. McDermott.

17 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
18 Barbara McDowell-Dowdall.

19 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
20 Barbara, are you connected?

21 MS. McDOWELL-DOWDALL: Am I
22 connected? Am I connected?

23 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
24 Yes, we can hear you. Please proceed
25 with your testimony. Thank you.

1 MS. McDOWELL-DOWDALL: Thank
2 you. I'm Barbara McDowell-Dowdall, a
3 retired teacher from A. Philip Randolph
4 Career Tech High School, member of APPS
5 and POWER Interfaith Racial Education
6 Justice Team. Councilmembers, I
7 encourage you to recognize your
8 entitlement and responsibility as the
9 source of close to 50 percent of funding
10 for the School District to insist that
11 our youngsters in every school are
12 provided with the essentials that any
13 decent school anywhere in the United
14 States would be expected to have,
15 including the resource that would raise
16 test scores, especially benefit the
17 majority poor Black and Brown students in
18 our City, raise reading levels of career
19 tech students to match the challenge of
20 their texts and spread current joy and
21 lifelong reader status throughout the 216
22 of 219 schools currently bereft of the
23 certified teacher librarian and a fully
24 resourced library.
25 Thurgood Marshall guided the

1 U.S. Supreme Court to replace white car,
2 colored car, Plessy v. Ferguson with
3 (inaudible). As with City and suburban,
4 public and private, most District schools
5 and a few District schools is not equal.
6 Our City is not the only town where the
7 shuttering of professionally-staffed
8 libraries stamped their students as
9 inferior in worthiness.

10 Yet George Floyd's Houston High
11 School Jack Yates took steps five years
12 ago to bless all students equally.
13 Houston Chronicle, January 21, 2017, the
14 magic of books has returned to Jack Yates
15 High School. The school's once depleted
16 library shelves are filled with novels,
17 nonfiction and text. Students gather to
18 talk about books they've read. It's
19 enough to bring tears to the eyes of
20 Houston School trustee Jalonda Jones.
21 "Libraries are what kept me sane when I
22 was little," Jones said at the Yates
23 rededication. Her voice cracking with
24 emotion, "I couldn't afford to travel and
25 I couldn't go any place and I just want

1 for kids to appreciate books like I
2 appreciate books."

3 The event marked a move to
4 rebuild closed or abandoned libraries
5 across the District. District officials
6 now concede that efforts to cut costs and
7 use classroom libraries to increase
8 literacy left many schools without proper
9 resources. "We made a mistake, we forgot
10 some of our schools," said the CAO.
11 Trustee Jones elected in 2015 said, "This
12 District has not been equitable in
13 providing resources. It never occurred
14 to me to ask, as a trustee do you have a
15 library because everybody is supposed to
16 have a library."

17 Zelda Hunter, certified
18 librarian at (inaudible) plans to add
19 print periodicals even though students
20 have access online. Principal Ken Davis
21 emphasized the importance in this digital
22 age of having books that you can actually
23 touch and feel -- I'm almost done. When
24 you can't get that iPhone or that iPad to
25 work, the books still work. Books aren't

1 part of our past. They're part of our
2 future.

3 So City Council tell the
4 District, let's add libraries with CTLS
5 to cast its five position requests.
6 Thank you. Quality and equity.

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
8 Thank you, Ms. Barbara, so much for your
9 advocacy. Thank you so much for your
10 service too.

11 Mr. McDermott, our next
12 testifier.

13 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
14 Mitchell Horenstein.

15 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
16 Mitchell Horenstein, are you connected?

17 MR. HORENSTEIN: Yes, I am.

18 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
19 Please proceed with your testimony.
20 Thank you for your patience.

21 MR. HORENSTEIN: Thanks so much
22 and thanks to everybody here. Thanks to
23 the community members and the great
24 testimony today. Philadelphia suffers
25 from an enormous deficit of quality

1 schooling. To some extent I agree that
2 this reflects insufficient funding as a
3 number of previous speakers have said.
4 However, to some extent it also reflects
5 the failure of the School District of
6 Philadelphia to manage its resources.

7 Take the example of the new
8 school selection process implemented this
9 year with no community input. The School
10 District of Philadelphia did not want to
11 consult with parents because it saw
12 parents as an obstacle to addressing
13 inequities in who is gaining admission to
14 Philadelphia's magnet schools. The
15 approach the District decided on was to
16 dramatically increase eligibility for
17 magnet school admission without however
18 creating any new seats in the City's
19 magnet schools.

20 Lots of newly eligible students,
21 no new seats. The problem was one of
22 basic math. For every single new student
23 admitted, an equally well-qualified
24 student would have to be kicked out of
25 Philadelphia's magnet schools to create a

1 false impression of equity, as if such a
2 situation could ever be fair. The
3 District decided to conduct a lottery
4 where students competed in a cruel
5 version of hunger games for a limited
6 number of magnet school seats.

7 More than 500 highly qualified
8 students were excluded entirely from
9 Philadelphia's magnet schools according
10 to District data. Now, not surprisingly
11 some of the parents whose families were
12 hurt in the process are suing the School
13 District for damages. Many others were
14 crowded into existing schools at over
15 capacity.

16 The question we have to be
17 asking ourselves in this budget process
18 is why are we rationing high quality
19 education in Philadelphia? Can we
20 imagine a world in which a child does not
21 need to win a lottery in order to get
22 access to high quality education. That
23 is the City I want to live in. Creating
24 opportunity means building high quality
25 schools in current levels of real demand.

1 The School District of
2 Philadelphia needs to build a whole new
3 Central High or two just to meet the
4 existing demand for high quality magnet
5 schools. Why is that not happening? Why
6 has the School District of Philadelphia
7 kicked out students and closed down
8 schools, but not invested in building the
9 good schools that everyone wants? That
10 should be our top budgetary priority.

11 Yet currently the School
12 District of Philadelphia does not even
13 have a Facilities Master Plan. It
14 operates hundreds of buildings that we
15 have heard, many of them requiring
16 rehabilitation. School choices left many
17 schools underenrolled and others
18 overenrolled. Yet rather than building
19 high quality schools, the District is
20 focused on lifting up charter schools and
21 shunting students off to be educated
22 somewhere else.

23 Philadelphia needs an elected
24 board of education that will be
25 responsive to the voters of the City and

1 build high quality schools. In education
2 in this District in the (inaudible) we
3 need to start building the type of
4 future.

5 (Timer bell sounded.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

7 Please wrap up your comments and thank
8 you so much for your patience.

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

11 Mitchell.

12 (No response.)

13 THE CLERK: Our next witness is

14 Mitch Chanin.

15 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

16 Mitch Chanin, are you connected?

17 MR. CHANIN: Yes. Can you hear
18 me?

19 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

20 Yes, I can. Thank you very much for your
21 patience. Proceed with your testimony.

22 MR. CHANIN: Great. Thanks very
23 much, Councilmembers, for the opportunity
24 to testify today. My name is Mitch
25 Chanin. I am a resident of Northeast

1 Philadelphia. I'm a member of Philly DSA
2 as well as POWER Interfaith and Reclaim
3 Philadelphia. Graduate of Baldi Middle
4 School many years ago, and it was great
5 to hear one of the administrators.

6 I'm going to deviate from what I
7 wrote so that I can kind of respond to
8 some of what I heard today. I really
9 appreciate so many of the testimonies
10 that have been offered so far and just
11 really struck by how devastating years of
12 austerity and neglect have been for our
13 schools and our students. We just
14 deserve so much better, our students in
15 Philadelphia just deserve so much better
16 than they're getting. I really support
17 the call for Penn to be required to pay
18 pilots.

19 I am very concerned about the
20 insufficient funding that has been
21 dedicated to redress toxic and unsafe
22 conditions in buildings and also the lack
23 of transparency and accountability and
24 effectiveness that characterize the way
25 that the existing funds for school

1 facilities are being used.

2 My mom appreciated the constant
3 references to ventilation, because my mom
4 spent 25 years working in a Northeast
5 Philly middle school office that had no
6 ventilation most of the time, no windows
7 and was 90 degrees year-round, and people
8 were just constantly sick in there. So I
9 heard about that all the time, and it's
10 just terrifying that this is still going
11 on.

12 I would really like to see the
13 City make a major appropriation to the
14 District to remediate toxic conditions in
15 our buildings, but to condition that
16 appropriation on a few promises from the
17 District. First, we need the District to
18 make a facility's master plan to rebuild
19 or repair every school, to remediate
20 environmental toxins and provide adequate
21 ventilation in every room and also to
22 eliminate each school's carbon emissions.
23 I'll come back to that.

24 I believe we need an independent
25 Board to oversee spending priorities,

1 construction progress and to decide on
2 best practices with parents, students and
3 union representatives on that Board. I
4 simply do not trust the District to
5 manage this process based on years of
6 experience, and we need much more
7 information to be shared with parents and
8 unions about environmental data,
9 construction timelines and progress.

