

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
JOINT SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON GUN VIOLENCE
AND COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Wednesday, April 7, 2021
10:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN KENDRA BROOKS
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS

ALSO PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE L. PARKER

RESOLUTION: 200524

1 - - -

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good
3 morning, everyone. This is the joint
4 hearing of the Special Committee on Gun
5 Violence Prevention and Children and
6 Youth regarding Resolution No. 200524.

7 I understand that the state law
8 currently requires that the following
9 announcement be made at the beginning of
10 every remote public hearing: Due to the
11 current public health emergency, City
12 Council Committees are currently meeting
13 remotely. We are using Microsoft Teams
14 to make this remote hearing possible.

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

23 Will the Clerk please call the
24 roll to take attendance. Members that
25 are in attendance will please indicate

1 that they are present when their names
2 are called. Also, please say a few
3 brief words when responding so that your
4 image will be displayed on the screen
5 when you speak.

6 Will the Clerk please call the
7 roll.

8 THE CLERK: Councilmember Helen
9 Gym.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I am
11 present. Good morning, Council Chair
12 and colleagues.

13 THE CLERK: Councilmember
14 Curtis Jones, Jr.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
16 morning, Mr. Chairman, members of the
17 Committee and viewing public.

18 THE CLERK: Councilmember Jamie
19 Gauthier.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good
21 morning, Mr. Chair. Good morning,
22 colleagues. Good morning to the public.
23 Present.

24 THE CLERK: Councilmember
25 Isaiah Thomas.

1 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
2 morning, Mr. Chair. Good morning,
3 colleagues. Good morning to the public.
4 Present.

5 THE CLERK: Councilmember Maria
6 Quinones-Sanchez.

7 (No response.)

8 THE CLERK: Councilmember
9 Katherine Gilmore Richardson.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
11 RICHARDSON: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
12 Good morning, colleagues. And good
13 morning, Philadelphia.

14 THE CLERK: Councilman Mark
15 Squilla.

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Good
17 morning, Mr. Chair. Good morning
18 colleagues. Present.

19 THE CLERK: And that is it for
20 the attendance or for roll, Mr. Chair.

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Will the
22 Clerk please read the title of the
23 resolution.

24 THE CLERK: Resolution No.
25 200524, authorizing the Committees on

1 Gun Violence Prevention and Children and
2 Youth to conduct joint hearings to
3 examine the need for universal assess to
4 trauma counseling for Philadelphia's
5 youth.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
7 very much, Brett.

8 Before we get started, I would
9 like to turn it over for remarks from my
10 colleague Councilwoman Helen Gym, who
11 chairs the Children Youth Committee.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so
13 much, Chair.

14 And first and foremost, I want
15 to thank my colleague Councilmember
16 Johnson for your long work in addressing
17 gun violence and in particular for
18 partnering with the Committee on
19 Children and Youth and ensuring that we
20 can create space for this hearing to
21 take place with a particular focus on
22 the types of trauma supports that young
23 people need in their lives.

24 At this moment in our City's
25 history, there's no question that we are

1 sitting at the intersection of multiple
2 crises, a public health crisis as we
3 enter the final stages of dealing with
4 this pandemic, an economic crisis due to
5 the necessary but painful lockdowns to
6 protect communities from the virus and
7 the escalating crisis of gun violence,
8 an absolute public health emergency that
9 we have seen here in Philadelphia as
10 well as in other large cities around the
11 country.

12 Today we're going to hear from
13 people working both to prevent and
14 respond to gun violence and trauma
15 impacting youth and Philadelphia. I'll
16 be listening very closely to the leaders
17 of the School District and the
18 Department of the Behavioral Health,
19 from doctors, social workers and
20 principals and from leaders and
21 community organizations that provide
22 trauma counseling and other mental
23 health services to young people in need.

24 I want to especially thank
25 Councilmember Johnson and the Committees

1 for being so focused on the importance
2 of including youth voices and
3 perspectives through this process.
4 Yesterday afternoon, Councilmembers
5 heard from young people who had been
6 directly and indirectly impacted by gun
7 violence. We had a youth roundtable in
8 partnership with five extremely
9 important organizations who are working
10 directly with young people in our City.
11 They were YEAH Philly, the Youth
12 Sentencing & Reentry Project, the Youth
13 Art & Self-Empowerment Project, the
14 Juvenile Law Center and the Village of
15 Art and Humanities.

16 We kept this conversation
17 private, in part because it was
18 important to create a safe space for
19 youth to share very personal and often
20 difficult stories and experiences and we
21 all felt it, and to hear the
22 recommendations for change and action.
23 Before we hear from a lot of the
24 official agencies and many adults today,
25 I did want to share a couple of things

1 that emerged during our roundtable
2 today.

3 One of the most important
4 things that youth told us is the
5 importance of trusting relationships in
6 their lives. When we're talking about
7 grief, when we're talking about trauma,
8 when we're talking about vulnerabilities
9 and violence, youth are not simply going
10 to go to people because they have the
11 title. They're going to go to the
12 people that they trust, people with whom
13 they've been in relationships with, and
14 this has been an important aspect of how
15 we talk to young people about violence.

16 We also heard from young people
17 that there are mental health supports
18 that are needed to help young people
19 facing depression and trauma, the need
20 for real mentors to help young people
21 navigate the incredibly difficult
22 challenges they face and to be there for
23 them in times of need. We also heard
24 the importance of having sustainable
25 jobs available to young people so they

1 can earn a living to support themselves
2 and their families.

3 We heard from young people
4 about the importance of programs and
5 activities, extended hours in rec
6 centers or for places that welcome you,
7 providing meaningful engagement and safe
8 spaces throughout the day and into the
9 evening. And finally, we heard about
10 the importance of housing stability, the
11 need to potentially relocate when
12 situations become untenable.

13 And most important of all, the
14 youth expressed to us that they're
15 watching, that they understand that
16 there are decisions that are made. But
17 ultimately, if they don't feel those
18 decisions, then they don't actually
19 exist for them. I'm hoping that this
20 hearing will expand upon our dialogue
21 from yesterday to hear from people who
22 are working inside systems, institutions
23 and organizations.

