

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND GLOBAL
OPPORTUNITIES AND CREATIVE/
INNOVATIVE ECONOMY

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, June 17, 2013
11:20 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE BLACKWELL, CO-CHAIR
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH, CO-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
COUNCILMAN DENNY O'BRIEN

RESOLUTION 130260 - Resolution authorizing a joint hearing between Council's Committees on Education and Global Opportunities and the Creative/Innovative Economy to hold hearings to examine best practices in education on a global basis to determine how they may be implemented to establish world class public education in Philadelphia.

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COUNCILMAN OH: We are now going to proceed with the joint hearing by the Education Committee and Global Opportunities Committee, and I believe that Councilwoman Blackwell is on her way to start that meeting. Thank you very much.

(Brief pause.)

COUNCILMAN OH: While the Chairwoman is on her way, let me just take a moment to thank all of our witnesses. We do have a witness at the ready from Hong Kong. His testimony will be by Skype, as well as a witness from South Carolina. I know that many of you are very busy, and I appreciate your coming in for this hearing.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good morning, everyone. We are so happy to be part of this joint Committee on Education and Global Opportunities and the Creative/Innovative Economy. We want to thank Councilman Oh, who has done all of the work on this issue and who postponed

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2 it a few times so that he could be ready
3 for this important presentation.

4 So certainly we have to my
5 right Councilman O'Neill, Co-Chair or
6 Chair of his Committee, Councilman Oh, to
7 our left, Councilwoman Cindy Bass, and
8 we're pleased to begin, and we're going
9 to hand this over to Councilman Oh.

10 Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
12 much, Councilwoman.

13 Instead of giving an opening
14 statement, I'm going to read some
15 paragraphs from a book which I think
16 summarizes the task at hand.

17 This book is entitled
18 "Surpassing Shanghai," and it is written
19 by Marc Tucker from the National Center
20 on Education and the Economy, NCEE. And
21 I'll begin reading.

22 This book answers a simple
23 question: How would we redesign the
24 American education system if the aim were
25 to take advantage of everything that has

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2 been learned by countries with the best
3 education systems in order to build a
4 system better than any that now exists
5 anywhere? That question is important
6 because a growing number of countries are
7 outperforming the United States on the
8 most respected comparisons of student
9 achievement while at the same time
10 spending less on education per student.

11 And that, by the way, means
12 that they have a sustainable ability to
13 continue funding their education.

14 One would think that this
15 disparity might have created great
16 interest among American researchers in
17 figuring out how they do it, but that is
18 not the case. Only a handful of American
19 education researchers have participated
20 in international efforts to compare the
21 performance of American students to the
22 performance of students in other
23 countries and to find out why we lag so
24 far behind our competitors.

25 For 22 years, the National

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2 Center on Education and the Economy has
3 been researching the education systems of
4 the countries with the highest student
5 performance. We have taken what we have
6 learned about the world's most successful
7 practices and policies and used that
8 information to design technical
9 assistance programs for disadvantaged
10 students, academic standards, and
11 assessments for use in a nation's schools
12 and policy proposals for states.

13 Sadly, we quickly learned that
14 it did not help our cause to tell people
15 that the ideas on which our work was
16 based came from other countries. We
17 discovered that until recently, Americans
18 have been convinced that there was little
19 to learn from other countries in the
20 field of education that many have been
21 suspicious of ideas developed elsewhere.

22 But that seems to be changing.
23 In the spring of 2010, the Organization
24 for Economic Cooperation and Development,
25 OECD, Secretary General Angel Gurría and

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2 U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan met
3 to discuss the release of the 2009
4 Program for International Student
5 Assessment, PISA, report in December
6 2010. Following the meeting, Andreas
7 Schleicher, Director of the PISA surveys
8 at the OECD and counselor on education to
9 Secretary Gurria, asked the NCEE if it
10 would be willing to work collaboratively
11 with the OECD headquarters staff to
12 produce the report on a very demanding
13 schedule. The report, quote, Strong
14 Performers and Successful Reformers -
15 Lessons from PISA for the United States,
16 was released on December 7th, 2010.

17 How is the United States doing?
18 For a country that once led the world's
19 education lead tables, the answer is not
20 very well. Even though the United States
21 spends more per pupil than any other
22 country in the survey, except Luxembourg,
23 its students perform average in reading
24 and science and below average in
25 mathematics. Students in countries that

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2 spend less than half what we spend are
3 achieving higher levels.

4 Many in the United States
5 distrust these figures, believing that
6 other countries educate only their elite
7 while we educate everyone, but that is
8 not true. Some 25 to 30 percent of our
9 students drop out of high school. That
10 proportion is smaller, typically much
11 smaller, among the top-performing
12 countries. Increasingly, it is the
13 United States that is educating only our
14 elite and our competitors who are
15 educating everyone.

16 American teachers will point
17 out that performance problems are to be
18 expected with so many immigrants and so
19 many children from so many different
20 backgrounds speaking so many languages,
21 but countries like Canada, with even
22 greater proportions of students born
23 outside that country, are showing much
24 higher performance levels for all
25 children, including immigrant children.

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2 In fact, the reading performance of
3 children without an immigrant background
4 in the United States is only marginally
5 better than the performance of all
6 students. It turns out that Canada, New
7 Zealand, Australia, and Hong Kong, all
8 with percentages of immigrant students
9 equal to or greater than the United
10 States, all outperform the United States
11 in reading. We repeatedly hear that were
12 it not for the poor and minority kids in
13 our big cities, U.S. students'
14 performance would be right up there with
15 the best performers, but that is not
16 true.

17 It certainly is the case that
18 our low-income and minority students do
19 poorly compared to international
20 benchmarks, but even our suburban schools
21 score only very slightly above the OECD
22 average. Even our top performers are not
23 doing so well. PISA divides reading
24 performance into six bands. One in
25 one-half percent of our students score in

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2 the top band better than the OECD average
3 of 0.8 percent, but Australia, Canada,
4 Finland, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore,
5 and Shanghai do better with proportions
6 ranging from 1.8 to 2.9 percent. Only 2
7 percent of our students reach the highest
8 point on the PISA mathematics scale
9 compared to the OECD average of 3
10 percent, and countries above that go all
11 the way to 27 percent, Shanghai. Only 1
12 percent of American students come in at
13 the top level for science, the OECD
14 average, but the percentage for Singapore
15 is 4.6 percent, for Finland 3.3 percent,
16 and for New Zealand 3.6 percent, for
17 Shanghai 3.9 percent, and for Australia 3
18 percent. One might think that given our
19 experience, we would do better at
20 educating disadvantaged children than the
21 best-performing countries, but that does
22 not seem to be true. PISA has classified
23 as resilient students who are in the
24 bottom quarter of the PISA index of
25 economic, social, and cultural status but

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2 who score in the top quarter of the PISA
3 achievement measure. The United States
4 comes in below the PISA average on this
5 measure, with 27 countries outperforming
6 us. Among them, Mexico and Turkey.

7 It is certainly true that
8 poverty among American school children
9 impacts their ability to learn in school
10 and that poverty in the United States
11 among children is increasing, and our
12 schools cannot be held accountable for
13 that. But it turns out that
14 socioeconomic status is a better
15 predictor of education achievement in the
16 United States than in most other OECD
17 countries. Socioeconomic status predicts
18 17 percent of the variance in student
19 performance in the United States, but
20 only 9 percent in Japan and Canada. That
21 means that poverty is making a bigger
22 difference in student achievement here
23 than elsewhere, and our schools can be
24 held accountable for that.

25 Expectations are an odd thing.

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2 While American teachers have low
3 expectations for their students, it turns
4 out that PISA data show that American
5 students rate themselves better students
6 than students in countries with the
7 highest performing countries rate
8 themselves. OECD speculates that this
9 may be because our students are often
10 complimented for performance that is
11 substandard when measured against the
12 best performers. By expecting less, we
13 make our students comfortable with
14 achieving less, when there is every
15 reason to believe they could be achieving
16 much more.

17 One would think that being a
18 big spender on education would mean that
19 we spend more money than other countries
20 on teachers compensation, but that is not
21 the case. When the OECD looked at
22 teachers compensation in terms of how
23 teachers are paid compared to other
24 professions requiring the same level of
25 education, only three OECD countries paid

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2 their teachers less than we do in the
3 United States. So the money is not spent
4 on our teachers. Much of it seems to be
5 spent on our buildings.

6 The issue for us obviously is
7 not simply to have some good performing
8 schools, but how do we adopt a system,
9 how do we create a system in Philadelphia
10 which provides equally good schools
11 throughout our City regardless of
12 neighborhood or socioeconomic status, and
13 how do we provide sustained levels of
14 funding for these schools.

15 So with that, I would like to
16 call our first witness.

17 THE CLERK: I would like to
18 invite Anu Partanen and Kai-Ming Cheng.
19 Professor Kai-Ming Cheng will be joining
20 us from Hong Kong and he is joining us
21 via Skype this morning.

22 (Dr. Cheng testifying via
23 Skype. Due to technical difficulties, it
24 was not able to be transcribed by court
25 reporter.)

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2 COUNCILMAN OH: I'm sorry. Dr.
3 Cheng, can I interrupt you?

4 DR. CHENG: Yes, please.

5 COUNCILMAN OH: Because of your
6 distance, because you are Skyping from
7 Hong Kong and our technology is not
8 really that advanced here in our City
9 Hall Chambers, we are missing some of the
10 words. We're going to try to improve
11 that, but we're going to call you back
12 right now, and I would ask if you would
13 speak a little slower so we don't miss
14 your words. Thank you.

15 DR. CHENG: Okay.

16 (Pause.)

17 DR. CHENG: Okay. Is this
18 better?

19 COUNCILMAN OH: It is much
20 better. Thank you.

21 I take that back. It was a
22 little better, but could you break your
23 sentences just kind of like into half
24 sentences and I think we'll get it all.

25 (Dr. Cheng testifying via

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2 Skype. Due to technical difficulties, it
3 was not able to be transcribed by court
4 reporter.)

5 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
6 much. I am going to, because there was
7 some difficulty in receiving your words
8 being broadcast, I'm going to just repeat
9 some of what you said for your correction
10 and some things that I've read from the
11 information that you have provided us.

12 Hong Kong is a city of 7,000
13 people. In mainland China -- I'm sorry;
14 seven million people. There are
15 approximately 80 million people in
16 mainland China or outside of Hong Kong
17 that deals with investments going through
18 Hong Kong.

19 Hong Kong has transitioned from
20 a manufacturing economy or having a large
21 manufacturing economy to one that has
22 less and less manufacturing and,
23 therefore, as a society itself has
24 changed to one where they need quick
25 on-the-feet thinking and flexibility.

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2 The education demands have changed.

3 There has been resistance
4 inside the culture within Hong Kong to
5 change education. As you pointed out,
6 there's a culture in Hong Kong that
7 government should not put its hands on
8 education. Yet there has been a lot of
9 parental dissatisfaction with the schools
10 despite the fact that teachers typically
11 teach past dinnertime and students
12 oftentimes study until 12:00 midnight. A
13 lot of it has been wrote, memorization,
14 and learning. Therefore, the emphasis to
15 reform the system, not simply improve it,
16 has been to change the underlying basis
17 of education in Hong Kong so that it is
18 conforming with the needs of society and
19 developing the students in a more
20 holistic manner.

21 One of the things has been a
22 shift from teaching to learning, as you
23 pointed out, giving a word such as
24 "spring" and then having the student
25 instead of being penalized for incorrect

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2 answers, being rewarded for as many good
3 and creative answers as possible.

4 There are three different
5 systems that you've identified, one in
6 China through Shanghai, one in Singapore,
7 and the one in Hong Kong. Singapore has
8 a top down, let's call it, a
9 military-styled authority in providing
10 education, very effective. Shanghai,
11 very well organized teachers, very
12 effective. And Hong Kong, which is a
13 very liberal society, has great
14 difficulties in herding its cats together
15 and, therefore, there was a campaign to
16 engage the media, parents, businesses,
17 and the entire society to look at
18 reforming education in a way where the
19 system would actually provide engagement
20 by teachers who would step up to the
21 levels of the need of society.

22 In all of these areas, the
23 education performance has been excellent.
24 There's been dramatic increases in the
25 measurements of student output

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2 satisfaction and actually self-esteem,
3 while at the same time having better
4 outcomes from the teachers themselves who
5 enjoy greater autonomy and
6 professionalism and have maintained kind
7 of a self-learning process as these
8 reforms have occurred.

9 I would point out that in most
10 situations that I have seen, including
11 your report, teachers receive higher
12 salaries, better benefits than in the
13 United States, while at the same time
14 costing the taxpayers less, and the
15 parents and the students receive a better
16 education.

17 That's my summary.

18 DR. CHENG: Thank you.

19 COUNCILMAN OH: All right. If
20 we have any questions.

21 Councilwoman Bass.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
23 Mr. Chairman.

24 I just wanted to make a
25 statement and, number one, thank the

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2 gentleman for reaching out to us and
3 providing the information that you did on
4 different ways, strategies, ideas,
5 thoughts of how we can provide a better
6 quality of education. I think we do
7 ourselves an incredible disservice if we
8 don't look at who is doing what and what
9 is working. And we really have to be
10 open to what is happening around the
11 globe, because we don't have all the
12 answers.

13 I think sometimes in
14 Philadelphia we have a way of doing
15 things, which is we do what we do because
16 we do it this way and because that's
17 what's done in Philadelphia. And I think
18 we need to get beyond that. We need to
19 really look at what's successful and why
20 is it a success, how do we get to that
21 point, how far away are we.

22 And so there's many questions
23 that I think that we can have answered
24 from this conversation. I think it
25 should be an ongoing conversation,

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2 Mr. Chairman, and that we should continue
3 to look around and see who is doing what
4 and what is working. Our young people
5 have so much at stake. Their parents,
6 our community, their lives are really on
7 the line. So we really can't afford to
8 mess this up.

9 And so there's a lot of
10 improvement I think that we can make and
11 we can learn a whole lot. I think one of
12 the things that really struck me from
13 your conversation is the input of
14 teachers and parents and of the education
15 community in general and how greatly
16 involved and how valued education is in
17 Hong Kong. And so -- and culturally, as
18 you said. It's maybe a measure of
19 cultural pride that folks are so engaged
20 in the educational opportunities and take
21 advantage, and we need to figure out how
22 do we make that shift, how do we get
23 there. We once were there. We once were
24 a leader in terms of providing a quality
25 education to all of our young people in

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2 this country, and how do we get back
3 there I think is a big question we have
4 to answer.

5 I have to step out to another
6 meeting that was pre-arranged, but I will
7 be back and look forward to hearing and
8 listening in upstairs. So thank you for
9 having me.

10 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
11 much.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I
13 would like to thank you for your
14 important presentation about not only
15 the -- especially the focus on a holistic
16 approach, that our teachers not only stay
17 engaged and upgraded on the latest in
18 their fields, but certainly that the
19 community as well as the students need to
20 be engaged.

21 Thank you for the excellent
22 presentation.

23 COUNCILMAN OH: Dr. Cheng,
24 thank you very much. I would have many
25 questions for you, but we're going to

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2 have to do that at another time.

3 Unfortunately, our technology does not
4 allow us to take good advantage of your
5 experience and expertise. But I really
6 appreciate your interrupting your
7 schedule. I'm sure we're 13 hours or so
8 different, and thank you for your
9 expertise and being a part of our effort.

10 DR. CHENG: Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: All right. If
12 we could call the next witness.

13 THE CLERK: Anu Partanen.

14 COUNCILMAN OH: Would you
15 please state your name for the record and
16 proceed with your testimony. Thank you
17 very much.

18 MS. PARTANEN: For sure. My
19 name is Anu Partanen and I want to thank
20 you for inviting me to speak here today.
21 I am a journalist originally from
22 Finland, but I've lived in Brooklyn now
23 for the past four years. Education is
24 one of the areas I cover in my work as a
25 journalist, and the testimony I am about

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2 to give you is based on my interviews
3 with Finnish teachers, teacher educators,
4 officials and other education experts, as
5 well as my personal experience of
6 attending Finnish schools from
7 kindergarten to a Master's Degree in the
8 university and observing the life in
9 Finnish schools during my work as a
10 journalist.