10 I want to come back just for a
11 second to one issue that hasn't really
12 been talked about much. I appreciated
13 the questions from Councilmembers to
14 Reggie McNeil about the School District's
15 facilities crisis. I was not at all
16 satisfied by his responses. We really
17 need the Facilities Master Plan to
18 include a binding commitment to fully
19 eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from
20 our schools.

21 And I think 2050 is too late. A
22 number of districts like LA Unified have
23 serious plans for eliminating use of
24 fossil fuels in their buildings. They've
25 found that there's not necessarily --

1 (Timer bell sounded.)

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Can you please -- excuse me. Can you
4 please wrap up your testimony, but I do
5 want you to conclude your remarks. Thank
6 you so much.

7 MR. CHANIN: Thank you very
8 much. I'll wrap up in just two
9 sentences. I think that it's often
10 perceived that we have to choose between
11 addressing the climate crisis and the
12 other urgent priorities in our City, but
13 we really can't afford to choose between
14 those two. As we're remediating these
15 toxic conditions, it's absolutely
16 critical that we decarbonize the school
17 buildings in order to have a livable
18 future. So I hope that the District will
19 allocate funds to the District for these
20 purposes and require real accountability.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

22 Thank you so much for your patience.
23 Appreciate it.

24 The next person to testify,
25 Mr. McDermott.

1 THE CLERK: Our next witness is
2 Amelia Longo.

3 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
4 Amelia, are you connected?

5 COUNCIL SUPPORT TECH: Amelia is
6 not connected, Madam Chair.

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
8 Okay.

9 THE CLERK: The next name is
10 Diane Payne.

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
12 Diane Payne, are you connected?

13 MS. PAYNE: Is this the
14 (inaudible)?

15 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
16 Yes. Is this Diane?

17 MS. PAYNE: Yes. Can you hear
18 me?

19 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
20 Yes, we can. Please proceed with your
21 testimony. Thank you very much.

22 MS. PAYNE: Hello. My name is
23 Diane Payne. I am a retired teacher,
24 parent of four public school grads and
25 defender of public education activists

1 through APPS. I am here today to testify
2 about the increasing lack of democratic
3 rights philadelphians experience.

4 Our School District and City
5 budgets aren't just numbers that must
6 balance. Those numbers represent the
7 people of the City and all of the
8 services and opportunities we don't have.

9 What makes it particularly stinging is
10 the District and City's reliance on
11 rhetoric to try to fool us that this is
12 not the case. District administration
13 repeatedly alleging that school
14 principals choose between essential
15 staffing needs is a prime example.

16 A principal doesn't choose to
17 not have a school library like their
18 Lower Merion counterparts. They choose
19 between what they must do without. I
20 implore the District to stop using the
21 language of choice when it comes to
22 essential positions. Please support
23 CASA's advocacy to centrally fund
24 essential positions, including certified
25 school librarians.

1 City and School District
2 undemocratic processes include 16 months
3 of Board-imposed speaker suppression by
4 capping public speakers at 30 during an
5 historic health crisis, which has killed
6 over a million Americans. At 11 out of
7 16 action meetings, the cap was reached
8 and an unknown number of stakeholders
9 were shut out of publicly addressing
10 their governmental body with the approval
11 of City Council.

12 Shutting out and failing to
13 engage with the PFT's environmental
14 health specialists and community
15 advocates around building facility
16 conditions again tasked with City
17 Council's approval, the Mayor shutting
18 out Philadelphians from the Board-
19 nominating process. We are the only
20 School District out of 499 Pennsylvania
21 Districts not permitted to elect our
22 Board.

23 And on top of that
24 disenfranchisement, the Mayor treats
25 applicants for a Board seat like

1 personnel hires, which they are not,
2 instead of public servants. We deserve
3 to be engaged in an open process and not
4 relegated to two for-show meetings. Time
5 limits me to one last example, this
6 meeting being held remotely. The entire
7 City is expected to forego an abundance
8 of caution in regards to COVID while this
9 Council continues to meet remotely. Not
10 only are these meetings not held in
11 person, many Councilmembers don't even
12 attempt to be seen on screen. Sorry.
13 The COVID cover has only increased both
14 the District and Council's
15 disenfranchisement rather than
16 enfranchising to the fullest extent
17 possible the citizens of Philadelphia.
18 Thank you for your time. And I support
19 Laurie Mazer's love budget.

20 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

21 Love letter, love letter. Thank you,
22 Diane, for your testimony and for your
23 patience this afternoon.

24 Our next witness.

25 THE CLERK: Our final witness is

1 Michael Young.

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Michael Young, are you connected?

4 MR. YOUNG: I am. Thank you.

5 My name is Michael Young. I'm the parent
6 of a 5th grader.

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

8 Please proceed with your testimony.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. YOUNG: If a tree falls in
11 the woods and there's no one there to
12 hear it, does it make any sound? If a
13 parent makes a presentation and nobody is
14 really listening, can it have any impact?
15 I came prepared to rant about the revised
16 lottery system, but others have already
17 done that. It was hurtful. It has
18 failed in any objective and it tossed a
19 bunch of great 8th graders out onto the
20 streets without their first choices of
21 high schools or some of them, hundreds of
22 them without any good choice at all.

23 Painful, hurtful, unfruitful,
24 damaging to almost everyone, but i'll
25 choose not to rant about the lottery.

1 And I also choose not to rant about this
2 forum where we're expected in two or
3 three minutes to provide any reasonable
4 discourse. No one is listening to us.
5 No action will be taken based on our
6 input. These two-minute rock-and-roll
7 rants only serve to provide the District
8 and the Council cover to claim that the
9 public was given a chance to voice our
10 opinions.

11 All of this is a good indicator
12 of why taxpayers have a right to have a
13 healthy skepticism about the District's
14 ability and effective planning of their
15 own budget. Who will vet this massive \$3
16 billion expenditure. While more money is
17 always helpful, I wonder how \$3.5 billion
18 in expenditures cannot produce results
19 better than the 23 and 37 percent
20 literacy proficiency in math and
21 literacy, 23 and 37 percent.

22 Just a few items, budget item of
23 operating budget at District increased by
24 20 million. It's not a big number. 148
25 to 168 million, but it is 20 million.

1 What could we do with that 20 million?
2 We could open two new schools. How many
3 books would it buy? How much air
4 conditioning would it provide? On Page
5 29, there's 564 million for school op
6 support. That's 24 percent of the
7 budget. It's 564 on ops against 1.6
8 billion (inaudible) instruction. So
9 operations is a very high number in the
10 school's budget.

11 Action item 27, 222 million for
12 alternate ed. This is some 3,000
13 students receiving 75,000 per student for
14 something that is not by the way --
15 alternate ed. is not special ed. This is
16 something different. Who's going to vet
17 this. We need to take a look at this
18 budget, reimagine the Philadelphia
19 schools from the ground up.

20 We can do better. Nitpicking a
21 few million here and a couple of million
22 there won't get it done. I've got ideas.
23 Many have ideas, but it takes more than
24 three minutes to explain them. Who in
25 City Council will step forward and say

1 what we all know. It's time for a
2 massive rethink, and you're the people
3 who need to get it done. Thank you.

4 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

5 Thank you, Michael, for your testimony
6 and for your patience this afternoon.

7 Clerk, is there anyone else here
8 to testify on the School District's
9 public testimony calendar?

10 THE CLERK: No, there are no
11 more names on our witness list.

12 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

13 We're going to ask all folks who signed
14 in to specify for the public testimony of
15 the School District to disengage. We
16 will give folks a moment to disengage.

17 For the purposes of my
18 colleagues, we will move on directly to
19 our Community College testimony.
20 President and Dr. Generals will be
21 available shortly. Let me give five
22 minutes for all the folks who are online
23 to disengage as we proceed and move from
24 our public testimony to the public
25 hearing of the Community College of

1 Philadelphia.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good job,

3 Madam Chair.

4 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

5 Long day.

6 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes, thank

7 you, Chairwoman. Greatly appreciated.

8 (Brief recess.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

10 Thank you so very much. Thank you. We

11 are now returning to the City Council

12 budget hearing. Having concluded the

13 testimony of the School District of

14 Philadelphia this morning and subsequent

15 public testimony on the School District

16 this afternoon, we are now going back to

17 the public hearing on the budget. And

18 with us presenting will be Community

19 College of Philadelphia.

20 I will now ask the Clerk to

21 present the names of this panel who will

22 be presenting along with Dr. Generals.

23 THE CLERK: First to testify, I

24 have Dr. Generals testifying.

25 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

1 Okay. Dr. Generals, please proceed and
2 introduce your team as you move forward.
3 Thank you so much for your patience. I
4 know it's been a long day. Thank you
5 very much.

6 DR. GENERALS: Thank you. Thank
7 you for having us. My comments say thank
8 you to President Clarke, but I'm going to
9 say thank you to Chairwoman Quinones. It
10 has been a long day and we lost our
11 Chairperson on the way. He had a
12 doctor's appointment that he had to make,
13 so I don't know if he's coming back. He
14 may be able to come back.