24 These include the agencies,
25 schools, hospitals and nonprofits to

1 understand what is already in place,
2 what are barriers to expansion and gaps
3 in services that exist and that we
4 listen from a place not of
5 defensiveness, but we understand that
6 we're all doing a lot of this work and
7 our job is to reach young people in
8 neighborhoods, to let them feel it, to
9 live it, not just to have it exist
10 within our own worlds and in our own
11 lives, but to make sure that the young
12 people who are truly a generation by
13 whom we will be judged, not only in this
14 moment, but two decades from now when we
15 have another generation of 15- to
16 30-year-olds, what we will have done for
17 them in one of the most desperate
18 sometimes and important moments in their
19 lives.

20 Our City has to do better. We
21 heard that. We have to do more and we
22 have to do better and that does not
23 impugn anything that has come before us.
24 But this is a time for us to rise to the
25 occasion, to meet the demands of our

1 young people and to give them a city
2 that they truly deserve.

3 So I want to thank
4 Councilmember Johnson, and thank you
5 very much. Look forward to the hearing.

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
7 very much, Helen. And I just want to
8 thank you for your advocacy around
9 making sure we are supporting and
10 empowering and making sure we are
11 fighting for our young people. And this
12 issue is very near and dear to me
13 primarily because before I became an
14 elected official, I was always in the
15 space of working in my neighborhood as a
16 community organizer.

17 But after listening to the
18 young men who were talking about their
19 experiences yesterday, it always brings
20 back my memories as to how I became the
21 person who I am and the different
22 choices that I made in my life. A lot
23 were bad or negative early on, and in
24 spite of coming from a good foundation
25 but nevertheless, the perils of the

1 street life kind of pulled me in
2 different directions.

3 It was individuals like -- I
4 guess the word I want to say is I'm
5 going to give him his proper credit as I
6 always do. It was people like Curtis
7 Jones who saw something in me that I
8 didn't see in myself when I attended the
9 Chaka Fattah Graduate Conference as a
10 young man when I had one foot in the
11 streets and one foot at Mansfield
12 University or Hardy Williams who met me
13 as a young man at the University of
14 Pennsylvania.

15 But again, I had one foot at
16 the University of Pennsylvania and also
17 another foot inside the streets. And
18 so, it was through that mentorship and
19 other opportunities that helped me
20 become the person I am today. But I
21 also made a lot of those decisions just
22 based upon living in the area that was
23 impacted by trauma.

24 It's not normal for an
25 individual to don't think that they're

1 going to see the age of 18, and that was
2 my lifestyle when I attended high
3 school. But so many examples of other
4 young men that live all throughout
5 neighborhoods in the City of
6 Philadelphia, it's abnormal to live in a
7 neighborhood where you see half of your
8 friends die, literally see them die as
9 it relates to the issue of gun violence.
10 And so, how are you processing that
11 trauma, do you decide to pick up a gun,
12 do you become more aggressive and be an
13 individual that's not being a positive
14 impact inside your community or make
15 poor choices.

16 So this particular hearing will
17 allow us to look at what are we doing to
18 not only support our young people, but
19 also communities that are suffering,
20 communities that are shell-shocked and
21 impacted as it relates to the trauma and
22 the gun violence that they are seeing
23 and making sure that we are doing
24 everything possible to support our youth
25 and support our communities.

1 So with that being said, we're
2 going to ask for the Clerk to please
3 call on the first panel.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Mr. Chair.

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: Yes. I placed in the chat
9 that I had a very quick comment. I just
10 wanted to thank you and Councilmember
11 Gym for this hearing today, and
12 especially thank Councilmember Gym for
13 pulling together the roundtable of the
14 young people yesterday. And I really
15 was struck by a lot of the information
16 that was shared and appreciated having
17 the opportunity to hear directly from
18 young people what they need to help them
19 thrive here in the City of Philadelphia.

20 I'm still replaying a lot of
21 what I heard yesterday, but it was very
22 clear from what we heard that we have to
23 do more, that we have to prioritize what
24 the young people are asking us for.
25 They are crying out to have

1 opportunities, to have safe spaces.
2 They are crying out to ensure that when
3 there are conflicts in their
4 communities, that they have the
5 opportunity to relocate. That was so
6 poignant and I heard that on that call.

7 So I just wanted to say thank
8 you to you, but especially to
9 Councilmember Gym for providing that
10 opportunity yesterday. And we are
11 looking forward to also our upcoming
12 hearing on conflict resolution and
13 releasing the report, which will be next
14 week on Wednesday, April 14th at
15 10:00 a.m. in the Committee on
16 Education. And I invite you all to come
17 back and help us talk about that issue
18 as well. But I want to say thank you
19 and look forward to this hearing.

20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
22 very much, Councilwoman Katherine
23 Gilmore Richardson.

24 I'm going to ask the Clerk to
25 read the portion of the script regarding

1 individuals who will be testifying. I'm
2 having a little technical difficulties.

3 THE CLERK: Before we begin to
4 hear testimony from the witnesses we
5 have for today, everyone who has been
6 invited to the meeting to testify should
7 be aware that this is a public hearing
8 and it is being recorded. Because the
9 hearing is public, participants and
10 viewers have no reasonable expectation
11 of privacy. And by continuing to be in
12 the meeting, you are consenting to being
13 recorded.

14 Additionally, prior to
15 recognizing any questions or comments
16 from the Members that they have for
17 witnesses, we will note for the record
18 at this time that we will use the chat
19 feature available in Microsoft Teams to
20 allow Members to signify that they wish
21 to be recognized. In order to comply
22 with the Sunshine Act, the chat feature
23 must only be used for that purpose.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Will the
25 Clerk please call the first panel.

1 THE CLERK: Absolutely.

2 Dr. Jill Bowen, Karyn Lynch and

3 Dr. Tonya Wolford.

4 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good

5 morning, Dr. Bowen.

6 DR. BOWEN: Good morning,

7 Chairperson Kenyatta Johnson, Helen Gym

8 and members of the Special Committee on

9 Gun Violence and the Committee on

10 Children and Youth. I am Dr. Jill

11 Bowen, Commissioner of the Department of

12 Behavioral Health and Intellectual

13 Disability Services, DBHIDS.

14 Joining me today is Yolanda

15 Hughes, Director of Trauma Response and

16 Emergency Preparedness, who provides

17 direct oversight for the Network of

18 Neighbors initiative on behalf of

19 DBHIDS. I also have with me Dr. Tamra

20 Williams, Deputy Chief Clinical Officer

21 Children Services for Community

22 Behavioral Health. Thank you for this

23 opportunity to testify in response to

24 Resolution No. 200524, which authorizes

25 hearings to examine the need for

1 universal asses to trauma counseling for
2 Philadelphia's youth.