11 The reason I am here and the
12 reason why Finland is so often mentioned
13 today as a great example for all school
14 systems looking to improve their
15 performance is the PISA study that has
16 been mentioned here today.

17 PISA, as we were talking about,
18 is a survey conducted by the OECD every
19 three years and it tests 15-year-olds in
20 dozens of countries in reading, math, and
21 science. Finland has become somewhat
22 famous because it has been very
23 successful in PISA ever since the survey
24 started in the 2000's.

25 Finland's success in PISA has

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2 been remarkable for three reasons. First
3 of all, it has been very consistent over
4 the years. Finland has appeared near or
5 at the top in all three competencies ever
6 since the year 2000. It has been very
7 consistent across schools. No other
8 country has so little variation in
9 outcomes between schools as Finland does.

10 It has been also very
11 consistent inside the schools. The gap
12 within schools between the top and bottom
13 achieving students in Finland is very
14 modest. So what Finland really has
15 shown, or at least based on the survey
16 seems to have shown, is that it is
17 possible to teach all the students well
18 and get excellent results regardless of
19 students' family backgrounds, where they
20 live or which school they go to.

21 Today my testimony, I'd like to
22 talk of the main aspects of the Finnish
23 system that we Finns ourselves believe
24 are the reasons why the system has been
25 so successful.

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2 First of all, briefly,
3 Finland's education system, children go
4 to school when they're 7 years old. So
5 relatively old by international
6 standards. They have a voluntary
7 kindergarten when they're 6 years old,
8 and almost all children, 98 percent,
9 participate in this. So in reality, most
10 children start school at 6 years old,
11 although they are not required to learn
12 how to read, for example, until the first
13 grade when they are 7 years old. So,
14 again, fairly old by international
15 standards.

16 The compulsory education goes
17 from years one to nine. So after ninth
18 grade, Finnish students can finish their
19 education, should they want to, but most
20 students continue their studies, and
21 there are two tracks after that. One is
22 a voluntary academic high school, which
23 is roughly the equivalent of American
24 high school, and the second track is
25 vocational high school, which has more

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2 emphasis on learning a vocation, but also
3 some academic classes. And both of these
4 schools prepare students to go to
5 university or further studies should they
6 want to. The main idea of Finland's
7 education system is that the path is
8 never blocked. Whichever choices you
9 make along the way, you can always
10 continue different ways should you decide
11 to do different things later.

12 The main driver of Finland's
13 education policy has been equity, and
14 that is one of the reasons why Finland is
15 very different from many other school
16 reforming countries. Finland started to
17 reform its education system in the 1970s,
18 and at the time, there was a long debate
19 on what we should do. Should we focus on
20 educating the gifted, should we focus on
21 educating everyone. And in the end,
22 Finland decided that in a small nation,
23 everybody should be educated since all we
24 have is our minds. Finland has no
25 significant natural resources or any of

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2 the sort.

3 So at the time, Finland was a
4 fairly unequal country. Today many
5 countries tend to -- or people from other
6 countries tend to look at Finland and
7 say, Well, it's a wealthy, very equal
8 country, we have nothing to learn from
9 them. But when Finland started to reform
10 its education system, there were
11 significant income inequalities in
12 Finland, and Finland was a poor
13 agricultural country at the time.

14 Finland decided to create
15 unified school system before there were
16 two different tracks that students were
17 divided into, and only one track would
18 take them all the way to university. But
19 this was changed completely. Now Finland
20 has only one unified school system that
21 all students attend to. There are no
22 gifted classes. There are no different
23 tracks. And Finland is a big believer in
24 integration, so all students in general
25 go to same schools.

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2 What Finland really has shown
3 seems to be that it is possible to create
4 excellence through equity. And this is a
5 big point, because in many countries
6 school reform is done with the excellence
7 in mind. Finland started from the point
8 that everybody should have similar good
9 quality education, and now it seems that
10 that really has produced great results.

11 To come to that equity, Finland
12 based its school system on public
13 education. There are no private schools
14 in Finland. There are few independent
15 schools, but all are funded by the
16 government. There is no tuition. All
17 education is free for all students,
18 starting from kindergarten all the way to
19 university.

20 Finland's education system is
21 based on corporation. There is no
22 ideology of competition between students
23 or between schools. There are no
24 standardized tests in Finland at all, and
25 there is no -- there are no lists of best

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2 teachers or best schools.

3 I'd like to mention a few
4 cornerstones of Finland's education
5 policy and how Finland has managed to
6 arrive at this point. The first one is
7 teacher education, which already here a
8 previous speaker was talking about. In
9 the 1970s when Finland started school
10 reform, it made a Master's degree in
11 education a requirement for all teachers.
12 So at the moment in Finland, you cannot
13 teach at any level from kindergarten to
14 high school without a Master's degree,
15 and you have to have studied specifically
16 in education for primary school teachers.
17 For middle school and high school
18 teachers, they study primarily the
19 subject they are going to study, but they
20 have to have at least a year's worth of
21 education studies at the university
22 level.

23 Of course, to require teachers
24 to do this in Finland, the university of
25 education is free. So teachers do not

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2 graduate with huge student loans, which,
3 of course, makes a big difference on how
4 prospective -- possible teachers view
5 their options and how much will they make
6 in the end and if it's worthwhile to get
7 this education.

8 The consequences of this policy
9 have reached in many directions. First
10 of all, to require this teacher
11 education, it has given all children
12 access to high quality instruction, which
13 serves the equity. It has made teaching
14 a popular and respected profession,
15 because many smart young people who want
16 an academic profession have started to
17 see teaching as a respectable profession,
18 where you are a professional just like a
19 lawyer or doctor.

20 It has also allowed the central
21 government to cut back on monitoring the
22 schools, and here we come back to no
23 standardized testing. Because Finland
24 has unified the teacher education system,
25 then later it doesn't have to monitor

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2 teachers all the time. Finns trust their
3 teachers to know how to do their jobs,
4 which, on the other hand, saves money at
5 the other end. From Finnish perspective,
6 you can either put the money up in front
7 and invest in educating your teachers or
8 you can do it later monitoring them and
9 trying to see if they're doing their work
10 properly. In Finland, we invest in the
11 beginning, and so far, it seems to have
12 worked out well.

13 Second cornerstone is funding.
14 The United States is one of the very few
15 western countries where school funding is
16 localized and where schools in wealthy
17 areas sometimes get more money through
18 property taxes than schools in poor
19 areas. In Finland, the school funding is
20 decided between the government and the
21 municipalities that function as school
22 districts. Overall, the funding idea is
23 that more money goes to schools that have
24 more immigrant students, more special
25 need students, more poverty in those

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2 areas.

3 Recently, Finnish government
4 has suggested or they are looking into
5 the possibility of providing more funding
6 to areas where the grown adult population
7 of that area is less educated, not
8 directly necessarily the parents but as a
9 whole of that area. So all Finnish -- in
10 service of equity, all Finnish schools
11 have the same funding and the schools
12 that face more challenges have more
13 resources.

14 Another aspect that one might
15 not immediately think of belonging in
16 schools is daycare. In Finland, even
17 though the school starts when children
18 are 7 years old, all children have a
19 right to a spot in one of the universal
20 publicly funded daycare centers. They
21 are not preschools like in America often
22 and they do not really teach reading or
23 math or numbers. Finns are big believers
24 in extended childhood, so these daycare
25 centers are basically places where they

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2 play outdoors every day, they have warm
3 lunch, they take naps. But here again,
4 the staff is required to have at least a
5 Bachelor's degree in education, social
6 work or nursing. So the Finnish daycare
7 centers are very high quality, and I find
8 that in America, there seems to be a bit
9 of a jungle out there and parents do not
10 necessarily trust the daycare centers.
11 In Finland, because that too is certified
12 and unified, parents have great faith
13 that these daycare centers take good care
14 of their children. And Finns believe
15 that the equity part of it starts already
16 from this at young age. The children
17 have access to the staff that is
18 educated. They have access to
19 healthcare. If they have learning
20 problems, usually they are already
21 noticed at the daycare centers even if
22 they are not schools per se, so they can
23 be held even before school starts.

24 Finns also believe that even
25 though you need to have high expectations

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2 for all students and the teachers need to
3 be rigorously trained, you also need to
4 help students succeed, which means that
5 there is a fairly rigorous support system
6 around the schools working inside the
7 schools, around the schools.

8 All students have access to hot
9 free lunch. It is not means tested and
10 it is for everyone. All students have
11 access to public healthcare and school
12 nurse. Schools have student welfare
13 teams which consist usually of a
14 principal, teacher, nurse, and a social
15 worker. So if a student has problems,
16 these teams get together at the school
17 and discuss with parents and the child
18 how to go about it.

19 There is also a tutoring system
20 put in place inside the schools. So all
21 students have access to a fairly flexible
22 system of tutoring. If you're away for a
23 couple of weeks on vacation or sick, you
24 come back, you can get few extra hours of
25 help to catch up. If you have trouble in

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2 certain subjects, you might be studying
3 in a smaller group for a little while and
4 then come back to your home classroom
5 once that is done. If you have more
6 permanent troubles, some students must
7 study some subjects completely in a
8 separate group with a special education
9 teacher and then come back for others.
10 So this goes to the idea of integration.
11 Everybody is in the schools, but inside
12 the schools, they try to help these
13 different learners to learn in different
14 ways.

15 Parents can choose the school
16 in Finland, but all efforts are made that
17 all schools are just as good. So the
18 vast majority of children in Finland go
19 to the school that is closest to their
20 home.

21 To close, I believe that
22 Finland has shown that it is possible to
23 create a high-quality public education
24 system that serves all students, both
25 poor and wealthy, and that can take care

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2 of talented and challenged students
3 equally well. But the one thing that
4 Finns believe is crucial is really the
5 teacher education and making sure that
6 all teachers have the skills they need
7 when they enter the schools, so then you
8 don't have to spend so much time worrying
9 later if the teachers are doing their
10 job.

11 Thank you.

12 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
13 much for your testimony.

14 I would ask if there's any
15 questions from my Co-Chair.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: This
17 is fascinating testimony. I can't
18 imagine that it -- it just sounds so
19 smooth and so uncomplicated, although
20 obviously nothing is as simple as it
21 seems. But it's fascinating, and
22 certainly we appreciate your testimony
23 and certainly would like to hear more.
24 There's a lot we can review there.

25 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very

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2 much.

3 I will just kind of go through
4 a couple points. I have been aware that,
5 for example, in Finland, if a child from
6 another country comes, they don't
7 separate them out to an ESL, for example.
8 We do. We put them in another classroom
9 to learn with other language-challenged
10 students, but basically they will have in
11 the same classroom that child and add a
12 teacher into the classroom. I mean, this
13 starts to be very expensive obviously,
14 but as you pointed out, the idea is
15 high-quality teaching on an equity basis
16 for everyone and that you put the
17 teachers in the classroom and you have
18 someone with a disability, for example,
19 or a learning disability, they're still
20 in the same classroom, add teacher for
21 that. And though there is a higher cost
22 of education, the end result is a more
23 productive person and a much robust
24 education system that produces innovative
25 and creative persons that has really

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2 helped Finland to become a strong
3 economic country as well.

4 MS. PARTANEN: For sure. If
5 you look at the statistics, surprisingly
6 enough, Finnish education system is
7 actually not that expensive. It is less
8 expensive than America's, and I think
9 Finns think that it's just a question of
10 where you put your money. For example,
11 the standardized testing system is quite
12 expensive in America. Finns spend no
13 money on that. Finns have cut back a lot
14 of the educational bureaucracy. The City
15 Council -- the municipalities are the
16 school districts, and there are no
17 intermediate levels between the
18 government and those, so there's much
19 less administration.

20 You are right in that I think
21 the immigrant students usually might have
22 first a language class where they learn
23 the beginning and then they are in
24 classrooms with everyone else. There are
25 teachers aides in Finland who are perhaps

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2 less educated and maybe cost less than
3 teachers who work in the classroom with
4 the teachers. So that's often one of the
5 solutions if you have students who need
6 special help in the classroom. So you
7 have the main teacher who is the educated
8 principal and then you have teachers
9 aides who are sort of helping with the
10 homework and helping next to them, but
11 don't maybe cost as much as a fully
12 educated teacher.

13 COUNCILMAN OH: I'd like to
14 point out that although Professor and
15 Dr. Cheng did not say so, but in his
16 written statement, he had certainly
17 stated that you cannot simply pick up an
18 education system, transport it to another
19 country. So much of it depends on the
20 country. Even so, the whole experience
21 of Hong Kong and going through this very
22 extensive process of getting everyone on
23 board to reform education in many senses
24 seems to have a lot in common with
25 Finland. I oftentimes compare South

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2 Korea's education to Finland's because
3 they're both top-ranked education
4 systems, although almost opposite, to
5 some extent, in their ideology. You said
6 extended childhood, which I'm a big
7 believer in, let the child be a child,
8 but certainly in Korea they start them
9 very early in a very rigorous, regimented
10 educational process that seems very heavy
11 to me, when I talk to folks in Korea and
12 their 3-year-olds are going on Saturday
13 to full classes of all sorts and it's --
14 so both of them seem to turn out well,
15 although I know that Korea is trying to
16 reform that regimented nature of its
17 education system.

18 Do you have any thoughts on
19 that?

20 MS. PARTANEN: Yeah. I guess
21 you can think that it's hopeful that many
22 different paths can lead to good results,
23 but they do have some things in common,
24 like all education systems that do well
25 in the PISA, they do all put emphasis on

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2 teacher education. They certainly all
3 put emphasis on funding and equal
4 funding. They all clearly put great
5 emphasis and respect for education and
6 teachers.

7 The question of cramming, I
8 guess from Finnish point of view, if you
9 can be more effective and get more done
10 and be effective while you're in school,
11 then you don't have to spend your nights
12 or weekends studying. So Finns tend to
13 see it that way, that it's better to get
14 more done faster than spend long hours at
15 it.

16 COUNCILMAN OH: What do you see
17 about education, for example, in a city
18 like Philadelphia, our challenges, or
19 perhaps in New York, that strike you that
20 you have some type of comment about?

21 MS. PARTANEN: That's a good
22 question. I think in Finland the way we
23 look at it -- because often in America,
24 of course, and I understand --
25 immigration can cause a great challenge,

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2 and it seems that there's not much to
3 compare with Finland, but I think the
4 good side of the Finnish system is that
5 the idea is to help each individual
6 student as individuals. And so if you
7 come from a poor background or your
8 parents are not educated, you get more
9 help to get along, but just as well if
10 you come from an immigrant background.
11 So a lot of those policies are really
12 designed to battle poverty. And even
13 though in the beginning -- Finland has
14 become much more diverse in the past 10,
15 20 years, but in the beginning when it
16 was started, Finland obviously wasn't a
17 very diverse country, but there was a lot
18 of poverty which have to be battled.

19 So to me, it seems that a lot
20 of the things that Finland does could
21 easily work in other places too, even
22 though some of the conditions are
23 different, because what they really were
24 aimed at doing was to battle the
25 differences of inequality and, if not

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2 ethnic diversity, then sort of diversity
3 in terms of family backgrounds and so on.
4 And I do think that funding is the thing
5 that probably any city could work at with
6 that.

7 COUNCILMAN OH: I will
8 conclude, and thank you so much for your
9 testimony, that, yes, among the things
10 that I did see of all the successful
11 reformed education systems was that all
12 the people got behind the system that
13 they finally decided was the system of
14 the community, and standing behind it so
15 solidly, they -- and, yes, teacher
16 ability, whether it's autonomists or run
17 by the ministry, but the society was a
18 hundred percent behind the effort and
19 thought it was immensely important.