15 But I would like to again thank
16 the City Council and thank the
17 Administration and thank the Board of
18 Trustees for the support that we've had
19 over the last year which has been
20 incredibly important given the fact that
21 we've all had to deal with this pandemic.

22 And so, with that and
23 notwithstanding that, we've been able to
24 come through with a fairly productive
25 year with some highlights and some

1 challenges that we need to go through.
2 And I would like to thank Mikecia
3 Witherspoon who's turning the pages for
4 me.

5 So our budget request is for
6 \$50.1 million, which is an increase of \$2
7 million from FY22. This includes a \$2
8 million increase for the Catto
9 Scholarship, which will allow us to
10 expand the eligibility for the Catto
11 Scholarship to include students who are
12 transferring back with or less than 30
13 credits, college-level credits and it
14 doesn't preclude students who graduated a
15 couple of years ago from coming back and
16 being able to take advantage of the Catto
17 Scholarship.

18 So the City and the
19 Administration worked together and came
20 up with the figure of \$2 million which we
21 think will cover this cost. So the total
22 City budget will be \$50.1 million. This
23 now represents 33 percent of our budget.
24 The state's portion is about 24 percent
25 and students are still providing 35

1 percent of the budget.

2 As you know, the historical
3 expectation will be a third, a third and
4 third, and this is probably the closest
5 this college has ever been to making that
6 number. And even though students are
7 paying 35 percent, you know that roughly
8 75 percent of our students are receiving
9 financial aid, so we're happy that it's
10 going in the right direction.

11 Some of the basic facts, the
12 college has about 24,800 credit and
13 noncredit students. We have suffered
14 enrollment declines as has been the case
15 with most colleges with just about every
16 college in the country. Students have
17 suffered under the burden of the
18 pandemic. I prefer to look at it as they
19 have stopped out, they haven't dropped
20 out. They've taken time to figure out
21 their lives and where they want to go.
22 And the onus is upon us to try to
23 encourage them and to ensure that they
24 feel comfortable in coming back to the
25 school.

1 Right now we're probably about
2 60/40 percent. In terms of online, 60
3 percent, 40 percent face-to-face. But we
4 still have to deal with what is the
5 biggest challenge and, that is, the
6 uncertainty of the virus, where it's
7 going, where it's not going. We've
8 stopped and started two or three times
9 since this all began, but we've had to
10 pivot on the dime not just from the
11 beginning but halfway through when we
12 thought it was just about over. We had
13 to push everything back online, and we've
14 done that at least twice.

15 That is not helpful to your
16 enrollment. It certainly puts up a cloud
17 of uncertainty. In addition to that, of
18 course there's mitigation factors and
19 strategies that we have to put forth for
20 those who do come to the campus. We are
21 under the City's guidelines for requiring
22 a vaccine mandate. We in total student
23 faculty and staff are over 90 percent,
24 but a large portion of that 90 percent
25 are students who are not vaccinated.

1 They cannot come to campus. They have to
2 take online courses only.

3 So with that in mind, we are
4 designing new delivery systems, if you
5 will, for students online. We're
6 expanding our offline offerings. We're
7 developing high flex offerings, which
8 allows the students to make a decision
9 the day of their classroom as to whether
10 or not they want to come to class or take
11 the class from home online. Of course,
12 as you know, this requires technological
13 enhancements as well as training for our
14 faculty to be able to redesign their
15 curriculum to be able to deliver that,
16 but we think it begins to meet the needs
17 of the new normal, which is the
18 expectation and the fact that we
19 demonstrated that we can deliver quality
20 instruction online in addition to quality
21 support services online.

22 85 percent of our graduates stay
23 in Philadelphia -- you want to scroll
24 back real quick, Mikecia, sorry -- yes,
25 85 percent of our graduates stay in the

1 Philadelphia metro area. 59 percent of
2 the students who graduated between summer
3 of 2016 and 2019 transferred to another
4 college or university.

5 I'm happy to announce that this
6 Saturday will be our first face-to-face
7 graduation since the pandemic. We will
8 be at the Liacouras Center. We will
9 employ some mitigation factors, but it
10 will be face-to-face. It will be parents
11 and students at this point, and we're
12 still certifying graduates. We have a
13 little over 1800 students.

14 And I'm also happy to announce
15 that we've asked, and she's agreed to be
16 our keynote speaker and, that is,
17 Councilwoman Cherelle Parker, so we're
18 very excited about her coming to be the
19 keynote speaker. We have 100-plus AA in
20 certificate programs throughout our
21 offerings.

22 A significant part of our
23 funding over the last two years in order
24 to help us get through -- you can turn
25 the slide -- has been the HEERF dollars,

1 Higher Education of Earnesty Relief
2 Funds. We had three installments of
3 that, the first two in the Trump
4 Administration, and the last one as part
5 of the American Rescue Plan which was the
6 largest at \$57 million. So in total
7 we've received \$108 million to support
8 our efforts to support students.

9 Half of that \$108 million had to
10 go directly to students with no
11 preconditions or strings attached. They
12 did not have to enroll. We couldn't use
13 it as a condition for enrollment or
14 persisting. They could use it for
15 whatever reasons they wanted. So if it
16 was for food, for transportation, for
17 housing, whatever their reasons were
18 related to the impact that COVID has had
19 on their lives, they could use it. So we
20 were very quite aggressive in recruiting
21 those students to come and take advantage
22 of those dollars.

23 We were able to get some
24 students to persist as a result of that,
25 but that was not the stated purpose for

1 those dollars. And then of course the
2 remaining of the 108 million, the college
3 used to upgrade its system, its HVAC
4 system. There's a listing here, faculty
5 and staff training to move everything
6 online, temporary Internet and data
7 reimbursement for employees who were
8 working from home, instructional
9 equipment and supplies, legal fees and
10 technical assistance, emergency financial
11 aid grants to students. So even though
12 the students had their own traunch of
13 emergency dollars, we dedicated a sizable
14 portion of the institution's dollars
15 towards that.

16 Software, HVAC, duct systems,
17 air handlers, tuition reimbursement.
18 Tuition replacement that was lost, we
19 were able to replace tuition that would
20 come as a result of student enrollment,
21 we were able to replace that loss through
22 these dollars, and we were able to
23 forgive loans as well as late payments
24 from students, and we were able to
25 utilize about \$3 million to forgive those

1 loans for students.

2 MSIs is Minority Serving
3 Institutions, we received roughly \$5
4 million for that which we could use
5 pretty much for the same thing, that is,
6 for student support as well as
7 institutional enhancements.

8 Okay. You can turn. Probably
9 the most exciting thing as you know is
10 the opening, the expected opening of the
11 Career Advance Technology Center in West
12 Philadelphia, 75,000 square feet. The
13 purpose is to create career and technical
14 opportunity for students. The building
15 is an energy-efficient design that
16 utilizes a high amount of natural
17 lighting, green rooftops, second floor
18 patio with adjoining room for events that
19 can accommodate 75 to 100 guests.

20 The building was designed to be
21 a community center. There are a number
22 of rooms there that can be used for
23 community purposes. It's an open-glass
24 concept. It's an integrated mix of
25 transportation technology, advanced

1 manufacturing programs and technology as
2 well as some allied health and health
3 science laboratories. There will be
4 opportunities for experiential learning.

5 And the industry partners at
6 this point include Ford, Toyota. We have
7 an exclusivity agreement with Toyota,
8 it's a regional agreement for their
9 dealerships around the region. Their
10 mechanics will come to us for the
11 training that they will need for that
12 program. It is a 3+2 whereby --

13 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT: Pardon me
14 for a second. We got a message that the
15 feed is currently down. We apologize for
16 the inconvenience, but I have to hear
17 back from them before we go live again.

18 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
19 Thank you, Dr. Generals. I'm sorry.
20 Apologies.

21 DR. GENERALS: Should I wait --

22 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
23 Yes, you have to wait until they tell us
24 that we're back up live. I'm not sure
25 where it went out, but you may want to

1 start at the beginning of this slide.

2 Thank you and sorry about that.

3 DR. GENERALS: It's okay.

4 (Recess.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

6 Thank you so very much. I want to

7 apologize. This is the City Council

8 budget hearing. This morning we did the

9 School District of Philadelphia, this

10 afternoon public testimony on the School

11 District. And we are completing the day

12 with the presentation from the Community

13 College of Philadelphia.

14 Dr. Generals and your team, will

15 you please proceed or continue with your

16 presentation. My apologies for the

17 technical difficulties. Thank you.

18 DR. GENERALS: Thank you. And

19 again, good afternoon to everyone. I

20 think we were on this slide where I was

21 explaining our Career and Advance

22 Technology Center which we'll open up in

23 the fall of 2022. We will begin offering

24 classes there. It is 75,000 square feet,

25 energy efficient with a green rooftop.

1 Second floor patio and adjoining room
2 with a beautiful view of Center City.

3 Synergies will integrate,
4 transportation technologies, advanced
5 manufacturing and some of the entry-level
6 health science fields such as dental tech
7 and some of the allied health credit
8 programs. There will be a mix of
9 experiential learning opportunities,
10 including a fab lab.