3 Today I will speak about trauma
4 and the significant impact it has on
5 children, youth and communities across
6 Philadelphia. I will share some of the
7 resources available through DBHIDS,
8 Community Behavioral Health and the vast
9 provider network and share information
10 on established strategies and
11 partnerships that help us mobilize
12 supports. Trauma poses a significant
13 threat to the overall health and
14 well-being of our City. It affects not
15 only survivors of traumatic experiences,
16 but impacts family members, friends and
17 communities.

18 In 2020, Philadelphia had the
19 highest number of homicides in 30 years.
20 And in 2021, we continued to see
21 increased incidents of gun violence,
22 many frequently involving young people.
23 Furthermore, we know that these
24 incidents disproportionately impact
25 communities of color due to systemic

1 racism, pervasive poverty and a high
2 prevalence of adverse childhood
3 experiences.

4 Adverse childhood experiences
5 or ACEs are traumatic events that occur
6 in childhood between ages 0 and 17.

7 Experiencing or witnessing violence is
8 one of several possible adverse
9 childhood experiences. ACEs are linked
10 to chronic physical health problems,
11 mental illness and substance misuse in
12 adulthood and can negatively impact
13 education and job opportunities.

14 Working together to support
15 parents and caregivers, we can lessen
16 the impact of ACEs on children by
17 assuring safe, stable, nurturing
18 relationships and environments. In
19 addition, there is strong evidence that
20 cognitive behavioral therapy, CBT, can
21 reduce symptoms such as anxiety and
22 depression for youth who have
23 experienced trauma.

24 To address trauma, DBHIDS has
25 developed a variety of strategic

1 partnerships and evidence-based
2 practices. DBHIDS has been an active
3 participant in the Philadelphia Roadmap
4 for Safer Communities since its
5 inception in 2019. We serve on the
6 Executive Implementation Team, the
7 Social Work Group for Group Violence
8 Intervention and the Tactical Team and
9 have deployed trauma supports and
10 services in response to incidents of gun
11 violence across the City to connect
12 individuals and families to needed
13 supports and help communities heal.

14 One promising trauma-informed
15 care practice for intervention and
16 prevention of future violence is warm
17 hand-offs in the hospitals' emergency
18 departments. Healing Hurt People
19 provides trauma-informed case management
20 services, peer mentoring and referral
21 linkages for individuals between 10 and
22 29 years of age.

23 DBHIDS also continues to
24 support the efforts of Temple
25 University's CeaseFire Cure Violence

1 program, a community-based violence
2 intervention program that serves
3 individuals, survivors of gun violence
4 in the 22nd and parts of the 39th
5 District.

6 The Philadelphia Alliance for
7 Child Trauma Services, PACTS, is a
8 network of child-serving systems and
9 organizations whose mission is to
10 increase the number of youth receiving
11 effective trauma-focused and
12 trauma-informed care in Philadelphia.
13 Before PACTS was implemented in 2012,
14 there were only three behavioral health
15 agencies that specialized in pediatric
16 trauma.

17 Today there are approximately
18 118 active trauma-focused cognitive
19 behavioral treatment trained clinicians
20 and 31 primary child-adult relationship
21 enhancement trained clinicians across 20
22 locations and 16 provider agencies.
23 Through Intensive Behavioral Health
24 Services, IBHS, we offer a full
25 continuum of supports for children in

1 schools as well as the community. CBH
2 contracts with 27 agencies to provide
3 school-based behavioral health services
4 in 246 schools across 46 zip codes.

5 Providers have already been
6 engaged in cognitive behavioral therapy
7 training and will ultimately be trained
8 as well in cognitive behavioral
9 intervention for trauma in schools or
10 CBITS and Bounce Back, which is group
11 therapy for elementary-aged children who
12 are experiencing traumatic stress.

13 Other supports provided by DBHIDS in
14 schools include school-based prevention
15 services. Prevention programs are
16 provided by 12 agencies in approximately
17 90 schools and have also expanded their
18 programming into an additional 21
19 high-risk zip code schools. Topics
20 include conflict resolution, decision-
21 making, skills for positive peer
22 interactions and alcohol, tobacco and
23 drug education.

24 In addition to our treatment
25 approaches, we offer various community-

1 based programs including the Network of
2 Neighbors Responding to Violence or the
3 Network. The Network responds to the
4 traumatic stress associated with
5 community violence, sudden loss, tragic
6 accidents, suicides, burnout or ongoing
7 circumstances, such as living or working
8 in a neighborhood plagued by high rates
9 of gun violence.

10 The Network trains community
11 members to support and lead responses to
12 trauma and violence within their
13 communities and aligns local and city-
14 wide supports to protect the safety,
15 dignity and voice of the impacted
16 community. The Network utilizes the ASK
17 model, providing support when invited by
18 the community. All supports are focused
19 on strengthening local efforts, reducing
20 stress and isolation, encouraging peer
21 support and connection. If a community
22 is experiencing heightened stress, they
23 can contact the Network to discuss the
24 situation and available supports at
25 networkofneighbors@phila.gov.

1 Trauma impacts our minds, our
2 bodies, our relationships and our
3 communities. Addressing trauma means
4 finding ways to prevent it, enhancing
5 systems that relieve it and supporting
6 treatments that alleviate it. DBHIDS
7 hosts trainings that work to create
8 trauma-reducing systems throughout the
9 City of Philadelphia. We are facing
10 very difficult times and facing multiple
11 layers of trauma. That is why we
12 message that it is okay if you are not
13 okay. That is why we message that you
14 are not alone and that help is
15 available. We encourage anyone in need
16 of support to reach out to member
17 services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
18 at 888-545-2600.

19 DBHIDS has a resource toolkit
20 now available specifically designed to
21 help people understand the signs and
22 symptoms of trauma and learn how to
23 connect to available resources. As part
24 of DBHIDS's newly launched Boost Your
25 Mood campaign, you can now find this

1 trauma information, including tips and
2 resources for children, families and
3 communities by visiting
4 DBHIDS.org/Boost. This additional
5 information will be shared with Council
6 with our request to help with
7 dissemination to support increased
8 awareness of the tools and resources
9 available throughout the DBHIDS full
10 continuum of care.