20 So thank you very much for your
21 testimony.

22 MS. PARTANEN: Thank you.
23 Actually, one thing that I came to think
24 of was also that a lot of the Finnish
25 teaching methods -- Finns believe in

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2 cooperative learning and so on -- have
3 come from the United States. So Finns
4 studied very much the research done in
5 the United States universities. So in a
6 way, the U.S. actually has taught Finland
7 a lot, and the United States has a lot of
8 those policies coming from the U.S. that
9 Finns have taken to use. So for that
10 reason too, I could see Americans could
11 use their own studies and knowledge to
12 improve the system.

13 And one thing that Finns
14 definitely -- or what I see when I come
15 here and I look at how worried American
16 parents are of education, whether they're
17 wealthy or not, they are very stressed
18 out over the schools and can they get
19 into the best private school or can they
20 do this and can they do that. Finns are
21 very relaxed about education. So one
22 thing that I will concede that Americans
23 seem to think that, well, if you're
24 wealthy enough and you can afford a
25 private education, then it's not really

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2 in your interest to work with the public
3 education system, but from the Finnish
4 perspective, it certainly is because it
5 does give you a certain sense of peace
6 and you don't have to worry about whether
7 your child is getting equal education to
8 someone else, since everybody is entitled
9 to the same education. That seems to
10 work well.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: I think what
12 we've seen in Philadelphia is that a
13 finger that is doing well cannot separate
14 itself from a hand that is doing poorly.
15 As much as we try to live a separate
16 life, they are going to suffer if we
17 don't get this education thing fixed.

18 Thank you so very much.

19 MS. PARTANEN: Thank you so
20 much for having me.

21 COUNCILMAN OH: Could you call
22 the next witness.

23 THE CLERK: I would like to
24 invite our second panel, Sharon Tagore,
25 science teacher and Fulbright Scholar

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2 from the UK; Seth Andrew, Superintendent
3 of Democracy Prep Public Schools in
4 Harlem, New York; John Swoyer, CEO of
5 MaST Charter School in Philadelphia, PA;
6 Dr. Eke, Provost and Vice President of
7 Academic Affairs at Lincoln University;
8 Bernadine Ahonkhai, member of Mayor's
9 Commission on African and Caribbean
10 Immigrant Affairs.

11 (Witnesses approached witness
12 table.)

13 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
14 much, all of you, for being here. I will
15 note that there are many of you and only
16 two microphones. So we will pass the
17 microphone, let us say, from your right
18 to your left. So we will not be going in
19 order of the persons listed, but why
20 don't we start actually with John and
21 just go straight across the panel.

22 So we are going seven minutes
23 per individual. So please try to keep it
24 to that level, and then we will have
25 plenty of time for question and answers.

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2 Thank you very much. Would you
3 please, each of you, state your name,
4 because you are being recorded and, by
5 the way, you are being broadcast
6 throughout our City system and
7 videotaped. So we are going to
8 distribute the transcript.

9 Thank you very much.

10 MR. SWOYER: John Swoyer.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: And your
12 testimony. I'm sorry.

13 MR. SWOYER: Good morning,
14 Chairman Oh, Councilwoman Blackwell,
15 members of the Committee on Global
16 Opportunities and Creative/Innovative
17 Economy, City Council members, and
18 visitors. My name is John Swoyer and I
19 am the CEO at MaST (Math, Science, and
20 Technology, Community Charter School).

21 COUNCILMAN OH: Let me just add
22 Education Committee. It's a joint
23 hearing, so we have the Education
24 Committee as well.

25 MR. SWOYER: MaST is located in

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2 Northeast Philadelphia and is one of the
3 longest running charter schools in the
4 City of Philadelphia.

5 MaST has come a long way from a
6 one-building steel storage facility into
7 a connected, three-building K-to-12
8 environment that fosters innovative and
9 imaginative learning practices. Long
10 before STEM was one of the most popular
11 acronyms in education, MaST's students
12 were immersed in science, technology,
13 engineering, and math, embedded into a
14 K-to-12 pathway. While the education
15 world now turns its attention to STEM,
16 MaST leads the way by evolving its
17 programming from STEM to STREAM
18 initiatives.

19 STEM versus STREAM: Local
20 families and the community at-large know
21 that MaST is an ahead-of-the-curve
22 school, meaning that we look forward to
23 what parents want in education. Our
24 school has recently transitioned into a
25 new initiative known as STREAM. STREAM

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2 education incorporates robotics and arts
3 into the STEM design through the creative
4 use of technology and hands-on learning.

5 In order for the United States
6 and, more specifically, the Philadelphia
7 region to remain relevant and competitive
8 in the 21st century, students must be
9 engaged, which requires rethinking
10 traditional classrooms and the
11 teacher-in-front-of-the-classroom-
12 lecturing approaches to education. MaST
13 is creating learning spaces that are
14 geared towards that engagement and
15 redefining interactive experiences, not
16 just between students and teachers but
17 amongst students themselves. MaST
18 focuses its efforts on academic
19 innovation with practical applications as
20 students look at future career paths and
21 opportunities. MaST will continue to
22 evolve its global education practices to
23 streamline reaching the whole child.
24 MaST's goal is not only college
25 attendance (94 percent of its seniors

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2 went to college last year) but guiding
3 students into careers out of high school.

4 The MaST way of education has
5 reached families in a very positive way
6 and the demand has tripled in two years,
7 from an 1,800 student waiting list to
8 over 5,600 students on our current
9 waiting list today.

10 Some parents want their
11 children at MaST for the same reasons
12 many families chose charter schools in
13 Philadelphia - safe, clean environment
14 for students, parent engagement, and a
15 school family community. Parents also
16 chose MaST for the technology integration
17 and innovative resources such as our
18 website, phone application for
19 communication, and media web page. But
20 the number one reason parents demand a
21 MaST education is the educational
22 opportunity and curriculum options.

23 MaST has embraced the fact that
24 technology is the driving force with
25 students today. Children are growing up

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2 with devices in their hands most of the
3 time. MaST differentiates itself because
4 it understands that not just having an
5 iPad in every hand is the key to
6 technology integration, nor does
7 possession of an iPad mean that the
8 student's education is impacted. It is
9 what MaST does with the iPad and the way
10 we embed it into the entire learning
11 environment that makes the difference.
12 It is not enough to simply designate your
13 school as a STEM or STEAM or STREAM
14 school.

15 Apple TV, along with iPads, has
16 changed our learning environment and cut
17 our costs by one-third compared to full
18 Smart Board integration and offers a much
19 more diverse learning environment.

20 For our STREAM concept,
21 hands-on learning is such key as modeling
22 and design of real projects. For
23 example, our engineering classes worked
24 in groups to help design building a
25 futuristic engineering center, a space

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2 MaST hopes to complete by the start of
3 the school year for 2015. The students
4 develop communication and team-building
5 skills using models to develop a concept,
6 use math to develop the structure, the
7 weight and the size, and utilize
8 engineering guidelines to build the
9 structure. Once the model has been
10 built, students calculate using physics,
11 statistics, measurements, even define a
12 budget. Students then design the space
13 virtually using Google Sketch-up, a free
14 application, and AutoDesk Inventor, a 3D
15 program that allows visualization of a
16 space with objects. This pathway also
17 instructs students on the building of a
18 business and marketing plan to
19 conceptualize design and physically
20 produce a model with a 3D printer. After
21 an object is produced, the physical model
22 allows a student to inspect and calculate
23 how the product would fit into a box for
24 shipping. Recently students designed all
25 types of chairs and had to actually

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2 calculate dimension, shape, and
3 distinguish whether the shipping costs
4 would prohibit them from making a profit,
5 all the real-world information and
6 experience that could only help with
7 critical thinking. MaST has attached to
8 this testimony a sample of the front of
9 our proposed engineering center created
10 by our students, which you would see on
11 Page 6.

12 To foster visual learning and
13 interactive education, particularly for
14 younger grades, MaST embedded in our
15 Media Center a floor projection screen.
16 The projection screen allows for the
17 broadcast of a book onto the library
18 floor to allow students to actually see
19 the pages turn compared to a physical
20 book that's typically shielded when read
21 by a librarian in a traditional setting.
22 The floor projection design is
23 inexpensive, done with paint and plastic
24 that magnifies the projection, very
25 little cost. But such a simple approach

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2 allows a lesson of the solar system to
3 come to life via an iPad app where a
4 student pinches the iPad screen to zoom
5 in or out of the planet's landscape, like
6 a virtual globe. If you notice the
7 picture on Page 7, you would see the
8 students sitting around the book, and
9 that's actually our Media Center.

10 MaST offers an HD studio where
11 students run and produce video content
12 and gives them a real-world experience
13 similar to what they would see at Comcast
14 or NBC10. Pictured below is a studio
15 that we designed at a fraction of the
16 cost, minus the construction. We did so
17 by using our students to actually do a
18 lot of the work.

19 MaST supports a connection to
20 the local job market and local
21 universities with similar programs, which
22 means our students are more likely to
23 stay in the local community for jobs. At
24 least 85 to 90 percent of the MaST
25 graduates attend local colleges and

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2 universities, with seven currently at the
3 University of Pennsylvania. Our
4 graduates return to speak on career days
5 about their successes in higher
6 education, and we track their success.

7 Our Fitness Center of the
8 Future uses interactive Wii boards to
9 transform a local space into an
10 interactive fitness space that focuses on
11 health and wellness in an imaginative
12 way.

13 Page 9 we listed what works in
14 education in terms of the MaST
15 perspective. Understanding that every
16 child learns in new ways; incorporating
17 concepts and realities that will help
18 students eventually find careers where
19 they can get jobs and earn a living;
20 improving the student growth by relating
21 to the way they learn today. STREAM is
22 about hands-on learning and development
23 through project-based learning;
24 technology is a key element in the future
25 of learning. It needs be embraced, given

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2 a plan, and implemented with the idea
3 that students can learn more efficiently;
4 job growth in America needs to start with
5 our educational institution. Proper
6 financial allocations need to be given
7 and managed to well-performing schools
8 and modeled after in Philadelphia; better
9 educational institutions take chances.
10 Test scores should only be a piece of the
11 puzzle; we need to encourage critical
12 thinking and imagination; we need to help
13 students by setting a path, not giving
14 the answers; global education needs to be
15 emphasized everywhere in America because
16 there are places that do it better and
17 more efficiently. It needs to start and
18 end with kids and opportunities. They
19 are the key to the future.

20 Our charter school is one of
21 the most sought-after options in the
22 educational realm for the City of
23 Philadelphia. Yet we have not been
24 permitted to expand because of the School
25 District of Philadelphia's policy in

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2 reaction to their own fiscal situation
3 despite our proven academic excellence
4 and fiscal responsibility. Such a
5 limitation is a detriment of not only the
6 families desperate for a chance out of a
7 historically failing district, but
8 hamstrings the enhancement of our region.
9 Everyone agrees that a well-educated and
10 well-trained workforce provides economic
11 opportunity and stability. Our city
12 cannot compete in the global marketplace
13 if it is cannot supply the requisite
14 workforce.

15 On behalf of our Board at MaST,
16 teachers, staff, parents and students, I
17 thank you for allowing me to appear here
18 today.

19 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
20 much. I would interrupt, unless the
21 Chairwoman has a question, just because I
22 think it has to be emphasized, just as
23 with Finland, when the issue of Finland's
24 educational success is brought up,
25 oftentimes people say you can't duplicate

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2 Finland, they're rich, they're all smart.
3 And the issue comes up with MaST Charter
4 School, and it has nothing to do with
5 public or charter. It is just -- people
6 say, Well, they have so much money. They
7 have all this money. That's how they put
8 the television station, the 3D printer,
9 the iPads and all that, the Prometheus
10 boards and everything else into this
11 technology-based education. Would you
12 address that issue.

13 MR. SWOYER: Sure. I think the
14 false reality is is that we have a big
15 fundraiser behind us, which we don't.
16 Over the last 10 to 12 years, the Board
17 has planned out futuristic spaces to be
18 built into the programming for that
19 budget and used the bond market as a
20 cheap way to borrow money and build for
21 the future.

22 I think that one of the major
23 challenges that we face is that the City
24 of Philadelphia has announced that they
25 want to replicate high-performing schools

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2 over the next five years. We are, as an
3 institution, out of space and need to
4 plan 18 to 24 months to build. We're
5 fiscally in the condition to be able to
6 build. We need the City to allow us to
7 know whether or not in three years, not
8 necessarily now with the economic status,
9 whether or not we would be able to do the
10 same thing, go out to the bond market and
11 build for the future.

12 COUNCILMAN OH: Can you put a
13 school similar with all those bells and
14 whistles, can you put one in North
15 Philadelphia or Southwest Philadelphia?

16 MR. SWOYER: Sure. We've shown
17 interest in expanding our model within
18 the City to other areas. Yes, we can.

19 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
20 much.

21 Would you identify yourself and
22 give your testimony for the record,
23 please.

24 MS. TAGORE: Good afternoon.

25 My name is Sharon Tagore and I am a

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2 Fulbright exchange from Scotland and in
3 Glasgow City and I have been in New
4 Jersey in Middletown District for the
5 year.

6 My testimony comes from the
7 point of view of a teacher, and I'm
8 actively teaching and a happy teacher for
9 the past seven years.

10 The school system in the United
11 Kingdom and in Scotland is very different
12 to over here. We have a tiered structure
13 of management where we have the head
14 teacher or head master, the deputy head
15 teachers, and then below that we have the
16 head of faculty or head of departments,
17 and then below that we have the actual
18 classroom teachers.

19 The one key difference, which I
20 believe is significant, is every teacher
21 in the building, with the exception of
22 the head teacher, has a teaching lord.
23 Why this makes a difference is because
24 every teacher is in constant contact with
25 children. They understand the value of

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2 teaching and learning, and it's
3 constantly put into practice. Therefore,
4 even the administrators have to, for want
5 of a better phrase, up their game. They
6 have to really understand what it means
7 to interact with children in a classroom,
8 what teachers go through in terms of
9 management, paperwork. And that is
10 really the focus of Scottish education.

11 Recently we have gone through a
12 major overhaul in our system called the
13 Curriculum for Excellence, and we have
14 four capacities, we call them, for which
15 we are striving to achieve. These are to
16 foster confident individuals; responsible
17 citizens; effective contributors; and
18 above all, successful learners. Our
19 school system believes that we can
20 achieve these things through three basic
21 principles, and these are leadership, not
22 only from the top down, as is our
23 structure, but we believe that by
24 teachers displaying leadership within the
25 classroom, by encouraging our students to

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2 become leaders of their own learning, by
3 allowing them to take more
4 responsibility, it creates this cohesive
5 environment where learning isn't just for
6 learning's sake. It's for pleasure.
7 It's for understanding the world around
8 you.

9 We also believe in a consistent
10 approach throughout the whole school.
11 From teaching in an American school
12 system for a year, I have seen little
13 evidence of that. What is celebrated in
14 America is individuality, but if you're
15 running a school, that needs to be
16 reflected in the way you teach and how
17 you teach, not necessarily the structure
18 of every single classroom. There needs
19 to be consistency so that when a
20 14-year-old child goes from one room to
21 the next, the standards are the same, and
22 I would suggest that would be the same in
23 grading within a department and across
24 departments to a certain extent.

25 But the main focus, apart from

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2 leadership and consistency, is teaching
3 and learning. The school that I come
4 from is a very high-achieving school.
5 We're in fact rated as the best state
6 school in Scotland, and this comes from
7 strong leadership team where teaching and
8 learning is a focus for all educators
9 within the building. Every month we have
10 what we would call whole school collegial
11 activities whereby all the staff get
12 together and workshops, presentations,
13 active strategies are discussed that are
14 in current research and we look at how to
15 implement them to make the learning
16 experience better for our students. The
17 philosophy for this is that with
18 providing our students with a better
19 teaching and learning environment, they
20 will thrive, and we have seen for the
21 past five years, there's been a
22 significant increase in not only the
23 quantity of A to Z level passes at our
24 highest level for gaining entry to
25 university, but also the quality of these

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2 passes has increased significantly also.