11 And at this point -- and it's a
12 growing list -- our industry partners
13 including Toyota, Ford, Nissan and
14 Subaru. We are working with the Navy
15 pipeline through the Pennsylvania
16 manufacturing industries, which is an
17 attempt at creating a link to the supply
18 chain for the next generation of
19 submarines for the Navy.

20 We received a PAsmart grant.
21 That allows us to provide auto tech
22 apprenticeships. And we just recently
23 received a school-to-career grant from
24 the Department of Labor and Industry
25 where we are working in partnership with

1 Ben Franklin, Mastbaum and West Philly
2 High School. And I bring these up to say
3 that once you have the facilities and you
4 have the faculty, you can then go after
5 these types of industry-training
6 opportunities.

7 The auto tech program is
8 anchored by the program that we already
9 have, which is quite small, but it has
10 expanded. We have an exclusive program.
11 It's called the T-TEN program. It's a
12 3+2 apprenticeship. Students go to
13 school three days a week and they work
14 for two days a week. It's a regional
15 program, so any student that works in the
16 Toyota dealership will have -- any
17 mechanic, auto mechanic, will have to
18 come to this program. That is a very
19 modernized program.

20 It includes autonomous driving
21 components, so students will develop
22 modern-day skills as it relates to auto
23 technology. Auto technology is almost a
24 misnomer because as you know, new cars
25 are all basically computers on wheels.

1 We will also offer diesel training, so
2 that will be bus, heavy and middle-sized
3 trucks.

4 We are talking or we will be
5 talking with SEPTA, so we're quite
6 excited about that. And we just recently
7 was informed that we were accepted as a
8 OneTen talent developer. As you know,
9 that's Ken Fraizer's baby to create a
10 million jobs for African American men
11 throughout the country. And so,
12 Philadelphia is one of the hosts for that
13 program and we will partner with them on
14 that, all of these and more. It's a new
15 facility and we expect to grow and we
16 expect to expand. And I think the most
17 important part is that it can serve as a
18 community center, a community help as
19 well.

20 All right. Turn. We just
21 recently partnered with PHA on two houses
22 for our housing insecure students, mainly
23 foster care students. We have a real
24 need of students that were either
25 homeless or housing insecure. This is a

1 very small project. Came about as a
2 result of Kelvin Jeremiah realizing that
3 his residents were my students and it
4 only made sense for us to find ways to
5 partner.

6 We're hoping -- the partnership
7 between Community College and the Housing
8 Authority is not unique around the
9 country. There are different variations
10 of it. Some housing authorities offer
11 vouchers for students. I was just out in
12 Portland and they are actually building a
13 dorm. So this is the beginning of what I
14 hope will be a successful program. These
15 students have all types of wraparound
16 services in addition to the housing so
17 they're receiving wraparound services and
18 the partnership includes working with the
19 City and the City for Homeless Services
20 and our Single Stop Department here at
21 the college.

22 We have data that says roughly
23 50 percent of our students had some level
24 of housing insecurity. And so, this is
25 an area that we felt was really important

1 for us to be able to begin providing
2 services to. We also continue to provide
3 services to our Single Stop, CCP Cares,
4 which is our fund for students. If they
5 have some type of crisis in their life
6 and they need immediate dollars, whether
7 it's for transportation or it can be a
8 flat tire or whatever the need is, they
9 can log into that, CCP Cares. And within
10 24 hours, they can get support.

11 We also through our Center for
12 Civic Engagement and Community
13 Leadership, we continue to be a hub for
14 CCP Votes, very powerful component of the
15 college. I truly believe Joe Biden was
16 elected because of the work that our
17 students did in registering folks around
18 the City. It's an integral part of their
19 curriculum. We refer to it as service
20 learning, so that's a real important
21 aspect of the education here.

22 We have an adopted a school
23 program where we've adopted Spring Garden
24 Elementary School, Waring School and
25 Beth(ph) Middle School. We have students

1 going over there and reading to students
2 and just mentoring them any way they can.
3 As you know, the Catto expanded its
4 eligibility. And flip. These are just
5 some testimony of students who have
6 received this.

7 Catto Idris will graduate. He
8 will be the first Catto scholar graduate.
9 "I love learning and the Catto
10 Scholarship team is helping me along the
11 way and I am very grateful. I won't let
12 this opportunity go to waste. I might
13 have started slow in the class, but it
14 always takes time to get accustomed to
15 them. I think I've gotten a grasp about
16 them now and it's a lot of fun."

17 And then Chelsea, "I love the
18 scholarship and I am so thankful that I
19 was qualified to receive it. It makes my
20 college experience so much easier by
21 helping me financially, which allows for
22 more study time and providing any extra
23 services that I need." As you know, it's
24 not just the tuition and fees
25 scholarship. Students receive books

1 stipend. They receive the stipend. They
2 receive all kinds of wraparound services,
3 navigators, counselors and so forth.

4 The early results on the Catto
5 Scholarship are indicating that they
6 are in most indicators at least 10
7 percent higher than the regular college
8 student in terms of retention, not
9 graduation because we've only graduated
10 one, but certainly retention, persistence
11 and GPAs. So we're quite excited that
12 the program is working, and it is
13 enabling students to be successful.

14 These are the demographics.
15 I'll just go down to the bottom. One of
16 the challenges, real challenges, some
17 days I call it a crisis in higher
18 education, is the dearth of Black men
19 coming to college and succeeding. Our
20 data indicate that of all the men at the
21 college amounts to about 30 percent of
22 our total population. African Americans,
23 men of color, that number is half. It's
24 around 15 percent. And then when you add
25 or divide or subtract from that, the

1 number of students that are not
2 successful is pretty abysmal.

3 So one of the focuses that we
4 are really trying to work with is to
5 increase the demographics of Black men.
6 And as you can see, the first cohort in
7 the spring of 2021, 17 percent of the
8 students were Black. Second cohort in
9 the fall of 2021, 16 percent. And then,
10 the third cohort, that number is 28
11 percent. Those are students who are
12 enrolled in the program. Of course, we
13 will track their academic success and
14 ultimately their graduation. But it's
15 extremely important for us to be able to
16 enable and provide a means for African
17 American men -- for all students, but
18 particularly our focus is on Black men.

19 In addition to that, as you know
20 we have the Center for Male Engagement.
21 Our Board took my suggestion that we
22 needed to put more money, we needed to
23 scale up that program. And so, they
24 committed \$1 million to support, to
25 retain, to recruit and to encourage men

1 of color through the Center for Male
2 Engagement. We've expanded it to what's
3 referred to as the IMR program, which is
4 a program designed to help and support
5 returning citizens to Philadelphia.

6 So we are working with students
7 that have returned and we're starting to
8 have conversations about actually going
9 into the prisons. But the total goal is
10 to lift all boats, and we think that \$1
11 million will go a long way to doing that.
12 Our commitment and our demonstrated
13 commitment bodes well for our ability to
14 get federal dollars through the Minority
15 Serving institutions Program, and we
16 continue to receive dollars in
17 conjunction and partnership with the
18 monies that the college has committed.

19 So I think our Board needs to
20 really receive a lot of credit for
21 putting forth that effort and we're quite
22 proud of it. And by the way, we are
23 working with community organizations
24 throughout the City. We're working with
25 the Mayor's Office for Black -- I think

1 it's for Black Men, and the stated goal
2 is to create a broad net of support
3 throughout the City so that we can get
4 students into the college and ultimately
5 into training and ultimately into jobs.

6 As you know, dual enrollment
7 programs is a huge part of what we do.
8 These are the numbers. 77 schools,
9 includes -- this number includes
10 homeschools and students under 21 years
11 old actively enrolled in GED programs.
12 The base population is 1200. Year 1, it
13 was 1408. Year 2, 1500. Year 3, 1700
14 students are here as dual-enrolled
15 students.

16 As you know, we also have the
17 Parkway Central Middle College program.
18 Last year we graduated our first class.
19 It was a little under 100 students
20 graduated. They're now moving through an
21 into their senior year in college. These
22 are students that just graduated high
23 school last year. This year we have 132
24 students that will graduate this
25 Saturday, which is about a month I guess

1 before they graduate high school, so they
2 will have their Associate's Degree this
3 Saturday before they get their high
4 school degree, so we're really proud of
5 that. It's the only program of its kind
6 in the Commonwealth. It's not uncommon
7 around the rest of the country, but we're
8 leading the way here in Pennsylvania and
9 we're quite proud of that.

10 Go to the next page please. So
11 we're doing a lot of work in our DEI
12 space. We think that it's consistent
13 with our desire for student success and
14 for community engagement. Throughout the
15 pandemic and the social justice issues
16 that we've all had to deal with
17 subsequent to the George Floyd murder and
18 the social justice issues that came about
19 as a result of that, we really dug in as
20 a community leader to try to find ways to
21 give voice to those who needed a space
22 who needed the opportunity to express
23 their frustration in terms of some of the
24 issues pertaining to George Floyd,
25 whether it was police brutality or

1 whether it was violence against the
2 transgender community, whether it was the
3 inequities that were exposed as a result
4 of the pandemic.