11 Exposure to adverse childhood
12 experiences and prolonged trauma can
13 negatively impact people's life
14 trajectories. Together, we can work to
15 reduce these traumatic events and their
16 impacts so that Philadelphians affected
17 by trauma can get their life
18 trajectories back on track. Thank you
19 to all of the members of City Council
20 for holding hearings on this very
21 important issue. We hope that the
22 viewing public will be encouraged to
23 connect to support as a result of this
24 platform. Thank you for the opportunity
25 to testify. Ms. Hughes, Dr. Williams

1 and I are available to answer any
2 questions. Thank you.

3 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
4 Dr. Jill.

5 Next witness, just state your
6 name for the record and begin.

7 DR. LYNCH: Good morning. My
8 name is --

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good
10 morning, Karyn.

11 DR. LYNCH: Good morning. How
12 are you?

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Pretty
14 good.

15 DR. LYNCH: Great. Good
16 morning, members of the City Council and
17 thank you for this opportunity to speak
18 to you and join in a conversation on the
19 most important topic. I am Karyn
20 Lynch --

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Karyn, I
22 think there's some background noise.

23 DR. LYNCH: Is there background
24 noise now? Is it better?

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes, it's

1 better. You probably have to speak up
2 just a little bit louder.

3 DR. LYNCH: Okay. So I
4 appreciate the thumbs-up because that is
5 encouraging and giving a sense of what
6 more is needed. Thank you,
7 Councilmember --

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
9 welcome.

10 DR. LYNCH: -- Gym and thank
11 you, Councilmember Johnson. Again, my
12 name is Karyn Lynch and I am the Chief
13 of Student Support Services with the
14 School District of Philadelphia. I'm
15 here today representing Dr. William Hite
16 who is our Superintendent and also the
17 School District.

18 I am also joined by several of
19 my colleagues. After I speak, Dr. Tonya
20 Wolford is going to share with you
21 information about data that as a
22 community we have collected, other City
23 agencies we have found this information.
24 We gathered this information so that you
25 can get a sense of where students are

1 attending who have experienced gun
2 violence, to which schools they are
3 attending.

4 The topic that we have today,
5 gun violence, is a very important topic.
6 It's important to discuss this and to
7 discuss this as a community because each
8 of the members of our community have a
9 role in playing in order to ensure the
10 end of gun violence that's taking so
11 many lives of our young children. A
12 loss of so many young lives to gun
13 violence is a crisis. It's senseless.
14 It's alarming.

15 Each time we receive news of
16 another child lost to gun violence, I
17 think about the mothers, the fathers,
18 the brothers, sisters, cousins,
19 classmates, teachers, relatives. I
20 think about the loss of the
21 possibilities, no prom, no driver's
22 license, no graduation, no workplace
23 experience, college, marriage, children,
24 grandchildren, all lost, a future lost.

25 I think about the growing

1 poverty of hope among our young people,
2 and I wonder about the shooter and what
3 it takes to reach this level of violence
4 and to take action that ends another's
5 life. I pray for the survivors, that
6 they may somehow find a way to move
7 forward despite the loss and given the
8 loss of their child. This is a crisis
9 that our City is experiencing.

10 The School District is an
11 active part of the City, and we play an
12 important role in collaborating with
13 others to help solve this crisis. We
14 are eager and willing to sit at the
15 table, to gather in forum, to go
16 wherever needed to involve the School
17 District in our role as part of our
18 responsibility towards educating and
19 providing safety and shelter for young
20 people.

21 While we are eager, willing and
22 more than able to join the effort, we
23 cannot lead this effort. And so, we
24 turned to other agencies within our
25 community in order to ensure that we are

1 part of their effort. I'm extremely
2 pleased that I had the opportunity this
3 morning to speak after Dr. Jill Bowen.
4 Her agency provides a good deal of
5 resources within the community, both
6 mental health and behavioral health as
7 she described. And following
8 Councilmember Gym's instruction, I am
9 not going to repeat all of what she said
10 and I'm not going to speak to --
11 although it's all in my comments, I'm
12 not going to speak to the many, many
13 resources to which the School District
14 is partnering with CBH and DBHIDS on
15 providing both trauma, mental health and
16 behavioral health supports.

17 Today I'm going to share the
18 School District of Philadelphia's
19 protocol when there is a crisis. I'm
20 going to talk a little bit about the
21 skills that we are teaching students to
22 help them learn and control their
23 emotions and their conflict and their
24 behavior. And then I'm going to talk
25 very, very briefly about next steps.

1 And as I said, following me is my
2 colleague Tonya Wolford, who is going to
3 share data.

4 So first, what does the School
5 District do when there's a serious
6 incident involving a young person, a
7 student, a child in our School District.
8 We have provided the Councilmembers with
9 a flowchart that describes exactly what
10 we do when we engage. Recognizing that
11 not every situation is the same and not
12 every incident is the same, we
13 differentiate our services depending on
14 the severity of the crisis.

15 So going to the next slide, the
16 prevention and intervention liaisons in
17 the School District of Philadelphia
18 support every single one of our schools.
19 They have an assignment. They are very,
20 very familiar with the schools. They
21 become involved and engaged in the
22 schools when there's not a crisis so
23 that they are most prepared when there
24 is a crisis to engage.

25 I'm not going to read the

1 slides word for word, but you can see
2 that these are the mental health experts
3 with our School District who are most
4 prepared to address the needs of trauma,
5 behavioral health and coordinate the
6 services that students, staff and
7 members of the community need in -- the
8 school community need in order to
9 address emergencies, crises and provide
10 intervention as well as coordinate
11 services across the City, including
12 those services that are provided by
13 Dr. Bowen's agency, CBH as well as
14 DBHIDS.

15 The flowchart, you will see
16 that the very first thing that occurs is
17 that agencies provide us with
18 information regarding an incident. It's
19 also very possible that we hear first
20 from family members, staff and
21 individuals in the community who are
22 first aware of an incident that has
23 involved a child or a loved one or
24 someone who attends one of our schools.