3 From the leadership structure,
4 we track our children and we hold them
5 accountable for how they are progressing
6 in their academic subjects. An example
7 of this would be if a child is doing very
8 well in biology but they are failing to
9 do very well in English, then we would
10 hold meetings with the teachers to
11 perhaps understand why that's the case,
12 because the theory is if they can
13 understand the language-based science,
14 they should be doing well in the
15 language. So we focus on the teaching
16 and learning side of things and try to
17 promote active learning strategies, but
18 not only that, how we can apply what we
19 do in the classroom to the outside world.
20 So we certainly go with the STEM
21 philosophy, that learning and teaching
22 has a purpose. It's not just to pass
23 exams.

24 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
25 much.

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2 DR. EKE: Good afternoon.

3 COUNCILMAN OH: Good afternoon.

4 DR. EKE: First, we should
5 thank Councilwoman Blackwell and
6 Councilman Oh for inviting me to join you
7 this afternoon, and, of course, we should
8 thank the City Council as a whole. This
9 hearing is a bit unique. It is an
10 expression of an interest --

11 COURT STENOGRAPHER: Can you
12 state your name.

13 DR. EKE: Kenoye Eke. I'm the
14 Provost and Vice President for Academic
15 Affairs at the Lincoln University in
16 Pennsylvania.

17 I thank the City Council,
18 because this is unique. Oftentimes we
19 don't concede or can learn from somewhere
20 else from others. I think this is a
21 clear demonstration about willingness to
22 open up and learn from others.

23 I should add that the views
24 expressed here are mine, not my
25 university's.

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2 Anyway, my testimony today
3 comes from a perspective shared by -- or
4 excuse me; shared by four factors: my
5 immigrant roots, as you can hear from my
6 southern accent; experience as a higher
7 education administrator; husband to a
8 wife who is a school teacher; and a
9 parent. An immigrant from Nigeria, I
10 received my basic and secondary education
11 in an educational system different from
12 the American system of public education.
13 I arrived in college with a preparation
14 strong enough to successfully navigate
15 college, graduating at the top of my
16 class in three years while working part
17 time to support myself. At no point did
18 I feel particularly gifted. I just had a
19 strong motivation to do well, so as to
20 help support my family back home some
21 day. My story in this regard is not
22 different from those of thousands of
23 immigrants who arrived on these shores to
24 pursue higher education.

25 As a university administrator,

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2 I have served at universities spanning
3 from Florida to California, with stops in
4 Kentucky, Louisiana and, of course, a
5 district where I had the good fortune of
6 serving as the Chief Academic Officer at
7 two institutions that receive and polish
8 literally diamonds in the rough that the
9 School District of Philadelphia produces,
10 Cheyney University and my current
11 university, the Lincoln University.

12 These institutions produce teachers who
13 serve in school districts across this
14 region, a reality which contributes to
15 the views you'll hear me express today.

16 As a husband to an elementary
17 school teacher who has taught in school
18 districts in several states, including a
19 one-year stint with a child school here
20 in Philadelphia, I've heard about the
21 challenges school teachers face from her
22 and her school teacher friends for 24
23 years.

24 And, finally, as a parent of
25 two boys who graduated from high school

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2 in this urban School District, the
3 region, having the customer of public
4 higher education here and familiar with
5 the market.

6 Having shared what shaped the
7 set of lenses with which I view the
8 subject of this hearing, I will say that
9 I do not represent an educational system,
10 and I say this all cannot share in a
11 particular initiative that is working in
12 the educational system that I'm part of.
13 What I can share with you in broad
14 strokes are methods on best practices. I
15 put this in the context of UNESCO's
16 Education for All by 2015 initiative, and
17 the efforts are to achieve many
18 development goals.

19 As someone who currently
20 reviews the EFA, Education for All,
21 global monitoring reports for signs of
22 progress, because of my interest in other
23 countries as well, I know that its recent
24 reports have shown that it's still
25 education for some. Since global and

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2 national leader qualities persist,
3 inequity that has been -- has been the
4 buzz word this afternoon.

5 I come to learn the global
6 divide between the world's richest and
7 the poorest nations persist, but more
8 importantly for this particular hearing
9 is that a world gap within countries
10 between children from the richest
11 households and the poorest matter and
12 telling that equality divide continues,
13 with many leaving K-to-12 lacking basic
14 literacy and numerous skills, let alone
15 having the global competencies that it
16 will need to succeed in college and in
17 new economy.

18 I'll focus on two things in my
19 suggestions for consideration, issue of
20 governance and teacher quality and
21 experience. One thing that is clear from
22 all the recent reports is that governance
23 matters. Bad governance is seen in
24 overcrowded, underfinanced schools,
25 absent teachers, unaccountable to

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2 families, high levels of inequality, and
3 low levels of learning. Good governance
4 aims for transparency, accountability,
5 equal opportunity for all citizens, and
6 efforts to meet everyone's needs.

7 The current best practice in
8 the issue of governance, at least of
9 governance reform agenda, is of course
10 the centralized decisions to a lower
11 government. Fortunately here in the case
12 of the U.S., city councils like yours and
13 other cities do have a major role to
14 play. So that's all decentralized.

15 What certainly we need to focus
16 on is how to devolve authority and the
17 share-making to schools and parents, some
18 that you see in the Finnish model that
19 was discussed earlier by the panelist.
20 Of course, there's parent choice and
21 competition. Yes, that's an aspect of
22 reform that has been very popular in the
23 U.S., but learning the establishment of
24 schools like MaST, for instance, charter
25 schools. And, finally, flexible

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2 recruitment and financial incentives for
3 teachers. These are the very basic
4 elements of reform agendas as it relates
5 to governance.

6 I do want to say, though, from
7 experiences elsewhere what the evidence
8 tells us and the lessons to be learned is
9 that financial decisions comes with
10 threats to equity. Yes, of course, you
11 see -- what we know here in the U.S., of
12 course, is that school districts in
13 affluent communities of course do better,
14 whereas those from disadvantaged with
15 (unintelligible), guess what, spend less.

16 Yes, our reports to OECD looks
17 good. On the average, we're up there,
18 way up there in terms of funding, but we
19 know that there are these inequalities
20 within, and that's what I think this
21 School District is grappling with.

22 Devolution to schools -- and by
23 the way, one lesson that learned in
24 decentralization is that governments can
25 retain a strong role in leveling the

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2 playing field. So the City Council, for
3 instance, could look at ways to level the
4 playing field within the School District
5 but between schools, because, yes, it's
6 clear that those who come from
7 disadvantaged backgrounds oftentimes come
8 way behind already. Those from affluent
9 communities, parents, have some
10 experiences that help them when they
11 arrive in the classroom, travel as simple
12 as that may sound, getting experiences
13 just by interacting with others. All of
14 those things help to prepare kids for
15 success in school.

16 So those with disadvantaged
17 backgrounds miss that. They lack that
18 already, and it makes sense, of course,
19 for resources to spend -- more resources
20 to be spent there than what generally
21 happens, which is the reverse. You ought
22 to make sure, again, that the inequities
23 that exist certainly are minimized.

24 Devolution of schools -- that
25 could lead to or you can perpetuate

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2 inequalities and burden the local
3 providers. Again, governments like the
4 City Council, the City government can
5 create an enabling environment to
6 strengthen voice and build capacity
7 primarily for those who are
8 disadvantaged. And, of course, the issue
9 of choice and competition, yes, choice is
10 good, competition is good, but it's not
11 the panacea for failure to -- it doesn't
12 address the issue of equity for leaving
13 when those with disadvantaged backgrounds
14 certainly have the opportunity to attend
15 charter schools or alternative
16 institutions.

17 But, there again, the two
18 lessons that I certainly want to bring to
19 your attention is that, yes, the system
20 is broken. The governance role or
21 challenge is to fix it, to fix the system
22 so that those inequities are fully
23 addressed.

24 And, of course, I will say if
25 you don't remember anything else I say,

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2 at least you should avoid the blueprints
3 and don't import in total in a system
4 what are beautiful, wonderful the Finnish
5 model works or the Korean model, which
6 you heard Hong Kong. Certainly you have
7 to contextualize it, make sure that it
8 does fit the culture as much as possible.

9 On the issue of teacher quality
10 and treatment, again, that's where my
11 experience again over the past few years,
12 past 24 years, living with a school
13 teacher comes into play and, of course,
14 as an educator at institutions that
15 produce teachers. Preparation is
16 important. Teacher preparation, no
17 doubt. Yes, the Finnish model, you know
18 that a basic requirement is a Master's.
19 It's my strong sense that without a
20 formal requirement of that in the U.S.,
21 you find that more and more increasingly
22 a lot of teachers are going to get the
23 Master's degree. So even without -- in
24 the absence of a government mandate, the
25 forces of the market have made it

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2 increasingly for those who wish to
3 succeed to obtain that.

4 But the preparation is not just
5 a degree, the kind of preparation
6 teachers get to deal with the challenges
7 that are faced in a urban district. That
8 really is a key, and I return to that
9 briefly in a minute.

10 COUNCILMAN OH: Let me just say
11 that you were pressed for time. If you
12 could wrap up --

13 DR. EKE: I'll wrap up.

14 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
15 much.

16 DR. EKE: My last statement is
17 about conditions of service, and you hear
18 the issue of pay and how important that
19 is. Community treatment is also very
20 important. You saw that is very
21 important in the Finnish model. The
22 community treats teachers well. Here the
23 media can play a role in helping us
24 change that.

25 Work environment, giving

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2 teachers more authority to do things as
3 opposed to how a lot of school districts
4 are organized. So making teachers more
5 autonomous, again, as been said in other
6 models, is important.

7 And I also find that the School
8 District again will be building a strong
9 system if you find ways to use the
10 diversity you currently have in the
11 District, particularly among the
12 students, to expand on the global
13 competencies students need. This
14 District is already very diverse with a
15 lot of immigrants from Eastern Europe or
16 West Africa. Certainly I think those
17 could be made -- those students and of
18 course the teacher core could be used as
19 assets to help prepare or give their
20 other cast mates the global competition
21 they need to succeed.

22 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
23 much. Thank you.

24 Would you please identify
25 yourself. State your name and give your

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2 testimony.

3 MS. AHONKHAI: Thank you. Good
4 afternoon. My name is Bernadine Ahonkhai
5 and I represent the Mayor's Commission on
6 African and Caribbean Immigrant Affairs.
7 Thank you for the opportunity to testify
8 today.

9 The U.S. Census Bureau 2012
10 report indicates that America's racial
11 and ethnic minorities now make up about
12 half of children five years of age. The
13 Census Bureau also projects that by 2017
14 minorities will make up more than half of
15 children and youth under age 18. This
16 historic shift shows that immigrant
17 children are at the forefront of sweeping
18 demographic changes in America.

19 Numerous studies also indicate
20 that gaps in educational achievement by
21 both races and class begins long before
22 secondary level, suggesting that remedies
23 to foster equal educational opportunity
24 for children will have to reach much
25 earlier in a child's life, right from

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2 prenatal period. The educational system
3 seems the most acceptable policy tool for
4 equalizing life chances for our young
5 citizens.

6 Previous waves of education
7 reform have been directed at access to
8 education and curriculum. Recently,
9 there has been a paradigm shift as both
10 national and international policymakers
11 influenced by global economic forces and
12 marketization now turn their focus to
13 teachers and the teaching profession, and
14 we've heard that from many speakers
15 already.

16 Nations and educational systems
17 no longer have the freedom to formulate
18 education policies in isolation.
19 Globalization has introduced economic and
20 market pressures on teaching and learning
21 and also the skills for the 21st century.
22 There's now a heightened assumption that
23 improving students' learning also
24 requires improving teachers' quality.

25 International agencies such as

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2 OECD, the World Bank, the UNESCO, and
3 even right here at home, Bill and Melinda
4 Gates Foundation, have played very
5 critical roles in reframing global
6 messages about teacher identity, teacher
7 quality, and quality and equitable
8 education in the global context. While
9 it is critical that government and school
10 systems retain their core assumptions and
11 processes of what their teachers need to
12 know and be able to do in a global
13 context, teaching, however, is a situated
14 practice. Even though teaching is
15 situated today in a global economic
16 context, teaching is also profoundly
17 shaped by local context, indigenous
18 forces and traditions. Therefore, there
19 should be a good balance between local
20 and global context in developing
21 educational policy.

22 Local education systems like
23 Philadelphia can learn from the
24 experiences of international and national
25 systems that face similar challenges and

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2 have established key policies with proven
3 positive results of high student
4 achievement. And we've heard some of
5 those already. OECD survey of 24
6 countries shed light on issues
7 surrounding teaching and learning in the
8 21st century. This survey is a first
9 ever cross-country analysis of key policy
10 approaches and strategies adopted by
11 these countries aimed at delivery of
12 quality education across all of their
13 schools and enhancing the education
14 achievement of their diverse student
15 population, with proven results of
16 student performance at above OECD average
17 in reading, science, and mathematics.
18 Among the top-performing OECD countries
19 are Australia, Ireland, and New Zealand,
20 and these countries have established
21 education policies that place commitment
22 to early childhood education, teacher
23 quality, skills development, and
24 pedagogical leadership.

25 Australia, Ireland, and New

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2 Zealand have very diverse immigrant
3 population like Philadelphia.
4 Philadelphia County has a strong and
5 vibrant immigrant population, including
6 African and Caribbean immigrants with
7 children in childcare programs and the
8 school system in Philadelphia. These
9 immigrants migrated to the U.S. and
10 Philadelphia in search of better
11 opportunities and life for their children
12 and themselves.

13 We all know that the key to a
14 brighter future for families and our
15 community lies in quality education
16 attainment of our citizens right from
17 birth.

18 Quality of our workforce also
19 depends on quality of education system
20 beginning in the early years. Statistics
21 show that children in Philadelphia County
22 identified at a high risk of school and
23 life failure, partly due to the high
24 level of poverty in the county. Children
25 in general typically develop language

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2 skills around the same time, but by age
3 3, children who are raised in poverty
4 only have about a third of the vocabulary
5 of children raised in professional
6 setting. Early childhood education
7 reaches children at the critical point in
8 brain development and has a long-term
9 sustained economic impact.

10 Research also shows that
11 quality early childhood education,
12 especially for at-risk children,
13 significantly improve children's
14 literacy, language, and math skills. The
15 Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts program
16 administered from the Office of Child
17 Development and Early Learning in
18 Harrisburg provides quality early
19 childhood programs and supports for
20 disadvantaged children at risk of school
21 failure. School districts that receive
22 Pre-K Counts graduates report that these
23 graduates continue to demonstrate
24 appropriate literacy, numeracy, and
25 social skills.

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2 Also, a Penn State University
3 study in 2010 found that third grade
4 students who participated in high-quality
5 Harrisburg Preschool Program, the City's
6 publicly funded Pre-K system, scored
7 significantly higher on PA System of
8 School Assessment tests than their peers
9 who did not participate in childcare
10 program.

11 In conclusion, therefore,
12 Philadelphia's education policy should
13 include the following: A strong
14 investment in a well-coordinated
15 continuum of sustainable early childhood
16 education program from birth to
17 kindergarten, with objectives tied to
18 career-ready skills and college; an
19 engaging and enhanced structured
20 curriculum that includes 21st century
21 skills development for success in a
22 global economy. Such a curriculum should
23 have a clear, well-structured classroom
24 management incorporated into each,
25 supportive students orientation climate

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2 and also cognitive activation with deep
3 challenging context; a strong pedagogical
4 leadership and well-trained top quality
5 teachers. High-quality learning
6 environment requires well-prepared
7 teachers; an effective evaluation,
8 assessment, and accountability
9 professional system; a focus on raising
10 student performance with special
11 attention to the diverse immigrant
12 student population we have here in
13 Philadelphia and the most vulnerable and
14 socioeconomic disadvantaged children and
15 students; and, finally, an equitable
16 funding and resources for the school
17 system.