5 This started before the vaccine
6 when Ala Stanford was running around
7 trying to find tests for minority
8 communities. We had her as one of our
9 first guests. Not only did she explain
10 the importance of getting tested, but she
11 as a scientist, as a doctor, she provided
12 a great presentation on the virus and how
13 serious it was.

14 At that time, this was probably
15 May of 2020 so it was just beginning. We
16 knew nothing about it. She knew quite a
17 bit about it. We had her, we had a
18 number of retired police officers come in
19 and talk about the importance of
20 community policing and how valuable it
21 was for the community writ large and the
22 police community and those who support
23 the police community to come together to
24 provide the kind of policing that we all
25 hope to be able to have.

1 We talked about economic
2 injustice at that time. So people were
3 laid off. I'd like to say that I'm quite
4 proud of the fact that we didn't have to
5 lay anybody off. We managed and we did
6 receive help from the federal government.
7 But unlike so many other places in the
8 City, we were able to keep people
9 employed through the dark, dark days of
10 the pandemic.

11 So we've made the commitment to
12 become an anti-racist institution. The
13 College previously had five pillars,
14 student success, workforce development,
15 economic stability, community engagement
16 and we've added a sixth pillar which will
17 now be our DEI pillar. That pillar will
18 include a commitment to becoming an anti-
19 racist institution.

20 We've engaged 127 employees who
21 participated in a number of listening
22 sessions. We've hired Gold Enterprises
23 to come in and facilitate these
24 conversations with our faculty and staff
25 and we're developing curriculum so this

1 concept will be infused throughout the
2 curriculum and throughout the college.
3 As you know, anti-racism has to do with
4 not just proclaiming the fact that you're
5 not a racist, but proclaiming the things
6 or at least exercising things that will
7 eradicate institutional racism that might
8 be a part of your organization.

9 But in addition to that, some of
10 the hiring strategies, our DEI Director
11 serves as a vote on all of our
12 committees. As you know in higher ed.,
13 faculty are hired by committee by their
14 department. So we were able to negotiate
15 having our DEI Director have a vote on
16 those committees. Every committee must
17 go through DEI training.

18 We created a faculty fellowship
19 program, whereby faculty, part-time
20 faculty will go through a year of
21 coaching and being mentored. And at the
22 end of that, they have certain provisions
23 that enable them to have a leg up on
24 opening jobs. We've been able to hire
25 four faculty of color as a result of

1 that. And our affinity groups, and we've
2 encouraged affinity groups amongst
3 faculty and staff of color.

4 So thus far the African
5 Americans have created an affinity group,
6 coming up the umbrella of the President's
7 DEI Committee. They will be supported
8 with finances for lectures, for speakers,
9 for travel and so forth. Again, the idea
10 is to try to empower people with the
11 importance of DEI. In terms of our
12 spend, capital purchases, professional
13 services, our total spend this year is \$5
14 million. This does not include
15 construction.

16 And the total minority-owned,
17 women-owned, total minority-owned and
18 women-owned, veterans and LGBTQ and
19 disabled-owned was 55.78. Women-owned of
20 course was the largest at 39 percent.
21 Total minority-owned being men and women
22 of color was 15 percent. Women only, 6
23 percent. Men only, 8 percent.

24 I want to go to the next --
25 okay. Again, in addition to the PHA and

1 housing, we do a lot to support students
2 beyond the classroom. We do a lot in the
3 classroom, I'll talk about that in a
4 minute. But these are just some -- I'm
5 not going to read these. We have the
6 Women's Outreach Center which does quite
7 a bit. They were able to secure a grant
8 through the federal government
9 (inaudible) whereby students get up to
10 \$800 a month for child care support. To
11 date we have about 55 students that have
12 been able to take advantage of that. And
13 again, the Single Stop program is an area
14 where people can get holistic services
15 for whatever their needs might be.

16 We did receive (inaudible)
17 refunding, \$5 million. And over the
18 course of the next year, we will build
19 out a space that has been dormant for, I
20 don't know, prior to my arrival here, it
21 used to be an old cafeteria. And the
22 idea is we will build out these spaces
23 for student basic needs and the student
24 center that will enable students to have
25 a place where they can go, and they can

1 get financial support, they can get legal
2 support, they can get whatever kind of
3 basic support that they need in order to
4 be successful.

5 We've adapted the idea, you
6 know, thinking of Maslow's hierarchy, you
7 can't self-actualize until you've taken
8 care of the basic needs. And we just
9 have so many students that either have
10 hunger insecurities, housing
11 insecurities, legal. Many of them have
12 relationships that have gone bad, so we
13 want to create a place, a safe place,
14 where they can go, where they can seek
15 the counseling, seek the advice that they
16 need so they can stand on firm ground as
17 they move through their classrooms.

18 Our workforce development
19 program, I know there's a large need here
20 in the City to try to create as many
21 workforce training programs that may not
22 necessarily be degree-based, certificate
23 programs, short-term certificates,
24 medium-term certificates. And here we
25 have the categories that we have most of

1 our workforce development programs in,
2 health care wellness, which includes
3 massage therapy, dental assistance,
4 dialysis technician. This list of
5 programs grows regularly, but this is a
6 basic picture of where we are.

7 Nursing assistant, sterile
8 processing technician, under the
9 manufacturing, logistics infrastructure,
10 most of which will go into the CAT, CNC,
11 which is Computer Numerical Controls,
12 precision machining, electro, mechanical
13 and industrial maintenance, the gas
14 pipeline. We're working with PECO and
15 PGW. Safety inspection mechanics,
16 embedded programs that include
17 blueprinting, shop math. This is an
18 emissions inspector certification,
19 certified reduction technician and CDL,
20 which is a new program. I believe this
21 is just starting now.

22 And under education, we have
23 stackable credentials and in the form of
24 an apprenticeship for child development
25 associate, which is online, a spiritual-

1 based counseling, business finance. We
2 have bookkeeping online, Quickbooks,
3 customer service and sales and the tech
4 field, A+ Certification, CompTIA
5 Security, coding certificate, cyber
6 security. We have web service
7 administration program and we have
8 networking.

9 And then in the professional
10 development area, we do diversity, equity
11 and inclusion, Microsoft Word, ServSafe,
12 AutoCad, logistics, grant writing,
13 nonprofit management. And of course, I'm
14 sure everyone should be familiar with our
15 10KSB program as well as our Power Up
16 program. We're particularly proud of
17 Power Up because it a Philadelphia-based
18 program for small business-owned,
19 primarily Black and Brown business-owned
20 firms here in the City of Philadelphia.
21 This past week we graduated our 600th
22 graduate from that program so we're quite
23 proud of that.

24 The growing space for workforce
25 development of course is in the life

1 sciences. We are collaborating with
2 cellular and life sciences industries
3 like Imvax to train graduates who are
4 ready to enter the workforce on the day
5 of graduation. These courses and
6 curriculum are developed and based on
7 industry needs, and students receive
8 training onsite through their
9 internships.

10 In collaboration with Wistar,
11 our students participate in the summer
12 internship and receive training to
13 biomedical research and technician
14 program. We are working closely with the
15 City and PIDC and offering workforce
16 training for high demand jobs such a
17 septic technician and quality control
18 technicians. And then finally, we're
19 working with Jefferson University
20 Pharmacy School to directly enter Pharm D
21 programs addressing the growing demand
22 for pharmacies in the City. So we're
23 quite proud about that because we know
24 that's a strategic area or avenue for
25 workforce growth in the City.

1 And then finally I'll say that
2 we are working with the City with our
3 community partner organizations and the
4 Mayor's Office through the Catto
5 Scholarship and the City's dual
6 enrollment program to create
7 opportunities for paraprofessionals to
8 move into the teacher-training pipeline.
9 We have a partnership with Catto
10 Scholarship which is working with the
11 staff and a cohort of students at SLA
12 Beeber and partners and the Center for
13 Black Educated Development in this work.
14 We see this as a viable need throughout
15 the City.

16 In addition to that, I mentioned
17 the apprenticeship program we have in
18 early childhood education, so we support
19 PHLpreK at CCP and First Up, continue to
20 cultivate and grow an apprenticeship
21 pipeline for early childhood educators.
22 These are students who through their work
23 are able to parlay their work experience
24 into credit hours, which ultimately
25 parlay into a degree here and then

1 through our articulation degree with our
2 four-year partners are able to get into a
3 teacher's education certification
4 program.

5 So I believe that's the last
6 slide that I have. I know it's late, but
7 I will ask if there are any questions or
8 take any questions that there might be.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
10 you. Thank you, Doctor. Thank you very
11 much.

12 And, Councilwoman Sanchez, thank
13 you so much for filling in, and thank you
14 for handling the School District public
15 comment questions. I understand they
16 were quite significant and we want to
17 make sure that we do the people's work.
18 Education is so important, which is why I
19 would like to thank Dr. Generals for
20 doing a great job.