25 We engage our prevention and

1 intervention liaisons as I said because
2 these are the subject matter experts,
3 and they provide the coordination that
4 other agencies as well as the
5 communication with the principal who
6 also receives the information regarding
7 any incident that happens involving a
8 child that's in their school. The
9 services of the prevention and
10 intervention liaison are also to check
11 our records, see whether or not whether
12 there are siblings or family members
13 within the school or within the School
14 District and reach out to other schools,
15 if necessary, in order to provide
16 differentiated supports and different
17 resources, but to ensure that not only
18 the children that are in the family, the
19 children that are within the classroom,
20 but also any children that are attending
21 other schools who may not have heard
22 about the incident are also involved and
23 aware.

24 The prevention and intervention
25 liaisons are also the individuals who

1 examine and assess what's needed in the
2 classroom, what's needed by supports
3 that need to be provided and they
4 coordinate those supports. If
5 additional counselors are needed, they
6 identify counselors for perhaps
7 neighboring schools, psychologists, CBH
8 providers, all of the entities -- I'm
9 trying very hard not to repeat what
10 Dr. Bowen shared, but the agencies and
11 the services that Dr. Bowen described
12 are also engaged and all of those
13 services are coordinated as well as
14 communication to the families within the
15 school community that are very
16 interested in knowing how they too can
17 support the classroom and the child and
18 having a better understanding of what
19 experiences their children are having at
20 school when that child comes home after
21 learning about something that may have
22 happened in their school.

23 The follow-up is ongoing and
24 differentiated based on the needs of the
25 school and the circumstances of the

1 incident, so it can be ongoing for
2 several weeks and there are check-ins
3 that take place by the prevention and
4 intervention liaison over time.

5 Also, the right side of the
6 flowchart I want to highlight the
7 prevention and intervention partners
8 that are actively involved with the
9 School District. I want to point out
10 that I shared that Council is involved.
11 We also have STEP teams in about 50 of
12 our schools. STEP stands for Support
13 Team for Educational Partnerships. This
14 is a team that includes both a clinical
15 coordinator, a social worker, a
16 behavioral health provider and a family
17 care counselor.

18 We also might depending on the
19 circumstances engage individuals and
20 supports that are at DHS, the Department
21 of Human Services or at Children and
22 Families or other agencies within the
23 community. I want to highlight that
24 starting last September, and Dr. Bowen
25 did make mention of this, in every

1 single one of our schools, DBHIDS is now
2 providing what we call and what is
3 called Intensive Behavioral Health
4 Services, IBHS, in every single one of
5 our schools. We are very pleased to
6 have this partnership. They provide
7 mental health services, coordination of
8 trauma support. They are operational
9 right now despite the fact that we are
10 in a virtual environment in many of our
11 schools. And the services that they
12 offer are geared to the language spoken
13 and the ethnicity of the members of the
14 community that they will be serving and
15 they were selected based on their
16 expertise as well as their community
17 relationships and involvement.

18 I also want to stress that the
19 same provider that is providing a
20 service within a school to a student is
21 going to be for the very first time the
22 exact provider that is providing that
23 service within the community and within
24 the home. So regardless of where the
25 service was entered, if a child is

1 engaging with a particular provider in
2 school, in the past they might have gone
3 home and the family might have been
4 involved with a different provider.
5 Now, with the help of our partner
6 agency, we have bridged that gap and
7 provided support.

8 I want to quickly run through
9 the list. There are other community
10 partners because partnering is extremely
11 important. We don't always have the
12 expertise and do rely on community
13 partnerships. I want to uplift the
14 Uplift Center for Grieving Children
15 because they provide grief services
16 within the School District as well as
17 the Philadelphia Alliance School Child
18 Trauma. These and several other
19 organizations are organizations that we
20 have worked with over time and they
21 provide grieving sources for
22 individuals. In the School District is
23 where I'd like to highlight that we now
24 have in the School District for the last
25 two years an Employee Assistance Program

1 for adults within our schools that are
2 seeking and need additional support.

3 So I shared the other supports
4 that we have and the other ways that we
5 have engaged with partners across -- we
6 engage with reliable established
7 partners who have experience in
8 addressing mental health and trauma
9 needs within our School District. Now,
10 very, very quickly before I close, I
11 want to share that very consistent with
12 comments that came from youth last night
13 as were relayed by Councilmember Gym,
14 teaching relationships and
15 relationship-building to young people is
16 absolutely critical and I would say it
17 is the essence of the frameworks that we
18 have within the School District of
19 Philadelphia.

20 When we talk about
21 relationship-building, we think about
22 relationship first, restorative
23 practices, we think about PBIS and other
24 frameworks that are all intended to help
25 young people build relationships, bridge

1 what they thought to be differences and
2 recognize that there's greater
3 commonality than they know, and also to
4 help them find reliable, trusting
5 individuals within the school both among
6 their peers and among the adults that
7 they can reach out to in places and that
8 they are forming relationships with when
9 there's not a crisis so that they are
10 building a skill that they can carry
11 with them throughout life.

12 I want to absolutely highlight
13 that one of the things that we have been
14 doing most recently in our conversations
15 with Councilmember Gilmore Richardson is
16 highlighting the importance of finding
17 ways, identifying ways and continuing to
18 grow the ways in which youth can address
19 their conflict. We believe that it's
20 extremely important that young people as
21 well as adults learn how to resolve
22 conflict when they see it with young
23 people.

24 And so, if there's to be
25 conflict training, we would hope that

1 there are adults that also receive
2 conflict resolution training so that
3 when they are engaging with youth in
4 resource centers, community location,
5 they too are prepared to help resolve
6 the issue.

7 Lastly, I just want to
8 highlight several things that we're
9 doing next. I've shared very often how
10 we will continue to work with our City
11 partners and other City agencies. I've
12 named several and we will continue to do
13 that work. We will work together with
14 these agencies. But as I said, it's
15 probably not that we can lead the
16 effort. Gun violence is extremely
17 important to everyone and we have to be
18 at the heart as we particularly look at
19 the frequency in which young Black boys
20 and young Black men are dying at an
21 alarming rate within our City.

22 We're going to work with
23 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson who is
24 extremely passionate on the topic and
25 who we appreciate for reaching out to us

1 only to join in her efforts. We are
2 also going to continue to identify
3 supports that are needed and grow those
4 supports as we have over the last 10
5 years, and we also believe that the
6 opening of schools is going to be
7 extremely important because young people
8 need to be in a safe, sheltering
9 environment for the majority of their
10 day so that they can avoid the instances
11 that can lead to gun violence and they
12 can be in an effective and sheltering
13 environment.