18 A concentration of best
19 practices in education on a global basis
20 and a world-class public education in
21 Philadelphia should also include a review
22 and possible adoption of the proven key
23 policy strategies of those countries
24 mentioned earlier, as well as others, but
25 with diverse demographic populations

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2 similar to Philadelphia County.

3 Thank you very much for the
4 opportunity to present.

5 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
6 much.

7 I would just like to make a
8 brief comment, that the better or the
9 best school systems also seem to be the
10 best funded with the least cost to the
11 taxpayers, in large part because there is
12 willing, not just willing, enthusiastic
13 participation of private industry.

14 I know that we have Germany
15 coming up in the next panel, where the
16 government spends 4 billion on vocational
17 and private industry spends 31 billion.
18 And those type of ratios, we can see why
19 good education is sustainable.

20 One of the challenges for us in
21 this city and across the nation, yes, we
22 know we need funding, but we have to get
23 the funding and we have to make it
24 sustainable. And certainly the issue of
25 how we can afford to provide better

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2 resources, more funds for teachers, and
3 ensure that we're not wasting money or
4 throwing money away should be at the top
5 of our list, but it isn't for some
6 reason.

7 Would you please identify
8 yourself for the record and give your
9 testimony. Thank you.

10 MR. ANDREW: Happily. Thank
11 you so much for having me. My name is
12 Seth Andrew. I'm the Superintendent of
13 Democracy Prep Public Schools in Harlem,
14 New York.

15 Do you have my material?

16 COUNCILMAN OH: I do, yes.

17 MR. ANDREW: So the first thing
18 I wanted to do was thank you both for
19 having us and the entire Council for
20 having us, and especially for putting
21 together such an incredibly diverse and
22 thoughtful panel. It's rare -- I speak
23 on this topic all over the country, and
24 it's rare to find such interesting and
25 thoughtful panelists and also this entire

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2 topic. So thank you for inviting me.

3 I've done work in about 40
4 countries and advised secretaries in
5 governments in six different countries
6 across the world around the model that
7 we've built at Democracy Prep Public
8 Schools, and I hope from this experience
9 that I'm able to share with you today
10 that I can be provocative and challenge a
11 few of your core assumptions about the
12 work that's happening around the world.

13 The first thing that I wanted
14 to tell you about, even before I tell you
15 about the work we do at Democracy Prep
16 based on South Korea, is that there are
17 two paramount philosophies on how to fix
18 schools. There are those that believe
19 we're never going to fix our schools
20 until we first fix poverty and those who
21 believe that we're never going to fix
22 poverty until we first fix our schools.
23 And I'm in the latter category. I
24 believe that through fixing our schools,
25 we can in fact solve and ameliorate all

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2 of the problems and so much of the pain
3 that comes from poverty in America and
4 around the world by first focusing on
5 fixing our schools. And I think the
6 great example here is the difference
7 between countries like Finland and South
8 Korea.

9 There are two models that we'll
10 hear about in the world, and one of them
11 is about preserving wealth and preserving
12 prosperity. But there's another model
13 that South Korea demonstrates that's
14 about building prosperity and moving from
15 poverty to prosperity, and that requires
16 a whole different skill set, pedagogy and
17 school design, than one which is based on
18 preserving that prosperity and preserving
19 that wealth. And so when we hear about
20 other countries around the world, we have
21 to, as my colleague says, identify
22 specific pieces and place them in
23 appropriate context for the work that we
24 do in New York, in Harlem, in Camden, and
25 for you in Philadelphia.

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2 So let me tell you a little bit
3 about myself. I'm Seth Andrew. I'm a
4 teacher. I actually still teach every
5 week now with my colleague, Ben Feit, who
6 is with me today, but I also oversee a
7 network of ten public charter schools
8 across Harlem and now Camden, New Jersey
9 right across the river, where we are
10 building a network that now we'll have
11 about 3,000 students growing through a
12 federal grant to about 10,000 students in
13 25 schools over the next five years.

14 Democracy Prep's mission is to
15 prepare our students for success in the
16 college of their choice and a life of
17 active citizenship. So we're
18 accomplishing two goals, both college and
19 citizenship, which is the reason that we
20 do the work we do.

21 In order to do that, we have
22 five core values: discipline, respect,
23 enthusiasm, accountability, and maturity.
24 And those values come together as what I
25 call a hybrid education. And what we've

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2 done is, we've built what I call a tiger
3 school. And you may have heard of the
4 idea of a tiger mother. Well, what we
5 are is tiger schools at Democracy Prep.
6 What we're trying to do for our scholars
7 is to provide those values and that
8 culture that we want all of our scholars
9 to have, no matter their background, when
10 they walk in the door, with that desire
11 for education that is going to make them
12 successful long term.

13 So Harlem has now become the
14 epicenter of school reform in America.
15 There is more high-quality school choice
16 in Central Harlem now than in any place
17 in the United States of America per
18 square foot. Students who live in the
19 projects on 135th Street now can choose
20 between ten high-quality middle schools
21 and have no test barrier, payment barrier
22 or otherwise to attend, and that is a sea
23 change from 2005 when I started Democracy
24 Prep.

25 It's a movement that we call No

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2 Excuses, and the idea of this movement of
3 No Excuses is to say no matter what the
4 challenges that our students may face in
5 their home environment in terms of
6 poverty or any of the other factors that
7 they face, we make no excuses. We're
8 going to get them to go to college and to
9 be great citizens.

10 And in order to do that, I take
11 the lessons that I learned in Korea. I
12 taught in South Korea in the year 2000.
13 And I came out of graduate school, I came
14 out of undergraduate education degrees,
15 and I was thinking about all the wrong
16 things, and the sad part is 13 years
17 later, I look at the American educational
18 debate and we're still thinking and
19 talking about the wrong things.

20 Thirteen years ago when I moved
21 to South Korea, my undergraduate
22 experience and education degree told me
23 to focus on funding equity, certification
24 degrees for teachers, and class size.
25 Those are the wrong things to focus on,

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2 because if you look across the world,
3 that's not what Shanghai is doing, that's
4 not what Hong Kong is doing, that's not
5 what South Korea is doing. What they're
6 focusing on is culture. They're focusing
7 on the culture, not of -- but of the
8 classroom, the classroom culture and the
9 school culture. And that culture that I
10 saw in South Korea inspired me to do the
11 work that I do today.

12 And so we see now across the
13 country and across the world not only an
14 achievement gap within the United States
15 but an international achievement gap. So
16 our low-income scholars in Philadelphia,
17 in Camden, in Harlem, those are scholars
18 who are not only behind their peers in
19 the suburbs, they're behind their entire
20 world right now, and we have more to
21 catch up with than we've even admitted
22 how bad this problem is.

23 If you're a low-income American
24 today, you have about a 9 percent
25 likelihood of getting a four-year college

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2 degree, 9 percent. Our public schools in
3 America are failing 91 percent of our
4 low-income kids. Fifty percent of our
5 public schools, our urban public schools
6 in America, are failing at a massive
7 scale. This is an unimaginable crisis,
8 and we need to treat it as such.

9 We can't just stop and say
10 we're going to tinker at the edges or add
11 \$20 or a hundred dollars more per pupil
12 here and think that's going to solve the
13 problem. We have to radically and
14 revolutionarily think what our schools
15 are.

16 And so what we did was, we
17 looked at South Korea, and we took three
18 main values and brought them back to
19 Central Harlem and now Camden. The five
20 things that -- the three things that we
21 looked at first in South Korea that were
22 unique to Korea were first an idea that
23 there was respect for teachers above all.
24 It's best symbolized by the honorific
25 seonsaeng-nim. Seonsaeng-nim is the idea

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2 that we call our K-to-12 teachers in
3 Korea someone who is honored. In America
4 we give titles to reverends, to military
5 officers, to professors, but a teacher is
6 still "Yo Miss," "Yo Mister." In Korea
7 you would never have that disrespect for
8 a teacher. And so the idea of respect
9 for teachers as a profession in Korea is
10 one of the cultural elements that made it
11 so successful.

12 The second is a simple idea
13 that hard work equals success. And we
14 will all say this around the world, but
15 in Korea they live it. They believe
16 there's no other variable. Hard work
17 equals success. More hard work equals
18 more success. Less hard work equals less
19 success. And that's it. And so when you
20 go to Korea, the students are working
21 hard, the families are working hard, and
22 it is what has transformed that nation
23 from the lowest income country in Asia to
24 one of the highest. It has got the most
25 advanced technology in the world and some

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2 of the strongest public schools, and that
3 only took 50 years. Now, 50 years is
4 longer than I want to wait, but I'll tell
5 you this, to see what has happened in
6 Korea in 50 years and what has happened
7 in other places in the world, like in
8 Africa -- I'm about to take our students
9 next week to South Africa, Lesotho and
10 Egypt, and those are countries where
11 we're traveling with our scholars to show
12 them that hasn't happened in 50 years.
13 So it gives me great hope that in Harlem
14 and places like Harlem, we can see this
15 transformation happen even faster through
16 respect for teachers, hard work, and an
17 idea that educational values are the most
18 important for families and for the
19 community as a whole. And if we can
20 continue to show everyone that those
21 values are there in our schools, then we
22 can actually transform our communities
23 and our cities.

24 So Democracy Prep was built on
25 these five pillars: joyous culture, more

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2 time, increased rigor, and thoughtful
3 data, but the most important factor is
4 the inspiring teachers that we hire, and
5 we do that by paying them better, by
6 treating them better, and by making them,
7 as someone else described, generals. We
8 make them the people who are the deciders
9 of the classroom, but we also give them
10 accountability.

11 And so at the end of the day,
12 to conclude, what we do is we combine the
13 best of the American system in terms of
14 creativity and adventure and travel with
15 the best of the Korean system in terms of
16 hard work and respect for teachers and
17 respect for education, and we come out
18 with scholars who are prepared to go to
19 the college of their choice and succeed
20 in a life of active citizenship.

21 And just so you have this piece
22 of data to understand, our scholars in
23 Central Harlem outperform West Chester
24 County, the wealthiest suburb in New
25 York. They are now -- our seniors have

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2 been accepted on average to 15 different
3 four-year universities, every single
4 senior.

5 And so this is not theory.

6 This is not a possibility. This is
7 possible for every single child in
8 America. And the kicker is that we spend
9 dramatically less money per pupil and
10 raise no philanthropy to make all the
11 things that I'm telling you possible. We
12 don't need private industry. We don't
13 need big foundations. We don't need
14 hedge funders. We can do this on the
15 public dollars we're given by budgeting
16 from the bottom up instead of from the
17 top down. And at \$14,000 a pupil, which
18 is what Philadelphia is spending now,
19 give or take per student, you're already
20 spending about exactly the same as we are
21 in Harlem, and we know that with those
22 funds that you already have, if you
23 rethink in a revolutionary way your
24 public schools, that you can get these
25 kind of results for every child in

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2 Philadelphia, because every child, in
3 fact every American, deserves great
4 public schools like ours.

5 Thank you so much for having me
6 and for letting me share a little bit of
7 our story.

8 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you all
9 very much. Please stay seated, as I'm
10 sure we have questions.

11 I'm sure John is thinking, what
12 federal dollars did you get. So could
13 you tell us about the federal dollars
14 that you got, first of all.

15 MR. ANDREW: Sure. So
16 Democracy Prep receives about \$15,000 per
17 student from the city, state, and federal
18 government, including a blended average
19 of our Title I, special ed, and all other
20 funding, and that's what we do. And we
21 operate our schools a hundred percent on
22 those public dollars. So all of our
23 increased teacher salaries, all of our
24 field trips, even this trip I'm taking
25 students to South Africa, a hundred

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2 percent publicly funded. We just have a
3 very large field trip budget in my
4 budget.

5 The grant we received is to
6 replicate Democracy Prep, and that was a
7 federal grant through the CSP funding,
8 the Charter Schools Program funding under
9 the Office of Innovation and Improvement
10 in the U.S. Federal Department of
11 Education. It is a grant program that is
12 available every year, and certainly the
13 State of Pennsylvania as well as
14 Philadelphia, individual charter school
15 networks can apply for this replication
16 funding. And what it's done for us is
17 accelerated the speed of our growth. We
18 were growing at about one or two schools
19 a year, and because of this additional
20 public funding, we're now going to be
21 able to grow at three or four schools a
22 year to serve about -- right now we have
23 cumulatively about 20,000 students on our
24 waiting list, and in every single year we
25 have an additional 6,000 students on our

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2 waiting list who get added to that
3 waiting list because we can't grow fast
4 enough.

5 COUNCILMAN OH: Well, it's,
6 number one, very encouraging to hear that
7 our federal government is helping to grow
8 successful school models. I certainly
9 will say that this issue about improving
10 our schools, while such an important
11 topic, seems to run into such tremendous
12 and unexplained resistance in our city.
13 I don't know about elsewhere, but such
14 logical things as taking a proven,
15 affordable, sustainable model of
16 excellent education that is thwarted and
17 cannot grow, cannot bring technology into
18 our poor communities that's so badly
19 needed and the idea that we are not
20 exploring how to create a better and more
21 sustainable system, which will, I
22 believe, receive funding is certainly
23 challenging.

24 I am, by the way, interested in
25 what is happening around the world, and I

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2 believe what we are seeing is, we are
3 seeing nations in Africa and South
4 America that while not at the level of
5 the United States perhaps are rapidly
6 increasing their education at dramatic
7 levels, and they don't have resources,
8 but they are improving education. Could
9 you comment on that.

10 MR. ANDREW: Well, I think
11 that's exactly my point, which is that
12 nations like South Korea 50 years ago and
13 now many other nations today are taking
14 these principles around culture and time
15 and rigor and data and expectations and
16 the value of teachers, and those are
17 things that you can do without many
18 additional financial resources to
19 dramatically improve the quality of
20 schools. And so South Korea still spends
21 dramatically less money per student than
22 Philadelphia does to get dramatically
23 better results.

24 So this is not at the end of
25 the day about a quantity of dollars.

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2 It's about how do we spend the money and
3 what are we prioritizing. At Democracy
4 Prep, we prioritize teachers above all.
5 So just to give you a thought experiment.
6 Right now if you think that Philadelphia
7 spends about \$14,000 per pupil and your
8 job is to educate a classroom of 25
9 children for that year, you've got about
10 \$350,000, and that's a conservative
11 estimate, of operating dollars to educate
12 a classroom of 25 students. Where does
13 that money go, \$350,000 of taxpayer
14 dollars, federal, state, and city dollars
15 to educate 25 children. Well, at
16 Democracy Prep, we start with the first
17 thing. We start with the quality teacher
18 in the classroom. We start those
19 teachers around \$65,000 a year as our
20 first step on the scale, and our teachers
21 are then paid over time based on their
22 performance. It's not a bonus system.
23 It's a raise system where our best
24 teachers make about 10 percent raises
25 year over year. So our highest quality

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2 teachers are making \$120,000, \$130,000 a
3 year based on their continued performance
4 in the classroom year after year.

5 But now I'm still at \$100,000
6 per teacher, but I've got 300,000 to
7 spend on that classroom. So what do I
8 do? I get another teacher for that
9 classroom. So now I have two
10 hundred-thousand-dollar teachers in that
11 classroom, and I still, if I were
12 spending money in Philadelphia, I'd still
13 have \$100,000 to \$150,000 left over for
14 the next things, which are technology and
15 materials in the classroom. So now maybe
16 if I spent a thousand dollars per
17 student, that's another 25. And you
18 build the budget up instead of down.

19 You start with teacher number
20 one, then teacher number two, then what
21 do the kids need in their hands,
22 technology and materials and books, and
23 then you say, Okay, so now we've built a
24 great classroom with two teachers. Now I
25 might need some special education

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2 supports and English language learner
3 support, but I can spread that across
4 four classrooms. So I can pay somebody a
5 hundred thousand dollars, but it only
6 costs me 25 per classroom. So now I'm 25
7 more, and up we go.