21 I sometimes sit here and I'm not
22 going to ask you this question on the
23 Teams budget hearing today, but I do
24 wonder if you've ever given any thought
25 to other opportunities in the City of

1 Philadelphia. I guess in a way I did
2 kind of ask you that. But I'm so happy
3 that you're here today.

4 DR. GENERALS: Thank you.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

6 You've done a very good job --

7 DR. GENERALS: Thank you.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: --

9 and I'm excited about the fact that this
10 whole issue with respect to earlier
11 versions of conversations on national
12 level about free Community College and
13 the fact that Community College should be
14 a lead in so many awesome opportunities,
15 you didn't wait around for federal
16 legislation or federal appropriations.
17 You did what you had to do with what you
18 had and I appreciate that so much.

19 I've been inherited the queue so
20 I just want to make sure. Based on what
21 I have here, I'm going to recognize here
22 Councilwoman Parker. Based on what I was
23 given, I thought it was Councilman Jones,
24 but I'm going to --

25 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Be nice,

1 Mr. President and Councilmember Jones.

2 Be nice and look at that queue.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: We're
4 going to have to a queue conversation
5 after today so we can be prepared for the
6 rest of the budget hearing.

7 Councilman Jones, you know --

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: I yield to
9 the Leader.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: You
11 know how I am. I'm old school --

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: I yield to
13 the Leader.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: --
15 some people say that ladies first thing
16 might not be appropriate in today's time.
17 I'm sorry.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: I yield to my
19 Leader.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Chair
21 recognizes Councilwoman Parker.

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you,
23 Mr. President. And thank you,
24 Councilmember and Whip Jones. I greatly
25 appreciate it.

1 Dr. Generals, I want to follow
2 up with Council President Clarke. But,
3 Council President, I don't know. Now, we
4 need Doc over there at CCP. I saw you
5 putting something in motion just now.

6 Councilmember Jones, I saw your
7 face too. I think you knew where he was
8 going with that.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I'm
10 never trying to start any problems. But,
11 you know, every now and then things cross
12 your mind and you can't help but talk
13 about it, but I'm going to leave it
14 alone.

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Well,
16 listen, Dr. Generals, I do want to follow
17 up and say thank you so very much for all
18 of the innovative work that you have
19 done. My eyes perked up when I saw the
20 partnership with PHA and your recognizing
21 for the record the number of students
22 attending CCP, and to be quite frank,
23 institutions of higher learning
24 throughout our region who are housing
25 insecure and food insecure.

1 We have a Catholic school in the
2 9th District called St. Athanasius and
3 they had like an apartment complex that
4 the nuns used to stay in and it is no
5 longer in use, so they converted that to
6 what is now called the St. Raymond's
7 House and they do exactly what you
8 described CCP is doing, that is,
9 providing housing for college students in
10 Philadelphia who are housing insecure, so
11 thank you for that.

12 I also want to give a huge
13 thanks to the entire team. And while I'm
14 saying thank you, Carol, Power UP,
15 Mikecia, all of our inner actions, I have
16 to go to something that is not so
17 pleasing to representatives of Northwest
18 Philadelphia, and I need you to just get
19 it on the record and succinctly as you
20 can.

21 Tell us what's happening. We
22 saw that enrollment is down. CCP is not
23 the only community college or institution
24 of higher learning, it's happening across
25 the nation. Councilmember Jones and

1 Gauthier, I was excited to see the Career
2 and Advance Technology Center in West
3 Philadelphia and that's wonderful, but
4 it's not so good news for the Northwest
5 campus.

6 And I want to you to make sure
7 we just put that on the record, Doc, to
8 affirm for us what's happening there.

9 And I've got two other questions that I
10 have to get on the record, so if you can
11 be succinct.

12 DR. GENERALS: Sure. So the
13 Northwest -- enrollment was the problem.
14 It's bittersweet because during the
15 pandemic, students moved to online and
16 now the pandemic's over, many of them
17 continue to be online so we didn't have
18 enrollment that could sustain it. And
19 the second problem was the building needs
20 work. It needs infrastructure work.
21 There are huge structural challenges
22 there and I mean, like walls that are
23 crumbling.

24 We've never outfitted the third
25 floor. We've always had problems with

1 cafeteria or food space, so we felt it
2 was in the best interest of all things
3 considered to just put a pause on it and
4 figure out what's the way forward, what's
5 the particular program, what's the
6 population that we could focus on in
7 terms of programs, what could anchor it.
8 So that's what it is.

9 The last program we tried to run
10 up there was ophthalmic tech in
11 conjunction with Salus, which we pretty
12 much share the same space, and it just
13 didn't fly. It started with a bang and
14 then we had zero students. So this --

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: So, Doc,
16 let me say this because I know my clock
17 is running, I want to say this to you,
18 for residents of Northwest Philadelphia
19 who considered that Northwest campus
20 sacred for our access to CCP, I don't
21 think all is dead right now. I think CCP
22 is evaluating. I think we should give
23 Dr. Generals and his team the ability to
24 get the bright minds in the room and come
25 up with the most innovative strategy

1 possible to see how we can make that
2 location an effective and efficient part
3 of CCP education. So, Dr. Generals, I
4 look forward to working with you on that.

5 Also, special shout-out to
6 Parkway, the Middle College, really
7 excited about that, seeing those red and
8 white shirts in your slide model for the
9 nation. And then Power Up Your Business.
10 And I want you to -- and you said this.
11 This goes to show you that you can do a
12 lot with a little bit. 600 graduates,
13 small businesses, Black and Brown small
14 business owners across the City of
15 Philadelphia. And, Doc, you mentioned
16 both of these programs in the same
17 sentence.

18 I was excited to learn from the
19 Goldman Sachs, I went to speak at a
20 couple of their programs. And every time
21 I spoke, they acknowledged that Power Up
22 Your Business has become the unofficial
23 feeder for 10KSB. Tell us about it, if
24 you will, what's that like now.

25 DR. GENERALS: You're exactly

1 right. Again, we've been at this, you
2 know. Let's speak the truth, this is
3 your baby. You're the one that supported
4 it the most, and we're extremely thankful
5 for your vision because you saw that with
6 10KSB. It was certainly regional, it was
7 a good program, but it really wasn't
8 focused on the commercial corridors
9 and/or Black and Brown businesses to the
10 degree that Power Up is. So it becomes
11 a -- I hate to use the term steppingstone
12 because that kind of implies something
13 less because these businesses are viable
14 entities in their communities, and the
15 peer learning, the peer business model is
16 elevating them to the point where they're
17 increasing their revenue streams and
18 they're increasing their employees.

19 And many of them like the idea
20 that business prowess is something that
21 enables their business. So once Power Up
22 was done, they pivoted and said, well,
23 let me go do 10KSB. I can only learn
24 more, which was what they've done and
25 they can spread their wings even further.

1 So over the couple of years, I don't know
2 what the numbers -- I don't know if
3 Carol's on the call, she might be able to
4 tell you, there's been quite a few who
5 decided after Power Up to go to 10 KSB to
6 take part in that program as well.

7 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
8 so much, Doc, for getting that on the
9 record.

10 I want to close out with this
11 and, Mr. President, this is when I think
12 I started thinking what you were
13 thinking. I looked at that slide on
14 workforce development and looked how very
15 succinctly, like Dr. Generals,
16 Mr. President and Councilmember Jones,
17 they know I'm a one-stop shop person. I
18 like standard operating procedures.

19 I like information in one place
20 where you don't have to be connected to
21 anybody powerful or anybody special to
22 get access to what's being provided. And
23 the way you succinctly had that list, I
24 know Councilmember Gilmore Richardson was
25 saying this is what I'm talking about,

1 this is what I'm talking about.

2 We know what you're doing with
3 fleet. The L&I Commissioner talked about
4 the training for L&I inspectors. We're
5 desperately in need of them. I talked
6 about in our Neighborhood Safety and
7 Community Policing Plan, extending our
8 Explorers program similar to the Boston
9 and/or Chicago models.

10 And quite frankly, I want to get
11 this on the record. I am a firm believer
12 that CCP along with our School District
13 of Philadelphia, they should be the
14 foundational places that Philadelphia
15 residents looking to being employed with
16 the City of Philadelphia in any way,
17 shape or form, you should be our vehicle.
18 We are not there. We are coming along,
19 inching slowly, but I wanted to get that
20 on the record.

21 And finally, Mr. President,
22 there was a slide where you had two
23 members. One was Iraida Sanchez and
24 there was another, it was a woman. And I
25 want to you to know that Iraida Sanchez,

1 that's going to be my new thing. They
2 said when they were in high school,
3 teachers downplayed going to CCP and said
4 that that should be your last option.
5 But when they look at those student
6 loans -- when I look at mine, I'm going
7 to be in debt for the rest of my life to
8 the University of Pennsylvania -- but for
9 those who are smart enough to go to CCP
10 for two years, and I think a significant
11 number of them transfer to Temple and
12 other institutions of higher learning,
13 you offer the best of what our City has
14 to offer from higher educational
15 perspective.