14 Along with other child-serving
15 agencies, we have to find ways to better
16 support children who have been involved
17 in gun violence. Evidence shows that
18 homicides (inaudible) among those
19 children that we have lost shows that at
20 some point many have been involved in an
21 instance of gun violence. And if we
22 engage these children before a homicide
23 occurs, engage them with supports,
24 including mentoring and ways to deal
25 with their anger and ways to deal with

1 their emotions and more in tune with
2 their emotions, it's a City effort.

3 Ours again is one of
4 instruction. We're teaching reading,
5 writing and arithmetic and so to be able
6 to provide all of these additional
7 supports, we have to rely on members of
8 the community who are going to engage
9 with children and their individual
10 organizations. So in closing, I want to
11 thank you all for the opportunity to
12 comment. And next as I shared here,
13 you're going to hear from my colleague
14 with the School District, Dr. Tonya
15 Wolford, who is sharing information on
16 data that is available to us as a
17 community. Thank you.

18 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
19 welcome, Dr. Lynch. Is Dr. Wolford
20 available next?

21 DR. WOLFORD: Yes. Hello. Can
22 you hear me?

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes, we
24 can hear you and see you, Tonya.

25 DR. WOLFORD: Great. Thanks so

1 much. My name is Tonya Wolford. I'm
2 Chief for Evaluation, Research and
3 Accountability and I'm going to present
4 some information on shooting victims
5 enrollment in the Philadelphia public
6 school system today.

7 The Philadelphia Police
8 Department provides us directly through
9 our Office of School Safety with
10 identifying information on school-aged
11 shooting victims. And that to this
12 point has been victims that are between
13 the ages of 6 and 22. The data that I'm
14 going to present today represents
15 shooting incidents and victims --
16 incidents that took place between
17 January 1, 2020 and April 3, 2021. SDP
18 was able to match 753 of these victims
19 to actual enrollment records within the
20 District. And of these 753 victims, 280
21 or roughly 37 percent had an active
22 enrollment at the time of the incident.
23 473 or 63 percent were not enrolled.
24 Those who had exited included students
25 who had graduated, for instance, dropped

1 out or students who had transferred out
2 of the SDP system, and I'll go into more
3 details on this in the slide. I'll walk
4 you through this in just one sec.

5 I just want to clarify also
6 that the victims were enrolled in
7 Philadelphia public schools for multiple
8 years so the figures presented here
9 represent the school of last record for
10 the students or the last school of
11 record. And the last school of record
12 that we have it's going to include
13 traditional SDP schools, alternative
14 schools, charter schools as well as
15 approved private schools for special ed.
16 placements.

17 This data slide provides an
18 overview of the information that we have
19 from students or school-aged students
20 that were enrolled in the District that
21 were involved in a shooting incident.
22 And so, on this slide which we'll walk
23 you through different sections of but
24 just to give an overview, it's got
25 information on the overall victims which

1 was that 753 number that I pointed out,
2 the enrolled victims which was the 280
3 number that I pointed out or 37 percent
4 as well as information on the exited
5 students, the 473 or 63 percent of
6 students that have been involved in an
7 incident for which we have records.
8 This slide also intersects the data
9 across those different groups with
10 information on types of schools they
11 were enrolled in, the last record that
12 we have for those students as I just
13 previously described.

14 Next slide, please. You can go
15 back to the -- back one, please. Thank
16 you. The first section with the orange
17 box around it is the total number of
18 students and what percentage of those
19 victims are students involved in
20 incidents were enrolled in the different
21 sectors. So just walking through this,
22 this is the total for the victims
23 involved in an incident that we were
24 able to match. 267 were in SDP K to 12
25 schools; 290 in alternative schools; 187

1 in charter schools; and 9 in those
2 approved private school placements.

3 In terms of the type of schools
4 I will just clarify, so the alternative
5 schools typically are involving children
6 that are older and the SDP and charter
7 schools here, the larger numbers are in
8 high schools. So over 80 percent of the
9 students that were identified were ages
10 17 to 22. So over 80 percent of the
11 students in that category were ages 17
12 to 22.

13 Next slide, please. So the
14 second part of this graph is then
15 looking at these other two breakdowns of
16 active students and exited students,
17 which that 280 plus 473 equals the total
18 students that I just referred to. But
19 if we're looking at active and exited
20 students for all of the sectors and all
21 of the categories, you can see that the
22 number of exited students are higher.
23 And again, that does just mean that last
24 school of record that we have on file
25 for the student occurred before the

1 incident was recorded, before the date
2 of the incident.

3 And as you see here, these
4 percentages are out of the total. So
5 out of the 753 students, we would say
6 that 26.8 percent were exited students
7 from an alternative school as their last
8 school of record. Similarly, we can
9 look over and say 20.8 percent of that
10 753 were students that had a last school
11 of record as one of SDP's K through 12
12 schools, and this just provides further
13 details around that distribution.

14 Next slide, please. Lastly,
15 this slide -- can you see the bottom of
16 the slide because I can't see it --
17 okay. Thank you. Lastly, this slide
18 provides last enrolled record by school
19 and these are schools with the top
20 number of students overall that were
21 involved in accidents. And it's 25
22 schools that represent over 50 percent
23 of the enrollments for the victims. So
24 stated otherwise, over 50 percent of the
25 victims had a last school of record as

1 one of the 25 schools shown here. And
2 again, we provide the breakdown between
3 total number of students that were
4 enrolled at some point as well as active
5 students in the different schools.

6 The legend at the bottom just
7 to highlight, you can so then see blue
8 schools are District schools. The cream
9 yellowy color, orangish color are
10 alternative schools, and then the green
11 are charter schools as well.

12 And that is my presentation on
13 the distribution of enrollments. I
14 would be happy to take any questions
15 I'll say in advance if I'm not able to
16 provide you. If there are additional
17 data questions, I will be able to follow
18 up. We'll be able to take those
19 questions and follow up on pulling or
20 finding the data that you may be
21 interested in that's not here.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Is
23 Councilmember Johnson present?

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I'm sorry.
25 I want to acknowledge Councilwoman Maria

1 Quinones-Sanchez who has a question.

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Thank you, Member Johnson. And I want
4 to thank you and Councilmember Gym for
5 bringing such a timely conversation in
6 this.