8 COUNCILMAN OH: Let me
9 interrupt you with one thing that I know
10 is on people's minds as we speak.
11 Because someone said to me, Well, South
12 Korea, which pays so much more, a lot
13 more for teachers, they probably don't
14 provide them good benefits, and I said,
15 No, they provide them excellent benefits.
16 But in your formula of salaries, one of
17 the problems we face as a state is with
18 our pension fund crisis. And so that's
19 sucking up a lot of our money, and that's
20 a whole other can of worms, but do you
21 have any ideas about that? Because I
22 know you're starting fresh, but there is
23 that issue about benefits. And so
24 perhaps you're not the one to say, but
25 certainly in Korea, they do have, for

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2 example -- and I suspect in Hong Kong, in
3 Finland -- excellent benefits that are
4 not in jeopardy.

5 MR. ANDREW: So three short
6 answers. The first to know is that in
7 South Korea, the salary scale is not
8 dramatically different than that in the
9 U.S. Comparatively when you equalize
10 things, the benefits are relatively
11 similar, but the value of the prestige
12 that is placed on the profession makes
13 the higher quality graduate from college
14 want to go into teaching, which doesn't
15 happen in America. There's a McKinsey
16 report that shows that teachers in
17 America, teacher training programs, get
18 the bottom third of college classes,
19 while in South Korea it's the top 10th,
20 the top 20 percent. And so it's about
21 prestige even more than it is about pay.
22 Pay matters, but that's not the primary
23 issue.

24 The second thing, when we start
25 from a blank slate from scratch is, we

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2 use a 403(b) system, which is a defined
3 contribution model as opposed to a
4 defined benefit pension system. What
5 that means is, we put in as a school
6 about 5 percent of the person's salary
7 year over year. They can match that for
8 another 5 percent. So they're getting
9 about a 10 percent -- and it actually
10 goes up if you've been with us for a
11 while to 16 percent, but around 10
12 percent of their base salary goes into
13 their benefit. With a 403(b), somebody
14 that made a career in teaching, so who
15 stayed there for 20 years, not only would
16 they be able to have a similar quality to
17 their pension, but they also own the
18 principal. And so we argue for our
19 teachers, especially our young teachers
20 that want to stay in the classroom for
21 their career, that a 403(b) model is
22 actually better than a pension system,
23 but because it is defined contribution
24 instead benefit, we don't have to budget
25 out or try to create an actuarial table

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2 for 20 years to say what's going to
3 happen 20 years from now and hope that
4 the stock market has kept up. We can
5 actually give that directly to the
6 employee and say, Here's your funding for
7 your retirement, and manage it
8 conservatively if you'd like or
9 aggressively if you'd like.

10 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
11 much.

12 Yes.

13 DR. EKE: One comment here. I
14 think the pay, as everyone has said, is
15 very important. The conditions of
16 service, however, I think go beyond the
17 pay. Pay certainly keeps people for a
18 little while, but one big challenge that
19 certainly urban districts have is
20 difficulty with retention, retention
21 because some of the best teachers really
22 do not have the stamina oftentimes to
23 stay because of the challenges they face.
24 The challenges -- and that's something
25 that the engagement, parental engagement,

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2 will help solve.

3 So one of the things that
4 certainly needs to be considered is how
5 to -- if we come up with a system that
6 will allow -- that will not only make the
7 teacher accountable, as we know No Child
8 Left Behind does, but make the parents
9 accountable as well. Kids come in very
10 undisciplined, unruly. So if you can --
11 no matter how good you are as a teacher,
12 if you can't get through the behavioral
13 issues, how do you impact content? You
14 don't get that.

15 I say this because, again, as
16 someone, again, who has lived with an
17 educator, who spent a year here, have had
18 a challenged school. Some of the
19 teachers, they allow a whole day. They
20 will run out by kids who simply will not
21 be able to -- so I think it ought to
22 change that. Parents expect the teachers
23 to do all the discipline, but I think it
24 has to be a shared responsibility. And
25 if you could come up with a way to

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2 encourage parents to be more actively
3 involved so that the kids come in with
4 the motivation to learn -- and, of
5 course, the teachers have a major role to
6 inspire them, but the parent
7 participation shouldn't be ignored.

8 That's the last point I want to make.

9 You got to make sure that -- because
10 without that, again, retention will be an
11 issue for good teachers.

12 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you. I
13 mean, I'd have 101 questions. Time is
14 flying for me. I don't know about you.
15 But so it's interesting to me. We have a
16 panel that's got to leave by 2 o'clock of
17 people from different nations.

18 I will say for the public
19 record -- we do have people listening and
20 watching -- that I think if we as a city
21 were able to come up with a good, proven
22 plan, not a theoretical plan, on best
23 practices and if we were to take away all
24 of the limitations that seem to be
25 artificial and identify why we need the

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2 dollars, we would be better funded around
3 the fact that we're trying to fund better
4 outcomes, more efficient use of the
5 dollars. But the way we are right now,
6 when we go ask for blank amount of money,
7 we're not getting it, and it's a
8 challenge.

9 But thank you very much, and
10 I'd ask that we call up our next panel.

11 THE CLERK: I'd like to invite
12 our third panel, Christopher Ebell,
13 Counselor with Embassy of Switzerland in
14 the United States of America; Andrea
15 Noske, Minister-Counselor with Embassy of
16 Germany in the United States of America;
17 Caroline Adenberger, Deputy Director of
18 Office of Science and Technology with
19 Embassy of Austria in the United States
20 of America; and Bradly Neese, Director of
21 Apprenticeship Carolina, joining us via
22 Skype from South Carolina.

23 COUNCILMAN OH: We are actually
24 going to take Bradly Neese last, if
25 you're listening, Bradly, not because

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2 you're the least important but because
3 you've actually done what is being
4 testified. You've taken an actual model
5 and successfully incorporated it into a
6 state in the United States with very
7 dramatically good results.

8 So we will ask the first
9 panelist on my left to identify herself
10 for the record and then move right
11 across. And we're going approximately
12 seven or eight minutes, with room for
13 questions at the end.

14 Thank you very much for being
15 here.

16 MS. NOSKE: Thank you,
17 Mr. Chairman, to having us here. My name
18 is Andrea Noske. I am the
19 Minister-Counselor at the German Embassy.
20 I'm heading the Science and Technology
21 section, and within this section, we are
22 also responsible for, as we call it,
23 vocational education and training.

24 I do think it's easier to talk
25 about pros and cons of the German

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2 educational system, and I would like to
3 walk you through four general thesis.

4 The first thesis is, German
5 school system is highly selective and
6 channels people. So we start with the
7 age of 6, and after elementary school by
8 age of 10, we have three-tier system. We
9 have a lower secondary school, an
10 intermediate secondary school, and we
11 have the academic secondary school, which
12 is more or less your high school.

13 Only the academic secondary
14 school leads to higher education and the
15 possibility to go over to a university
16 system. Young people attending the lower
17 and the intermediate secondary schools
18 subsequently participate in the
19 vocational training at the age of more or
20 less 16. So if we have a given age
21 group, 55 percent of the German students
22 entering the vocational education and
23 training, and only 29 percent of a given
24 age group are attending the academic
25 secondary school. The meaning behind is

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2 that not every child is able to attend a
3 university, and so we have some
4 possibilities for them.

5 The second thesis, you have to
6 decide on your future occupation very
7 early in life. In lower secondary and
8 intermediate schools, it's mandatory to
9 have a short-term internship at companies
10 to get an idea of the job market, and the
11 teachers educate on different
12 occupations. So young persons apply for
13 job training at a company, and companies
14 are willing to deal and handle that.

15 After leaving school at the age
16 of 16, when they start a trainee or an
17 apprenticeship, they know that they will
18 be trained at that company in one of 350
19 officially recognized occupations. That
20 means it doesn't matter if you are living
21 in the north, in the south, in the east
22 or in the west of Germany. Whatever
23 occupation you take, it's the same for
24 everybody in Germany.

25 So they will be trained over a

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2 period of two to three years, mainly four
3 days in the company and one day at a
4 vocational school, and that is what we
5 call the dual system. And we have it in
6 Austria and Switzerland as well. And
7 from the very first day in that company,
8 they are going to earn money. So each
9 training course and each working day is
10 going to be paid, and that's why you have
11 these 31 percent of private money,
12 because you have to take this trainee
13 wage into account. And each course at
14 the end concludes with a generally
15 binding exam supervised by the Chamber of
16 Industry and Commerce.

17 This leads me to my third
18 thesis. The vocational training system
19 is highly regulated. Yes, that's true,
20 because you have to have it generally
21 binding along the whole German countries,
22 and we have specific treaties for these
23 vocational education systems. We have
24 different wages depending on what you do.
25 If it's a highly specialized in a highly

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2 computerized company, it may be different
3 than you are a hair cutter or baker.

4 And at the last thesis,
5 companies pay and businesses is in the
6 driver's seat. That's the reason why we
7 have the awareness of business and
8 companies, that the fact that it has to
9 pay for the workforce, it needs to take
10 over 75 percent of the total cost of our
11 dual system. And on the other hand, they
12 are in the possibility to lead the
13 possible curricula, so that they say, We
14 need to have this and that skill in the
15 technical basis and we need to have this
16 and that skill in a soft skill basis. So
17 you as the government and you as the
18 teacher or the schools, you have to keep
19 that in mind when we talk about the
20 curriculum for these vocational schools.

21 At the end, we have federal
22 employment agencies, vocational schools,
23 and the government and the businesses
24 which are dealing with the education of
25 these young people. So that at the end,

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2 when they have their exam, they are
3 highly skilled workers.

4 And in Germany, approximately
5 469,000 companies provide training for
6 those young people. Due to the fact that
7 our industry is mainly related on small-
8 and medium-sized family-driven companies,
9 it's only 22 percent of the whole German
10 businesses, but on the other hand, we do
11 have some, especially in the crafts, we
12 do have some chambers who serve as the
13 company and they teach the young people
14 on the machines that they needed. And in
15 the end, if you are trained by a company
16 but the company cannot provide you at the
17 end with a job, it's not a problem
18 because there are lots of companies who
19 couldn't afford to train somebody but now
20 then they can find workers. And due to
21 the fact that the occupations are
22 officially recognized nationwide, it's
23 always transferable.

24 So we have a highly selective
25 system. We have a system which affords

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2 early decision-making. We have a system
3 which is highly regulated and a system
4 which is business driven.

5 Besides all -- because of that,
6 the system is very effective. Students
7 and their parents have to decide very
8 early which course to take, but personal
9 and professional development is possible
10 at any stage of the process. So at the
11 end, if you have your exam, you can add
12 more education so that you at the end can
13 have a path to the academic field. And
14 some people do that, especially if they
15 are in bank or trading. They start after
16 their high school degree with an
17 apprenticeship in a bank or big trading
18 company and then they go to the
19 university, and at the end, they are very
20 highly recommended for management
21 positions, CEOs.

22 For those who have finished
23 vocational training are trained workers,
24 and they can have further occupational
25 advancement so that they have a degree of

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2 a master craftsman, and that means
3 comprehensive training makes the
4 apprentices proud of the result they
5 achieved, and that's why in general we do
6 not have any problems with stigmatization
7 of vocational jobs like you may have in
8 the states. And we don't regard it as a
9 second chance but as a first choice. And
10 although our system affords early
11 decision-making, our school system and
12 the employment agencies help students to
13 get oriented, and, of course, our system
14 is highly regulated, yes. The standards
15 are good for everybody. So employers
16 know exactly what an apprentice has
17 learned during his or her training and
18 what he or she can do afterwards. There
19 is no fear that the company may invest in
20 a trainee and she leaves afterwards. The
21 company can hire another worker with the
22 same training and it's no problem to have
23 exchanges, and the employees can apply at
24 another company because of their
25 comprehensive occupational skills. It's

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2 a give and a take. Let's say that.

3 So we have this business-driven
4 system. The employers association
5 cooperate with government and with labor
6 unions to update the occupations, because
7 sometimes in the advanced manufacturing,
8 you need more skills from more, let's
9 say, IT side or less welding side or you
10 have to deal with rubber, so you have to
11 have other skills than 10 or 15 years
12 ago. That means that companies do not
13 decide alone what they need on a
14 short-term basis, but also has to discuss
15 long-term job market prospects with
16 government and labor unions. And
17 government employers associations and
18 labor unions meet on a regular basis with
19 a committee at the Federal Institute for
20 Vocational Education and Training, and
21 they discuss the needs for new
22 occupations. They modernize existing
23 occupations, and they discuss, of course,
24 the necessary training periods. And to
25 illustrate that, in the last years, we

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2 had approximately 40 new or modernized
3 occupations. And this process probably
4 seems very German to you and complicated,
5 but I would like to say it illustrates
6 the German cooperative model, and in most
7 cases, management and labor can find
8 common ground. So at the end, we see
9 that this system helped us through the
10 last crisis and especially due to the
11 fact that the businesses take a lot of
12 money in their hands. The hire and fire
13 mentality is not so much common in
14 Germany, because they invest in their
15 people and they know if they can hold
16 their people during a longer process,
17 they can get the money back.

18 Thank you.

19 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
20 much.

21 I will just note for our
22 listeners that this conversation about
23 vocational education, as you stated, is
24 not about a second chance or an inferior
25 education or a stigmatized profession.

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2 And what I find very fascinating about
3 all three countries is that we all know
4 that a smaller portion of people will go
5 to college than will not, and here we
6 have a perfectly good path for people who
7 do not want to go to college to enter a
8 profession that they're proud of, that
9 they earn good money at, that they do not
10 have a social stigma, that they can rise
11 up in their community and go on to
12 leadership positions. And it's certainly
13 something that is very interesting to me
14 as to what we can do here in
15 Philadelphia.

16 So thank you for that. And I
17 will say that I believe that the pay that
18 we're talking about is also quite
19 different than what we're talking about
20 here in Philadelphia.

21 So if you would please identify
22 yourself for the record and give your
23 testimony. Thank you.

24 MR. EBELL: Certainly. Thank
25 you, Chairman. My name is Chris Ebell

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2 and I'm Counselor of Science Technology
3 at the Embassy of Switzerland in
4 Washington, DC.

5 A lot of the, I think,
6 hallmarks of the Swiss have been already
7 outlined by my colleague here, as I think
8 the German, the Swiss, and the Austrian
9 systems are very similar for all
10 practical purposes. Let me, however,
11 position the Swiss system here in the
12 context.

13 Of course, our country being a
14 small country, a multicultural country
15 with three different languages spoken and
16 a 21 percent non-citizens in the country
17 of about eight million. So this poses a
18 certain amount of integration challenges
19 as well. And I mention this, of course,
20 because I think in the United States and
21 in the City of Philadelphia also, those
22 challenges are present as well, maybe
23 slightly different form. However, they
24 need to be addressed as well.

25 Switzerland as well has a very

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2 fiercely federalistic structure with 26
3 cantons, again, in a very small country,
4 and I'm saying that because here it is
5 really important to work with all
6 partners around the table. And, again,
7 obviously things are not directly
8 transferable. However, in a city as
9 large as Philadelphia at least by
10 European or by Swiss standards, I imagine
11 that multiple partners need to be
12 integrated into a whole approach, a whole
13 of government approach, but also a whole
14 stakeholder approach here. And I think
15 part of the success of the Swiss system
16 here is that this has happened, this
17 integration has happened.

18 In general, we see a lot of the
19 other sort of philosophical basis for the
20 Swiss system, very similar to the Finnish
21 colleague, about equal access to
22 education. Education is mostly state
23 run, it is free, and the belief is that
24 every person, every child should have
25 access to the same high-quality education

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2 as everyone else. So those factors are
3 in there.

4 And maybe also to go back to
5 the testimony of the colleague who spoke
6 about the South Korean model, the
7 teachers are socially respected in
8 Switzerland and they're well paid. So
9 meaning that there is no -- again, there
10 is no social problem that's being a
11 teacher. There is a prestige that comes
12 with and a certain respect socially as
13 well. I think these are factors. They
14 are soft factors, of course, but I think
15 they're probably important to observe as
16 well.