16 Thank you, Mr. President. And
17 thank you, Dr. Generals and all members
18 of your team.

19 DR. GENERALS: Thank you very
20 much. And I'll see you Saturday.

21 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes,
22 indeed. From one mighty Lincoln Lion to
23 the CCP Lions. I'm ready.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
25 you. Thank you, Councilwoman.

1 Chair recognizes Councilmember
2 Jones.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
4 Mr. President.

5 And, Dr. Generals, I listened to
6 your prebudget presentations for a very
7 long time and I sat through them
8 patiently usually, but this one was
9 exciting. You are doing some really
10 integrated things into the community that
11 have real world results. And you know
12 I'm not one who flatter people if I
13 really don't mean it.

14 I heard more school-to-paycheck
15 pipelines in your presentation than I've
16 ever heard. That connectivity to the
17 theoretical education world to a
18 practical job at the end of the rainbow
19 is amazing. Member Sanchez took me up
20 during the debate about the sugary
21 beverage tax to Pepsi. And when we were
22 touring the Pepsi plant, they were
23 talking about what kind of skilled labor
24 they needed.

25 They were of the opinion that

1 they could take a forklift driver if they
2 had the right aptitude and get maybe a
3 12-month certificate to get them to just
4 know the pH of water for each bottle that
5 they bottled for water and keep that
6 consistent. They didn't need a whole
7 bunch of frills and whistles and football
8 games. They needed somebody that could
9 check the pH level of water. And those
10 kinds of industry needs with a designer
11 curriculum tailored by the Community
12 College are the future of workforce
13 development in the City of Philadelphia.
14 So I want to give you proffers for having
15 that vision. You can just say thank you.

16 DR. GENERALS: I appreciate it.
17 I want to be clear that this is not a
18 one-man show here. We've got a whole
19 team of people working on this and we've
20 got partners throughout the City. I've
21 got Vice-presidents on this call right
22 now, Dave Thomas, Carol de Fries, Sam
23 Hirsch, Shannon Rooney. They're the ones
24 that -- Makecia who's flipping the --
25 she's our facilitator through City and

1 state government. And so, it's a team
2 effort. I need to be clear about that,
3 but I appreciate it.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good leaders
5 attract good teams, so congratulations.

6 DR. GENERALS: Thank you.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: But you did
8 not mention my favorite initiative you've
9 developed and I don't know why. We have
10 a problem with the City of Philadelphia
11 recruiting Black and Brown police
12 officers, getting them to be able to be
13 prepared to pass the physical and written
14 test. You have a demonstration program
15 with Malika Rahman that is doing just
16 that, taking Community College residents
17 and giving them the skills needed to be
18 able to not only take the test, but pass
19 the test and become Philadelphia police
20 officers, PHA officers, SEPTA police and
21 the like. Why didn't you mention them?
22 I was waiting to give you a round of
23 applause for that.

24 DR. GENERALS: Well, you know, I
25 have all my notes here. The City

1 recently reported that between 2018 and
2 '22, they hired 259 students and alumni
3 in those fours, which included two years
4 in the pandemic, and this included
5 police, correctional officers, police and
6 firefighter dispatchers, firefighters,
7 youth detention trainers. And all of
8 this is molding and coming through our
9 careers and connections.

10 And with Malika and the strength
11 that's building -- and by the way, she
12 was one of our faculty fellows so she
13 came up through the program that I
14 mentioned in terms of recruiting minority
15 faculties. Electricians, HVAC,
16 mechanics, so, yes, it's organic. It's
17 only going to grow. So I think that's a
18 good thing to point out.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Other than
20 the fact that Member Parker talked about
21 the aging infrastructure in the District,
22 I was jealous. I don't have a facility
23 in my District. But if you keep this
24 kind of work up, I don't really need one
25 because the residents of my District will

1 find their way to your facilities and
2 take advantage of it.

3 One last question: There was a
4 dual enrollment piece when you first
5 started. How is Overbrook High School
6 doing on the dual enrollment? The last
7 time I was at a budget hearing that was
8 one of the questions. Can I get an
9 update about the dual enrollment for
10 Overbrook High School?

11 DR. GENERALS: Dave Thomas, are
12 you on the call? He'll have the
13 specifics.

14 MR. THOMAS: I am.

15 DR. GENERALS: There you go.
16 You're on.

17 MR. THOMAS: Good afternoon,
18 Councilman Jones.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
20 afternoon.

21 MR. THOMAS: Good to see you.
22 So the last time we spoke I was in
23 conversations with Principal Lee at
24 Overbrook. I believe last year we had
25 put together a plan to enroll a small

1 number of students. I always defer to
2 the principals because they make those
3 calls. So we enrolled a small number of
4 students. So we're going to start about
5 five students and wrap around some
6 supports for those students to go through
7 and take some courses.

8 We did start that. We only had
9 about three students that actually
10 completed for this semester. And I think
11 it was everything to do with the fact
12 that we were online and remote learning,
13 which was just a challenge for those
14 students. So we are revisiting as we're
15 moving forward to increase that number.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Well, if you
17 could, you know, that's one of those
18 political answers. I recognize it when
19 I see -- when you find out, will you tell
20 me please?

21 MR. THOMAS: I certainly shall.
22 We should all probably visit Principal
23 Lee together. I know Morgan Cephas as
24 well is interested in increasing with
25 this pipeline. So I'm in conversations

1 with everybody around that. So yes, sir.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: All right.

3 DR. GENERALS: Just a side note,
4 Morgan Cephas is one of our newest Board
5 members.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES:
7 Congratulations to Morgan Cephas of
8 Central. She could not get into
9 Overbrook. It was an exclusive admit,
10 but she did with the Central --

11 MR. THOMAS: You're talking to
12 another Central alum here, Councilman
13 Jones. I'm just letting you know.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Lance of
15 power, I get it.

16 MR. THOMAS: I'm going to log
17 off. Thank you.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: All right.
19 Thank you very much, Mr. President.

20 DR. GENERALS: Thank you.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: President --

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
23 you, Councilman.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Chair

1 recognizes Councilwoman Katherine Gilmore
2 Richardson.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

4 Thank you. Thank you so much, Council
5 President.

6 Thank you, Dr. Generals and to
7 the Board and the entire team at
8 Community College of Philadelphia.
9 Certainly appreciate the work that you
10 all are continuing to do, particularly
11 around workforce development, which is an
12 area that I deeply, deeply care about and
13 have continued to work through during my
14 time here in Council.

15 And so, I wanted to start where
16 our Majority Leader Councilmember Parker
17 left off in talking about some of the
18 workforce development programs that you
19 all have. And the one I wanted to really
20 drill down on was the program with
21 helping us to increase the amount of L&I
22 code enforcement inspectors in the City
23 of Philadelphia.

24 And so, I understand you all are
25 in partnership with L&I and are working

1 to implement a technical code enforcement
2 of coursework into the construction
3 management degree program. And so, if
4 you can just give us an update about that
5 work and when will the coursework be
6 implemented into your already existing
7 construction management program and will
8 the new coursework that you all
9 intertwine into the program be required
10 of all construction management students?
11 And if so, how many students will it
12 impact? I just wanted to know more about
13 that program and building that pipeline
14 for us because you know we have a
15 definite shortage of L&I code endorsement
16 inspectors.

17 DR. GENERALS: Sure. So we
18 definitely started the program -- started
19 the conversations and moved down the
20 road. It was a bunch of starts and
21 stops. I know that we needed to have
22 from them a content specialist, precisely
23 what they're needing as we mold this into
24 a curriculum and then ultimately a credit
25 program.

1 I don't know if Carol's on the
2 phone or I know, Makecia, you spoke to
3 this the other day. Maybe you can give a
4 more recent update.

5 MS. DE FRIES: Hi. It's Carol
6 de Fries. I'm here and I'm happy to chat
7 a little bit more. We're actually
8 meeting with L&I I think within the next
9 week to move forward and beginning to
10 craft the more content-specific
11 information that we need to incorporate
12 into the credit-based program. But also
13 when we were talking earlier about
14 innovative programs, the concept that
15 we've pitched to L&I is to make that both
16 credit- and noncredit-based, so that
17 individuals who may come to the career
18 with the requisite experience, so someone
19 who's worked in construction but maybe no
20 longer can physically do construction and
21 meets the technical codes can take that
22 portion as a noncredit be certified to
23 become hired by the City's L&I department
24 in addition to creating a pipeline of
25 individuals in our construction

1 management program that will be new to
2 construction management or the
3 construction field in general.

4 And we've talked a little bit
5 about how we can also begin to make that
6 connection with the School District CTE
7 schools so that students who are -- and
8 in talking with our enrollment folks,
9 students who are interested in that field
10 view it as a viable option as opposed to
11 just going out and actually doing the
12 construction themselves, but viewing that
13 as a really good-paying job because they
14 are very good and obviously, a City job
15 has a great pension and it's not as
16 physically taxing, but requires all the
17 same level of information and expertise.

18 So we're still I would describe
19 at the beginning phases of developing the
20 content that goes with that program, and
21 then the process will require the
22 internal approvals from the curriculum
23 perspective.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
25 Got it. And I wanted to ask a follow-up

1 question relative to the timeline. If
2 you can keep us updated on the timeline
3 for completion for that work and when you
4 anticipate that program or upgraded
5 program to be up and running?