7 And I just thought it was
8 really important and if Jill can speak
9 to this really quickly, the kind of work
10 that's been done around the last two
11 years around behavioral health in the
12 School District is unlike anything we've
13 done before. And unfortunately, COVID
14 hit us in the middle of us
15 institutionalizing some of the work
16 that's been done.

17 I think it's important, Jill,
18 if you don't have the specifics, but
19 then if you can provide it for the
20 record in this particular hearing I
21 think it will be critical, the selection
22 of which behavioral health agencies and
23 their alignment with school-based
24 providers and the amount of investment
25 both from your Behavioral Department to

1 the School District I think it's
2 important. As we talk about amplifying
3 and growing this, because I think the
4 conversation is about how we do this
5 better and what more supports we need, I
6 think it's important for us to know what
7 investments are currently on a
8 school-by-school basis.

9 There are clearly some
10 neighborhoods that require more than
11 others. And I think part of what we're
12 trying to get to is a line where we have
13 hotspots and a line that with the School
14 District's plans for summer opening and
15 some additional information, so if you
16 don't have that readily available but if
17 you can speak to the intensity of the
18 investment that you're making on a
19 school-by-school basis, I think it's
20 important for the record, and thank you.
21 Thank you again.

22 DR. BOWEN: Thank you,
23 Councilmember. I don't have those
24 specifics in front of me, but we
25 certainly can get them. And I do have

1 Dr. Williams on the call and she may be
2 able to say some more. But I do want to
3 say it's 27 providers across all of the
4 schools. And the idea of having this
5 available in every school is really a
6 critical component. And it both
7 provides the opportunity for the
8 evidence-based practice to be available
9 that is known to mitigate against the
10 traumatic effects of ACEs, that's
11 cognitive behavioral treatment. And
12 though the pandemic slowed down some of
13 the training initiatives, the foundation
14 of CBT training continued even through
15 this past year of the pandemic.

16 In addition, there is work that
17 is done with the school and with the
18 teachers in the classroom that helps to
19 address challenging behaviors or
20 challenging conflicts, so conflict
21 resolution, et cetera, that can happen
22 in the classroom or can happen in terms
23 of skill-building for teachers to help
24 with some of the interactions in the
25 classroom. So it's an enormous

1 undertaking and wide reaching, and that
2 we are just beginning to even see the
3 impact that this approach can have on
4 the children in the schools.

5 I do want to see if
6 Dr. Williams would like to say more.
7 She is the Children Services Lead at
8 Community Behavioral Health and is very
9 actively working with the School
10 District on the Intensive Behavioral
11 Health services, the IBHS program. So
12 I'll see if Dr. Williams would like to
13 say a few words in response to
14 Councilmember's question.

15 DR. WILLIAMS: Yes. Thank you,
16 Dr. Bowen. We really are very excited
17 about some of the opportunities that we
18 have with IBHS or Intensive Behavioral
19 Health Services. We took a different
20 approach to implementing behavioral
21 health services that are available in
22 schools by offering a regionalized
23 approach. It's a strategy that we've
24 used with other types of behavioral
25 health services, but essentially

1 providers are sort of assigned to
2 particular zip codes where schools are
3 located and they are considered the lead
4 behavioral health agency for those
5 schools. So principals have a go-to
6 lead mental health agency that they can
7 contact when they believe that a student
8 is having some behavioral health
9 challenges.

10 And so, in this way we really
11 wanted to also not just increase that
12 communication between behavioral health
13 providers and schools but also to be
14 able to increase the community links, so
15 making sure that providers who are
16 serving the communities in those zip
17 codes are also communicating with other
18 resources in those areas to provide
19 really more holistic supports to
20 students and families who need help.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

22 If you can just give the information for
23 the record because I think as we move
24 on, as this conversation carries on --
25 and I definitely want to let

1 Councilmember Johnson and Gym who are
2 hosting this and have been working on
3 this -- I just want to make sure that
4 because of COVID, some of the work that
5 we initially thought was going to happen
6 didn't happen, but I want to make sure
7 that we're connecting this and involving
8 this to meet the really challenging
9 immediate needs right now, so thank you
10 very much.

11 And thank you, Councilmember
12 Johnson.

13 DR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
15 very much.

16 I just have one question
17 regarding the liaisons that work with
18 the School District. This is for
19 Dr. Lynch. I just want to get an idea
20 of the number of schools that are
21 assigned per liaison. And then also,
22 what is their certification in terms of
23 training and background regarding this
24 work that they are doing?

25 DR. LYNCH: So each has

1 probably about 12 schools, 12 to 24
2 schools depending on the network, and
3 their backgrounds are in mental health
4 so they could have counseling
5 background, mental health psychology
6 background and most are licensed
7 clinical and trauma training.

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay. So
9 that's 12 schools per liaison on a case
10 load?

11 DR. LYNCH: It's 12 to 14, and
12 it's based on the data and the
13 experiences that are taking place within
14 the school.

15 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay. All
16 right. Thank you very much. And that's
17 it for you, Dr. Lynch.

18 I have a question for Dr. Jill
19 Bowen regarding Network of Neighbors,
20 that I know my colleague Councilwoman
21 Kendra Brooks works very closely with as
22 well. So, Dr. Bowen, I just want to get
23 an idea. I remember doing a workshop
24 with Network of Neighbors and they were
25 talking about how they go out into the

1 community and provide trauma-informed
2 training to community members who would
3 like to participate.

4 At that particular time, there
5 was a staff of two. And I know that the
6 City of Philadelphia has other
7 trauma-based services that they provide,
8 but this particular organization I know
9 do a lot of on-the-ground frontline work
10 regarding gun violence. So what's the
11 future plan in terms of expanding the
12 level of services that are available
13 particularly with Network of Neighbors?

14 When I had the workshop in
15 Point Breeze, and I found out there were
16 only two staff members, and I know we
17 were on the trajectory at that time to
18 hit 500 homicides, I was trying to
19 really get an idea of how their work can
20 be taken to scale in terms of really
21 being out there and being effective.

22 And again, I know when I talked
23 to you when you and I met, it was
24 mentioned there are other services that
25 the City of Philadelphia also provides,

1 but my specific interest is Network of
2 Neighbors because you kind of do see
3 them on the ground doing the hard work
4 in terms of training community members,
5 so I just want to get some feedback from
6 you.