17 About the education system as a
18 whole, I think what's important to note
19 is that as in the German system, after a
20 compulsory basic schooling, children or
21 young people are presented with a choice
22 essentially to go into vocational
23 training or to go into an academic --
24 more academic-oriented track, high school
25 type track. In Switzerland, as a matter

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2 of fact, I think we have 68 percent of
3 all students choosing the vocational
4 training track. So basically we are not
5 looking at a majority of people wanting
6 to go to universities, to colleges.
7 Rather, they choose this track, which
8 means I think as a reflection of us and
9 the cultural value -- again, we talked
10 about this -- of vocational education as
11 being something that is valuable and
12 socially respected.

13 Now, I think this is another --
14 I think there's also a major difference
15 here to the United States. The approach
16 here seems to be that the ultimate goal
17 is to get as many people into a four-year
18 college as possible. There's absolutely
19 nothing wrong with four-year colleges, of
20 course, but it seems that a
21 diversification of choices at an earlier
22 stage can certainly help to have a more
23 targeted approach to education and to not
24 be in a position where you have to sort
25 of spend a lot of energy on getting

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2 everybody to the same place. Rather, you
3 can have people choose where they want to
4 go.

5 The vocational training system
6 provides that option, especially because
7 it starts at a relatively young age, and
8 then it becomes what my colleague,
9 Andrea, just described, a dual track
10 system, meaning that the students will
11 work part time three days or four days a
12 week and they will go to school at the
13 same time, getting their general
14 education during the rest of the week.
15 And obviously there is -- one of the
16 opportunities here is a very close
17 relationship to the market, to the labor
18 market.

19 As a matter of fact, studies
20 show that youth unemployment in contrast
21 with an apprenticeship or vocational
22 training model is much lower than in
23 countries that don't have that, of course
24 with all kinds of social benefits
25 attached to that, and that career

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2 outcomes, accordingly, are generally
3 better.

4 COUNCILMAN OH: Could you tell
5 us, because I know the answer, but could
6 you tell us what is the unemployment rate
7 for young people in Switzerland?

8 MR. EBELL: It is below 3
9 percent. It's about 2 percent, something
10 like that. General unemployment is 2.9.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
12 much.

13 MR. EBELL: Thanks. So maybe
14 just four key features, and I'm going to
15 not repeat everything my colleagues will
16 say. But I think what's important is the
17 Swiss education system is fully
18 integrated, meaning it has pathways in
19 all directions. The initial choice you
20 make does not mean, also as my colleague
21 just mentioned, you can't go back or you
22 can't go to the other side. You can go
23 from the academy essentially to the
24 vocational track and backwards. There
25 are passages to do that, meaning there's

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2 a permeability across the educational
3 choices you have.

4 There's an integrated
5 partnership, meaning that all
6 stakeholders necessary in the education
7 system are around the table. They know
8 what they have to do. They know their
9 roles, and this is defined as well -- the
10 same is true for the financing.

11 And, finally, also the
12 certification piece that has been
13 mentioned is an important one. The
14 professions coming out of the vocation
15 system are certifiable professions, and
16 they're transportable. The skills are
17 transportable, and they will be -- they
18 are -- we're in the process of
19 integrating them into a wider European
20 system under the Copenhagen process to
21 make these transportable across the
22 European market as well.

23 So in conclusion, I would say
24 that those factors, getting everybody
25 around the table and everybody knows what

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2 their role is in the educational system,
3 is absolutely crucial, and it's something
4 that has to be built over a while. It
5 has been built, of course, in the
6 dramatic world, I suppose, over
7 probably -- somewhat over centuries, but
8 I think with a good effort, it can be
9 done.

10 Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
12 much.

13 I would note that in contrast
14 to Hong Kong and other countries that are
15 going through these dramatic reforms,
16 that it seems that your nation has
17 refined and refined and refined over
18 centuries something that has worked very
19 well. And so while it's not necessarily
20 reform, it is interesting that it's so up
21 to date, that the participation levels of
22 constantly making it relevant for today
23 and tomorrow is just ingrained into your
24 systems.

25 So would you please identify

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2 yourself for the record and give us your
3 testimony. Thank you.

4 MS. ADENBERGER: Good
5 afternoon, Chairman Oh, Councilwoman
6 Blackwell. Thank you for very much --

7 COUNCILMAN OH: It's also
8 Chairwoman Blackwell.

9 MS. ADENBERGER: Thank you very
10 much for having us today. My name is
11 Caroline Adenberger. I'm with the
12 Austrian Embassy in Washington, DC, the
13 Office of Science and Technology.

14 I can only add to what has been
15 said already by my German and my Swiss
16 colleague, that it's a system that has
17 grown historically and over the centuries
18 in German-speaking regions in Central
19 Europe. In Austria, the dual model, that
20 vocational education system, is part also
21 of the entire education system, basically
22 starting from kindergarten all the way up
23 then to vocational training and/or
24 university education.

25 This is very important, because

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2 already when you're still in high school
3 or the equivalent of high school,
4 basically it would be the age of 12, 13
5 to like 14, 15. In every school system
6 you're in, you will be exposed to the
7 opportunity of getting into a vocational
8 training model. What does that mean?
9 That might be visits to companies to show
10 how it actually looks like. There will
11 be experts coming to schools to tell
12 about the craft they're in or the
13 industry they're working in. And there's
14 also something we call like a mandatory
15 exercise. It's part of the regular
16 curriculum to show this as an
17 opportunity.

18 The characteristics, as it has
19 been said already, it basically takes --
20 the vocational model takes place in two
21 places. It's both in the company, the
22 training company, as well as in the
23 school. The duration of it is usually in
24 between two, three or four years. That
25 depends on the craft and the industry

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2 you're in. And it can also be reduced.

3 It's a flexible system. If you already

4 bring some kills with you, it could be in

5 a school or some other apprenticeship

6 model that you started, that will be

7 added to your experience and thus it can

8 be reduced. So there are regulations,

9 but they're flexible depending on the

10 individual case.

11 Similar to Germany and also to

12 Switzerland, also in Austria the majority

13 of the education, 80 percent, takes place

14 in an enterprise, in a company, and about

15 20 percent, or one day per week, would be

16 in a school. However, in Austria we've

17 switched from the model that you really

18 go to school, say, every Thursday or

19 every Friday, and we often offer it in a

20 blocked version, which means that ten

21 weeks per year or -- sometimes, again, it

22 depends on the trade, the craft you're

23 in -- twice, five times per year, once in

24 spring, once in fall, you'll have a block

25 of schooling that is offered to the

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2 apprentices.

3 Right now we have about 200
4 different professions that you can learn
5 as an apprentice. Again, this is also
6 changing. Some old professions, they
7 disappear. New are added. That's an
8 ongoing process. There is always a
9 review.

10 We have some 130,000
11 apprentices in Austria. Just to compare,
12 we are also a fairly small country, or
13 medium sized, as we call ourselves, of
14 some nine million people, and about 40
15 percent of the peer group is in an
16 apprenticeship model. So it's not close
17 to half, but it's a very popular model
18 that students go actually into the
19 apprenticeships.

20 As of now, we have some 35,000
21 companies that offer apprenticeship
22 training. It's also the same, as it has
23 been mentioned by my German colleague,
24 that we have a lot of small- and
25 medium-sized enterprises. So it's also

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2 dependent on that number.

3 One thing that I'd like to
4 mention in this regard is that there's a
5 lot of pride and a lot of prestige that
6 comes with apprenticeships. We
7 participate on a regular basis with and
8 against our neighboring friends in the
9 so-called skilled competitions, and it's
10 really something that also makes
11 headlines, national headlines, to see
12 where our apprentices -- it could be in
13 welding, it could be in painting -- who
14 is going to be the best in the Euro
15 skills, which is a European competition,
16 but also in a so-called world skills.
17 I'm happy to report that Austria fares
18 fairly good in those competitions.

19 In terms of the branches or the
20 different branches of industry, where do
21 we have the most apprentices? Almost
22 half of it is actually in related trades
23 and the craftsmanship. So it's you learn
24 during those three or four years. Your
25 business could become an electrician or

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2 wood work. So all those are very
3 hands-on skills. In addition to that, we
4 have trade services. That's about 15
5 percent. And then also heavy industry,
6 and also since Austria is a prime
7 destination for tourism, we have also
8 about 10 percent in tourism, restaurant
9 business, and hotels.

10 What's the remuneration?

11 That's an important part of it. It works
12 as a very strong incentive also for young
13 people in high school to see that this is
14 something to get an education, but
15 they're also getting paid for what
16 they're doing.

17 Just as an anecdote from the
18 past, there was a time -- I don't know
19 how many decades ago -- where an
20 apprentice would actually pay the company
21 to get educated for the skills. So they
22 were seeing it as an investment. Of
23 course, now things have changed. So when
24 you start, the first year it's usually
25 about 460 euro you get and it goes up to

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2 the fourth year to about a thousand euro
3 or that would be 1,300 U.S. dollar.
4 Again, that depends on the industry
5 you're in, but, I mean, by the fourth
6 year, you're a very skilled worker.

7 Also for the companies, what is
8 an incentive, to get some reduction on
9 the cost; for example, Social Security
10 and others. So when they're having
11 apprentices in their companies, there's
12 some subsidies from the federal level
13 that makes this attractive to first
14 invest in the first and second year into
15 educating someone, but then you also have
16 some reductions on the additional labor
17 costs they're facing.

18 As has been mentioned before,
19 everything ends no matter what kind of
20 industry you're in with a final
21 examination. This is very important
22 because it's both a practical examination
23 but also theoretical examination, and you
24 then basically get your certificate,
25 which either makes you a very

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2 sought-after skilled worker or you might
3 start your entrepreneurial career, start
4 your own company, and you have that
5 certificate that shows that you know what
6 you're doing.

7 As has been mentioned before by
8 my Swiss colleague, we have the
9 permeability. It's very important,
10 because we also want to make sure that
11 this is a choice that you make fairly
12 early in your professional career, but
13 it's not a one-way thing, that if you
14 decide later on to go on to another
15 trade, you can do that, or if you decide
16 to go to university, you have all the
17 options open. So it's your first choice
18 that opens many doors.

19 So what is needed on a
20 political level? I think that's always a
21 question if you want to establish a
22 system or maintain a working system and
23 improve it. You need good governance.
24 In Austria we have a system. It's called
25 the Social Partnership. What it

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2 basically means, ever since World War II,
3 we have the employers and the employees,
4 the representations of those two groups
5 come to a table and discuss what is
6 needed, because, again, you want to have
7 a healthy company, you want to have
8 healthy industry, but also you want to
9 make sure that the people working in
10 those companies and industries get heard.
11 So everything is coordinated by the
12 Federal Ministry in terms of legal basis.

13 For example, the training
14 profiles and the curriculums are
15 developed on a federal level. And then
16 it's a continuous modernization process,
17 and also those occupational profiles with
18 the input from the industry and from
19 trade, that's always updated, what's
20 actually needed. So it's demand driven.

21 And what's very important I
22 think is both from the employer as well
23 as from the employee side and the general
24 population, that's very strong support
25 for that kind of vocational training in

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2 Austria.

3 We do have in addition to the
4 Federal Ministry, which is in charge of
5 kind of creating the framework for it and
6 also legal framework, there's an advisory
7 board. It's a federal advisory board.
8 They're the representatives of the
9 mentioned social partners. They're also
10 occasional school teachers. There are
11 co-ops that are advisory members, so they
12 can also really give feedback from their
13 experiences on the ground on what's
14 needed. And then in addition to that,
15 there's also the Federal Ministry of
16 Education involved when it comes to the
17 part of the schools.

18 That's the federal level, but
19 then you break it down to the regional
20 level. We have nine states, similar to
21 cantons in Switzerland. It's fairly
22 small. There we have the local Chamber
23 of Commerce. They're the one that are
24 mainly in charge of administering it.
25 They're the first authority if there are

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2 any questions or concerns. They also
3 examine possible new apprenticeship
4 companies. So if you want to become --
5 if you're a company owner and you want to
6 train apprentices, there are certain
7 standards that need to be fulfilled. The
8 idea is to educate youth, not to have
9 cheap labor.

10 They're also responsible, that
11 apprenticeship office on the regional
12 level, they're responsible for examining
13 and recording the apprenticeship
14 contract, and they also provide
15 counseling. And, again, they're just
16 sort of the first address for any
17 concerns.

18 Financing, how do you finance
19 such a system? Similar to Germany, it's
20 also financed by the companies, by
21 industry. In Austria, it's currently at
22 about 170 million euro per year. That's
23 what the system costs. It's from the
24 side of the companies from industry.
25 Then the federal and the regional

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2 government provide the financing for the
3 whole school base part of the training.

4 And in addition to the money, there's
5 also a lot of additional incentives such
6 as further education for the trainers.

7 There is something like a training
8 alliance. Then there are subsidiaries,
9 as I've mentioned them before, in terms
10 of that you have to pay less
11 labor-related costs.

12 That's basically it. I have
13 also a few more comments on the
14 internationalization of the
15 apprenticeship model. I'm going to cut
16 it short. But no matter if you did your
17 apprenticeship program in Austria, in
18 Germany or in Switzerland, there's a
19 mobility given, and also from our
20 international friends from overseas, if
21 you got your education in another country
22 and come to Austria, there is, of course,
23 an acceptance and a recognition of the
24 skills you've earned somewhere else.
25 We're still working on that. Again, it's

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2 an ongoing process, but also in terms of
3 globalization, it's not just something
4 that we see as a local model or say a
5 dramatic country model, but really also
6 global model, and we're trying to making
7 sure it's an open one.

8 Thank you very much.

9 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
10 much.

11 We have Bradly Neese on hold.
12 And the apprenticeship is really
13 something that I think we certainly here
14 in Philadelphia are not familiar with,
15 and I was delighted to go to the Swiss
16 Embassy and learn all about it. It was
17 very exciting. That's where I met Bradly
18 Neese, and I think South Carolina has
19 done a really interesting thing that has
20 appeared to be very beneficial.

21 Would you state your name for
22 the record, Bradly, and give us your
23 testimony, please.

24 MR. NEESE: Sure. I'm Brad
25 Neese. I'm the Director of

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2 Apprenticeship Carolina in South
3 Carolina. Thank you for allowing us to
4 be a part of this today and just sort of
5 tell our story. We think it's a great
6 story and we love telling it.

7 So just a quick background on
8 Apprenticeship Carolina, where we came
9 from, where we're going, and some of the
10 successes that we have. One of the
11 things I'll start with was just sort of
12 how we brand ourselves in saying that we
13 are -- we're the do evolution of
14 apprenticeship. I think apprenticeship,
15 especially when we started this
16 initiative, maybe had a little bit of a
17 stigmatism to it that some of the other
18 panelists have described. People want to
19 say this is a viable option for people.
20 This is a viable option for South
21 Carolinians. So that's how we view
22 ourselves. We're taking an old model and
23 making it new again, and we're doing it
24 in a lot of different industry sectors.

25 I will tell you that by way of

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2 structure, I'm an employee of our state
3 technical college system, which I guess
4 probably locally there you probably call
5 it community colleges, but down here we
6 call them technical colleges. We have 16
7 technical colleges throughout our state
8 and then we have a small state office,
9 which I represent, that has a Division of
10 Economic Development and Workforce
11 Competitiveness. And so I'm a part of
12 that division, and I oversee the
13 apprenticeship initiative.

14 And just a quick thought to say
15 about that is, we view this as not just
16 workforce development. I think that
17 that's a key to this, is that when we
18 talked about apprenticeship in our state
19 and we talked about training our folks,
20 this is really economic development.
21 This is really giving it part of economic
22 development and what we need in order to
23 remain competitive as a state.

24 An important part of who we are
25 and what we do is that we're an

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2 initiative that it isn't a government
3 initiative that was really sort of
4 created and pushed down the throats of
5 our businesses. We're really an idea
6 that came out of business in our state by
7 way of our state's chamber of commerce,
8 the commissioner report that said, Hey,
9 what are some of the issues going on in
10 our state, and one of them is that they
11 didn't have a viable apprenticeship
12 system like some of our southeastern
13 neighbors did. So they said, Hey, look,
14 you need to create a natural resource for
15 that with our technical college system.
16 So we took it.