6 DR. GENERALS: I think it will
7 probably be in phases because the
8 noncredit can be done rather quickly as
9 soon as we get the content. And I
10 believe we've identified the content
11 specialist; is that correct, Carol, or
12 they've identified somebody for us?

13 MS. DE FRIES: Yeah, L&I has
14 identified someone for us and that's who
15 we're meeting with next.

16 DR. GENERALS: So that portion
17 can move up a lot quicker. Embedding it
18 into a program may take a little more
19 time. Our faculty just left for the
20 summer, so that will probably be more
21 like some time in the fall going into the
22 spring.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
24 Okay. Great. Well, just --

25 DR. GENERALS: It would be

1 helpful if we can get that noncredit
2 piece in place because that will be the
3 spring board into the degree program.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:

5 Sure. Well, just keep us updated on all
6 of the movement with that program. I am
7 certainly interested in that program and
8 have been working with the City to create
9 more pipelines around some of our
10 department-level, entry-level positions
11 and working with the School District and
12 also seeking to work with all of you to
13 figure out how we create direct pipelines
14 even as we change and look at the job
15 specifications for some of our entry-
16 level City jobs. We have modified some
17 of them to line up directly with School
18 District of Philadelphia CTE programs.

19 And so, as you move down the
20 pipeline with this particular coursework
21 and content, we want to do the same thing
22 working with L&I and working with all of
23 you. So that is great news. And I'll
24 await the additional update.

25 Dr. Generals, you talked about

1 the new Career and Advance Technology
2 Center in West Philadelphia that's slated
3 to open I think you said in August, the
4 middle week of August. And so, we're
5 really, really excited about this center.
6 I'm happy obviously because it's in West
7 Philly. I represent the entire City, but
8 home base is West Philadelphia.

9 And so, I wanted to talk about
10 community engagement with that center and
11 ensuring that we are alerting the
12 surrounding community. And also, I think
13 I saw a list of programs there --

14 DR. GENERALS: Correct.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
16 -- on one of the slides. There was a
17 list of programs, and I loved all the
18 programs that you shared. But I
19 specifically wanted to know if you all
20 have a program or will have a program
21 around solar installation or energy
22 efficiency because you know we have so
23 many opportunities for solar installation
24 in Philadelphia and you talked about the
25 energy efficiency of the center and just

1 how environmentally friendly the actual
2 building will be. But I was wondering if
3 that program will be offered as well.

4 DR. GENERALS: At this point, we
5 don't have a program to offer. We have
6 been talking with the School District and
7 we also have been talking with Thaddeus
8 Stevens about their program which is very
9 much developed. But I would agree, it's
10 a program that would be very attractive
11 and be something that we should do. We
12 are offering alternative fuels connected
13 to the auto technology, the
14 transportation components of the programs
15 that are there.

16 At this point, we don't have the
17 solar tech portion of it there, but we
18 have flexible space. It was built with
19 that in mind that as these ideas come up
20 or as new industries come up or as new
21 programs or technologies come up, we
22 would have the flexibility to be able to
23 incorporate that in there.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
25 Okay. Well, I'm glad you said that and I

1 heard the bell, and I will honor the
2 clock particularly for my colleagues.
3 But I wanted to mention the bipartisan
4 infrastructure legislation. You know
5 that includes a lot of money for
6 workforce training programs, particularly
7 programs that are focused on the energy
8 and transportation fields.

9 A lot of these opportunities,
10 and I've said this to a number of
11 departments, will be competitive grants
12 that you all would have to apply for.
13 And so, I just wanted to know how you all
14 are evaluating those opportunities in
15 ensuring that you are applying and taking
16 advantage of any additional resources
17 that could be of assistance to CCP
18 particularly as you are moving into the
19 new center, the Career and Advance
20 Technology Center? How are you all
21 looking at those opportunities in trying
22 to vie for those competitive dollars?

23 DR. GENERALS: Sure. So we're
24 absolutely threading through that massive
25 bill, which includes specific workforce

1 development elements to it, but also
2 sustainability, green science and we
3 think that we could be competitive for
4 both areas. I mentioned Thaddeus
5 Stevens. He's very much interested in
6 creating a joint program in water, what
7 would you call, water preservation or
8 water technologies, if you will. And
9 that's something that I think would be an
10 entree into the Water Department here as
11 well as an industry that can't find
12 enough people to work given the
13 sustainability needs for clean water and
14 for the recyclability of water.

15 So we're looking at that. We're
16 looking at -- again, the big pot is
17 workforce development which is the more
18 traditional, but then there's the green
19 science and sustainability, the
20 environmental sectors which are areas in
21 which we think we could be equally
22 competitive. So our grants department,
23 they are looking through that. We have a
24 couple not specific to this, but we have
25 a couple of proposals in the federal

1 department right now, specifically for
2 workforce development.

3 And there are areas that we
4 haven't taken advantage of, specifically
5 the Defense Department. We've done a
6 little bit with the National Science
7 Foundation, but we need to do more there.
8 But then there's also the infrastructure
9 bill, which is pretty much a gamechanger
10 at this point. So, yes, we are looking
11 at federal dollars.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE RICHARDSON:
13 Okay. And if you can just keep updated
14 on any of those opportunities,
15 particularly if there are any from the
16 EPA and just keep us updated on how we
17 can assist with that. Very quickly, and
18 I want to honor the clock, but I was very
19 encouraged to see that a sixth pillar has
20 been added to the college's strategic
21 plan around diversity, equity and
22 inclusion.

23 I have some additional questions
24 relative to that space that I will submit
25 for the record in writing so that we can

1 move forward and honor the clock. And
2 thank you so much, Dr. Generals, to the
3 Board and your team. I look forward to
4 continuing to work with you all on all of
5 these initiatives, including the DEI
6 work.

7 And thank you very much, Council
8 President, for the leeway. And thank
9 you, Councilmember Sanchez.

10 DR. GENERALS: Thank you.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
12 Absolutely. Thank you, Council Lady.
13 Thank you so much.

14 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
15 Quinones-Sanchez.

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
17 I definitely don't want to be between
18 dinner and everyone here. Thank you very
19 much, Council President Clarke.

20 I just wanted to just echo some
21 of the sentiments of my colleagues and
22 really thank Dr. Generals and his whole
23 entire team. As you can see from his
24 program offering, that Community College
25 is the workforce college of the City of

1 Philadelphia. And I'm pleased to see
2 that for the first time in a long time
3 we're not fighting around this budget,
4 but really talking about how does it grow
5 more. And I just want to thank him
6 because we set him up for some challenges
7 around some of this workforce stuff and
8 working with City departments and others
9 and his team as he mentioned has been
10 incredible troopers in that.

11 And I just want to echo
12 Councilman Jones' sentiments. We need a
13 robust dual admit program, and I know you
14 did a lot of work with Dr. Hite. We have
15 2,000 young people in the dual admit
16 program. We need 5,000 young people in
17 the dual admit program, and that will
18 allow us to continue to grow the CCP
19 system in every neighborhood in the City
20 of Philadelphia.

21 So I just want to thank the team
22 and echo what you said, Council
23 President, Dr. Generals didn't wait for
24 us. He just kept going. And I really
25 want to encourage them to continue to do

1 that, and look forward to this new high
2 flex model that they are going to be
3 introducing or using at the college that
4 will allow young people and working
5 people and parents and young parents to
6 be able to either attend in person or use
7 the technology. I think that's the new
8 way.

9 And Community College doing that
10 and acknowledging that is another example
11 of how they're ahead of the curve on some
12 of this. I just want to thank the entire
13 team and look forward to continuing to
14 work with them. Thank you, Dr. Generals.

15 DR. GENERALS: Thank you.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Thank
17 you, Councilwoman.

18 That appears to be all of the
19 questions from members of this Committee
20 for this particular witness. And with
21 that being the case, Dr. Generals, I want
22 to thank you and your team so much for
23 all the awesome work you do. I look
24 forward to continuing to have further
25 discussion on how you can enhance your

1 ability to do what you do for the
2 citizens of the City of Philadelphia.
3 And like Councilwoman Sanchez said, it's
4 good to have a conversation without
5 fighting over money for once for the
6 school. And I want to thank the Kenney
7 Administration for that.

8 So there being no additional
9 questions, the Committee will stand in
10 recess until Monday, May 9th at
11 10:00 a.m., at which time we will
12 reconvene on Microsoft Teams. Thank you
13 all very much, appreciate it and keep up
14 the good work.

15 DR. GENERALS: Thank you.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Good
17 night.

18 DR. GENERALS: Good night.

19 (Committee of the Whole
20 concluded at 5:50 p.m.)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T I O N

2

3 I, hereby certify that the

4

5 proceedings and evidence noted are contained

6

7 fully and accurately in the stenographic notes

8

9 taken by me in the foregoing matter, and that

10

11 this is a correct transcript of the same.

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TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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