17 When we started -- I'll give
18 you our sort of bragging quotes on this.
19 When we started this, we only had 90
20 companies in the entire state that had
21 apprenticeship programs. Last week we
22 had 604 companies. And these aren't just
23 mom-and-pops that are jumping on board
24 and working with us with this thing. In
25 one week we had the likes of Walgreens,

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2 Michelin, and Kimberly-Clark all sign on
3 to do apprenticeship programs in our
4 state. We've taken that from 777
5 apprentices to we've hit over 7,500
6 apprentices since 2007. So we've grown
7 this, but I will tell you that our growth
8 doesn't stop there. We hope to grow to
9 over 2,000 programs, about 20,000
10 apprentices by the same date. We're
11 really on a growth pattern with this
12 thing and we want to keep it moving.

13 One of the reasons why I think
14 we've been most successful is because, at
15 least with our technical college system,
16 when you look at three pieces of
17 apprenticeship program, you got
18 structural, job training, you've got what
19 we call job-related education and then a
20 wage progression and benchmarks. Well,
21 the premier provider of job-related
22 education in our state is our technical
23 colleges. So what we're able to do is
24 immediately partner with our technical
25 colleges and get to companies and talk

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2 about this process.

3 Another reason why we've been
4 successful, quite frankly, is just the
5 creation of Apprenticeship Carolina.
6 We're a small staff. We're six people.
7 We cover the entire state, but we provide
8 some pretty high-end services to these
9 companies, where we'll actually go in and
10 help them create an apprenticeship
11 program, help them document their
12 apprenticeship program and actually help
13 them register with the Department of
14 Labor, all free of charge.

15 Another unique thing that we
16 have in our state is a tax credit, and
17 some folks might sort of incorrectly
18 think that that would be the reason that
19 we've grown the way we have. But we do
20 have a tax credit that is unique to our
21 state. It's a thousand dollars per
22 apprentice up to four years, but those
23 folks are required to have registered
24 programs. We do have some pretty
25 high-end apprenticeship programs that are

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2 not registered for the likes of some
3 companies that you all know, but that's
4 the route they've chosen. We still work
5 with them. We still help them create
6 their programs.

7 We've had some real success in
8 maintaining our top -- if we look at our
9 top six occupations that we have, they're
10 all -- five of those six are in
11 manufacturing. The sixth one would
12 actually be in healthcare, which is
13 another unique thing that we've done, is
14 we've really struck up some really unique
15 relationship in the healthcare industry,
16 where we're starting to see a lot -- a
17 growing amount of the apprenticeship
18 programs in healthcare, hospitality and
19 tourism, energy, again manufacturing. So
20 what has been really interesting about
21 our apprenticeship work is that -- I
22 think this is very different when you
23 talk to other states -- is that the
24 trades industry, your typical
25 construction and those sorts of trades,

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2 we didn't do a whole lot with them. We'd
3 love to, but really they represent only
4 about 10 percent of our apprenticeship
5 agreement. So that's work that
6 (unintelligible) of what we talked about.
7 We can actually apply this process to the
8 areas that are outside of what are
9 traditionally thought of as apprentice
10 block opportunities in our state.

11 Some differences I think from
12 the panelists from Germany, Austria, and
13 Switzerland are basically, to start with,
14 our population. I think when they're
15 talking about apprentices, generally
16 they're talking about a much younger
17 population than what we have in South
18 Carolina. Our apprentices really start
19 at an average age of 28. And so these
20 are folks that have probably already had
21 a career working on (unintelligible).
22 And so this creates new opportunities for
23 them.

24 I will tell you, though,
25 because of pipeline issues -- all of this

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2 comes down to the pipeline, the pipeline
3 of available quality talent. That's what
4 companies do, is create that -- that
5 we're now -- we're moving into the youth
6 apprenticeship game. We now have five or
7 six registered youth programs in our
8 state. We have a full-time employee now
9 that is doing nothing but developing
10 youth apprenticeship programs, and we
11 have struck a close relationship with our
12 education system, because we all have a
13 common goal of getting this
14 apprenticeship system built and built up
15 fairly quickly. That's an interesting
16 thing I wanted to mention there.

17 I think that's where we are,
18 and I'd love to answer any questions.

19 COUNCILMAN OH: Well, thank you
20 very much, especially for Skyping in for
21 us and for sharing what you're doing in
22 South Carolina with us up here in
23 Pennsylvania.

24 And, of course, I do have to
25 thank our panel of international guests,

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2 because, once again, they're so kind to
3 come in and share with us what you're
4 doing right in our city here in
5 Philadelphia. And for the record,
6 because someone asked me this on
7 Facebook, no, they're not getting paid
8 and, yes, they are voluntarily coming in
9 and helping us, which is so kind of them.
10 And I especially would like to say how
11 well received we were by the Embassy of
12 Switzerland, just a little city. Really
13 was treated so wonderfully, and by all of
14 your embassies. Your governments are so
15 helpful to us as we try to deal with this
16 pressing issue for us.

17 Chairwoman, do you have any
18 questions?

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Not at
20 all. I would like to thank our guests as
21 well and certainly thank you and your
22 staff for the excellent work you've done
23 on this issue.

24 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
25 much.

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2 I do have a question for
3 particularly our international guests but
4 also for our witness from South Carolina,
5 and, that is, it would appear to me to
6 strike you as very noticeable or somehow
7 very odd that here in the United States,
8 particularly I would say here in
9 Philadelphia, that we seem to have some
10 kind of stigma to people who don't pursue
11 a four-year college, and we are
12 challenged to get so many of our people
13 to work.

14 What is it that you see that we
15 may not see ourselves in our efforts to
16 try to deal with getting everyone trained
17 and making our city attractive for new
18 employers? What is it that we have to
19 deal with?

20 MR. EBELL: Well, I think, one,
21 it's a very good question. I think it's
22 a cultural question mostly, but I think
23 what would be helpful is to have a system
24 in place where in fact those occupations
25 are recognized and certified. I think

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2 that's one important step to that.

3 Another step is I think to
4 change people's minds about that is to
5 talk about it and to provide that type of
6 recognition to those people. I mean,
7 there is a tradition of the American
8 worker, and there's pride in skills. So
9 it's not completely -- I don't think it's
10 completely unknown, and Philadelphia
11 certainly is a city that knows
12 manufacturing and has a tradition of
13 workers. So I think it is there. It
14 needs to be revived, and perhaps it needs
15 to be seen alongside as part of, again,
16 an integrated education model rather than
17 a sort of social back-up plan if the
18 other main thing fails. It's a matter of
19 how you talk about it as well.

20 COUNCILMAN OH: Could I, before
21 you say something, it reminds me that we
22 have a company Hyundai Rotem that
23 couldn't find high-tech welders, and they
24 certified these welders, flew them to
25 Korea where they got realtime welding

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2 high-speed trains, and they came back
3 certified and were gobbled up by so many
4 other companies. And I will say that a
5 good number of these employees had
6 criminal records. It did not matter to
7 the company that they were ex-offenders,
8 and when they came back with such good
9 skills that was in so high demand, they
10 did not lack an opportunity to leave that
11 company. And so I think that's a really
12 critical statement that you just made,
13 but thank you.

14 MS. ADENBERGER: I would like
15 to --

16 MR. NEESE: Councilman, if I
17 may, I think one of the things that we
18 would say is, that being an apprentice
19 doesn't forego your opportunity for
20 college by any means. What our programs
21 are designed to do is actually help a
22 person earn and learn at the same time.
23 In many cases, these folks that are
24 apprentices are also earning Associate's
25 degrees. Those Associate's degrees often

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2 have articulation agreements with
3 four-year universities. So in a perfect
4 world, our youth programs are folks that
5 are taking coursework at high school
6 levels, and their coursework is
7 articulated at a two-year college. At a
8 two-year college, work is articulated at
9 a four-year university. So hopefully
10 what we're creating is a pipeline that is
11 actually encouraging people to go through
12 higher education, but they're also
13 learning and earning at the same time.

14 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
15 much. Thank you. That's very important.

16 Yes.

17 MS. ADENBERGER: I would like
18 to add two thoughts to this. The one
19 thought is that I think it is very
20 important to communicate it early on,
21 particularly to the future apprentices,
22 but how that could look like is like, for
23 example, in high school, to have that
24 kind of field trips and go to those
25 companies and see how cool it is to learn

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2 and earn, as just pointed out before,
3 that it's not something that's a second
4 choice, but it's a first choice,
5 particularly also with all the
6 opportunities open.

7 In terms of society, I think
8 there is maybe more like a nationwide
9 effort. I know it's already underway,
10 but it can always be improved just so
11 people actually see the 21st century
12 apprenticeship opportunity and what the
13 benefits are.

14 From the bottom up, I'd like to
15 point out a best practice that started
16 almost 30 years ago in North Carolina.
17 It was a collaboration between actually
18 German, Swiss, and Austrian companies
19 that built a production facility there
20 but realized fairly soon that they have a
21 lack of skilled workers. So together
22 with the Regional Development Council and
23 the community colleges, they developed 30
24 years ago an apprenticeship model. And I
25 was in touch with some of the founders

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2 who were still there, and they're happy

3 to report that some of the first

4 apprentices, they're still there.

5 They're now teaching the next generation,

6 and they have more demand for those

7 apprenticeship spots -- they're very

8 sought after -- than they can actually

9 fulfill. And I think it's also a

10 wonderful example to show that this is

11 really a sustainable model where also the

12 employer and the employee stays there.

13 They had opportunities like the ones you

14 just mentioned before, but they're like

15 this is a great company and you create a

16 certain identity.

17 Thank you.

18 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very

19 much.

20 Yes.

21 MS. NOSKE: I do have an

22 example in Lehigh, Pennsylvania. There

23 are some, of course, German-owned

24 companies. They work with Lehigh High

25 School together in the, let's say, last

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2 second years so that they have some
3 scholar internships on a regular basis,
4 and the parents and the teachers and the
5 students are more familiar with the
6 business life, and that forces some
7 people to choose a community college path
8 with ending in a highly skilled worker
9 and not the more academic path on a
10 technical college or university college
11 with a Master in the end.

12 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
13 much.

14 Well, this will conclude our
15 testimony of our witnesses, unless there
16 are any questions or other comments
17 before we go into public comment. I know
18 we have one person here, if not more, who
19 would like to make a comment. So is
20 there any final concluding statements by
21 any of our panelists, anything we may
22 have missed?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILMAN OH: If not, then
25 thank you so very much and thank you for

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2 being here to help us.

3 MR. EBELL: Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN OH: Our first
5 witness who is making public comment is
6 James Royal.

7 Is there anyone else in the
8 room who would like to make a public
9 comment?

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILMAN OH: Seeing none,
12 then we will have a comment from
13 Mr. Royal.

14 (Witness approached witness
15 table.)

16 COUNCILMAN OH: Would you
17 please identify your name for the record
18 and give us your testimony.

19 MR. ROYAL: Thank you, sir. My
20 name is James Royal. I'm President of
21 the 7000 Villagers. We are working to
22 keep all the schools open. And I only
23 found out about this last night at half
24 time. I was channel surfing. I said let
25 me get over here.

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2 I just wanted to say this:

3 Everything that I've heard today, we need
4 to try to set up our time, because we can
5 answer every question that was laid on
6 the table and probably some of those that
7 weren't. Our organization has been
8 working specifically for the last 15
9 years but more directly in the last eight
10 years to better educate our students.
11 And I was floored, because there was a
12 lot of information shared here, but how
13 do we get our students, the 200,000 we
14 have here, to some other level?

15 Let me give you an example. A
16 few years ago we went to Rhoads School
17 and Fitzsimons School. Both have
18 principals that we were working with.
19 And we wanted to talk to the students in
20 the assembly, and neither one of the
21 principals wanted all those students in
22 the assembly, because they figured we
23 can't control them. And I said, That's
24 not true. I said, If you get those eight
25 or ten classes in the auditorium, we'll

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2 show you. And naturally when they came
3 in, for the first five or six minutes,
4 they was yahooing and slapping hands and
5 what-have-you, but in the next 15
6 minutes, we had the total audience under
7 control.

8 It's the content of what you
9 give to a student. It's not that our
10 children can't learn. It's just what
11 they're fed. And this both happened in
12 Rhoads and Fitzsimons. Matter of fact,
13 in Rhoads, there was about five or ten
14 young men that was acting up in the
15 hallway. They said, Listen, we want you
16 not to bring them in.

17 We said, We want them on the
18 front row.

19 It's impossible for us to fix
20 our system and even have it, as I was
21 hearing some of the folks testify, about
22 the various levels of competitiveness as
23 opposed to integrating instruction with
24 learning. And so that's why I'm here. I
25 have to say to you, Mr. Chairman and

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2 Mrs. Chairman, because I know both of you
3 are really about education, we need real
4 soon to sit down and talk about -- matter
5 of fact, this happened last Friday at the
6 SRC. There was a meeting there of some
7 community concerns and how do we fix the
8 schools while we're trying to keep them
9 open. What product are we going to give
10 our students? So I'm saying today, as
11 soon as we can. Because I told them,
12 Look, we need to meet in the next two or
13 three days, in which it will start
14 probably later on today.

15 We have to fix our school
16 system, but it has to be a product where
17 every student -- and we have the
18 technology and we have the people to make
19 it happen. We don't have to search all
20 over the world. I'm glad all these minds
21 came together, but if we put all what
22 they said together in a pot, you'll come
23 up with the team that we have right here
24 right now, because most of our stuff is
25 advocacy, because that's the role we were

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2 given.

3 But right now we have to
4 educate our students. We have to educate
5 our parents. We have to continue to
6 educate even the teachers and
7 administrators, because all of the
8 different levels that were brought out
9 today, retention and certifications, all
10 of those things. But one of the things
11 that I heard and I was so grateful -- and
12 I'm almost done, because I got to go get
13 my granddaughter from the school -- was
14 respect for my teachers. I remember
15 Ms. Russell and Mrs. Northington and Ms.
16 DeHale and Mr. Bale. Those were my
17 teachers in elementary, middle, and high.
18 I started out in Bates School and I ended
19 up in Ben Franklin. And I remember
20 teachers all along the way. They were
21 respected, but not only was respect given
22 to the teachers, but also respect was
23 given to the parents. And because of the
24 drug culture in the '80s, a lot of our
25 families had been broken up. So part of

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2 our strategy is, when we had those
3 children in the school, we're going to
4 have to teach them how to respect one
5 another, calling each other by name, not
6 cursing at one another, not cursing out
7 the teachers, but respecting one another.

8 So that's why I said everything
9 I've heard is encouraging. So I'm going
10 to be calling your office to see if we
11 can bring our instruments to you, because
12 I'm not talking about, as you said
13 earlier -- the gentleman from South
14 Carolina is great, but he's not here in
15 Philadelphia. We need a fix and we need
16 it now. And we thank you so much for
17 having this forum, and I thank God I was
18 channel surfing at break time, otherwise
19 I wouldn't have known.

20 Thank you so much.

21 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
22 much for your comment.

23 Is there anyone else who would
24 like to make a public comment?

25 (No response.)

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2 COUNCILMAN OH: Seeing none,
3 this will conclude our joint hearing.

4 Chairwoman, do you agree?

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes.

6 Thank you again, Jim, and thank all of
7 those who have testified and those who
8 are listening in their office to this
9 important testimony.

10 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
11 much.

12 This will conclude this hearing
13 on Resolution No. 130260 until the call
14 of the Chair.

15 (Committee on Education and
16 Global Opportunities and the
17 Creative/Innovative Economy concluded at
18 2:15 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the
proceedings, evidence and objections are
contained fully and accurately in the
stenographic notes taken by me upon the
foregoing matter, and that this is a true
and correct transcript of same.

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