7 DR. BOWEN: So first, I want to
8 say thank you. It is a really excellent
9 program and I appreciate highlighting it
10 and, therefore, the Director of the
11 program Yolanda Hughes is on here with
12 me. And I will ask her to help explain
13 the approach of the Network of Neighbors
14 and why a small group of leaders through
15 DBHIDS can create a very wide group of
16 leaders in the community. And so, I
17 will have her explain to you, she would
18 be the best, what the program is, which
19 is not to say that we are not interested
20 in expanding and have made that request
21 for expanded funding for the program for
22 this Fiscal Year '22 budget.

23 And I do want to just say that
24 we looked at some of the data on the
25 number of communities that were served

1 by Network of Neighbors, so we compared
2 the January through March 2020 Quarter
3 1, which is the prepandemic quarter of
4 2020 with the current year Quarter 1
5 2021. So we're looking at January
6 through March of 2020 versus January
7 through March of 2021 and there's an
8 over 65 percent increase in the number
9 of communities serviced by Network of
10 Neighbors. So you're talking about 29
11 communities served in the beginning of
12 2020 and 48 communities served in the
13 beginning of 2021. So we really do
14 appreciate the attention and focus and
15 understanding of the importance of this
16 program.

17 So I'm going to turn it over to
18 Yolanda Hughes, the Director for Network
19 of Neighbors, who can be more explicit
20 about the philosophy and the way in
21 which the program works.

22 MS. HUGHES: Good morning,
23 everyone. Thank you, Dr. Bowen. The
24 Network of Neighbors has a very unique
25 approach.

1 And, yes, currently there are
2 two full-time staff to address your
3 comment, Councilman Johnson. But the
4 goal of the network is actually to train
5 community members to support their own
6 community. So when we go out to support
7 communities, a couple of things have
8 happened.

9 One, we operate from a premise
10 called the ASK model, A-S-K, which
11 really means that communities have to
12 invite us in, and that's really
13 important. Because when communities
14 have been impacted by trauma, their
15 sense of trust has been taken away from
16 them. So when we are asking communities
17 to invite us in, that means they are
18 driving a process, their voice is
19 leading the way. So we are getting a
20 lot of information. We spend a lot time
21 with triaging and assessing communities.

22 So pretty much what that means
23 is we are working with communities to
24 really establish their trust. Because
25 as Councilwoman Gym spoke about when she

1 talked about young people yesterday,
2 we're asking young people and people in
3 the community to tell their story about
4 how something has impacted them. So if
5 we don't have an invitation to come into
6 that community, it will not make them
7 feel safe, right. So that
8 differentiates us from crisis response.

9 So crisis response, they rush
10 out and they support communities. But
11 what we're really doing is building a
12 relationship with communities that have
13 been impacted to help them talk about
14 how trauma is affecting them. And what
15 I really love about the network is it's
16 a gateway. It really exposes people to
17 this is what it looks like to be in a
18 safe space, to have a conversation so
19 that if I continue to have symptoms and
20 things continue to escalate for me, then
21 I will seek out more intensive
22 behavioral health services, if needed.

23 So when we talk about training
24 communities and community members,
25 what's really important is we feel that

1 community members trust individuals in
2 their own community. They're more
3 likely to have that conversation. So we
4 offer a training usually twice during
5 the fiscal year where we train anyone
6 who's interested to learn the
7 interventions that we use. The
8 intervention that we use is called post-
9 traumatic stress management and it's a
10 group intervention.

11 And we love this intervention
12 because it has worked with different
13 cultures, different neighborhoods. And
14 the reason is because we are gathering
15 people which is natural for them to come
16 together as a group from the same
17 community to talk about how they have
18 been impacted. Everything that we do is
19 free and we help communities organize as
20 well. So for example, if a community
21 leader contacts us to say, yes, my group
22 has been impacted by gun violence, I
23 want to get youth together, things of
24 that nature, we go an extra step in the
25 sense of if you want us to help you

1 create a flyer to pass out to the
2 community, we will do that. We want to
3 make sure that the messaging comes from
4 the community and it doesn't come from
5 us. So it's always about the community
6 driving the process.

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Great.
8 Thank you for that feedback. And again,
9 I'm glad you clarified the difference
10 between the work that you do and the
11 crisis response teams. That was very,
12 very helpful. I'm just interested, but
13 most importantly just inspired by your
14 work because separate from the crisis
15 response is the actual deep-dive
16 perspective of actually dealing with
17 trauma individuals, experience as it
18 relates to the gun violence that we're
19 seeing, but also the community. Because
20 I think sometimes we forget that not
21 only when there's a shooting and a
22 murder inside a neighborhood, not just
23 the immediate family members are
24 impacted, but the community is impacted,
25 because a lot of times they are our

1 loved ones and friends and people we've
2 watched grow up in our neighborhoods
3 whose lives are taken, so thank you very
4 much.

5 At this time, I'm going to call
6 on Councilwoman Helen Gym.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
8 very much, Mr. Chair. I really
9 appreciate it.

10 I want to just very briefly
11 talk about as we go into this
12 conversation just some comments that
13 were made by young people last night
14 because none of this is intentional for
15 us, but it's important to hear how they
16 are seeing things. So one of the things
17 that they talked about is when you
18 punish violence, when you look at
19 violence and punish it, one of the
20 things that was drawn out is that you
21 punish depression and they're feeling
22 that anger is very closely linked to
23 depression.

24 What they said was you need to
25 invest in our humanity. You need to

1 invest in places where we can get help
2 that isn't a lockdown facility. You
3 need to invest in the therapy that comes
4 out of relationships that reflects
5 culture-lived experiences, and I think
6 that this is a little bit of what
7 Councilmember Quinones-Sanchez was
8 talking about.

9 One of the young people said,
10 you have to look at why young people are
11 doing things. The grieving process is
12 long-term, but understanding this why is
13 going to fix a little bit. So I hope
14 that everybody can stay on to listen to
15 some of the testimony that you're going
16 to hear later, especially from school
17 principals because it's incredibly
18 powerful.

19 And to Karyn Lynch in
20 particular, you and I have been on the
21 phone for a long time. We've talked
22 about things after the immediacy. I
23 know that this is deeply personal and
24 deeply personally felt, and I know you
25 understand what your principals are

1 going through each and every day. But
2 it's very clear that when we're hearing
3 the testimony from principals, we also
4 did a survey of people online, including
5 a lot of teachers who talked about
6 what's it's like to (inaudible) the news
7 and go through all of this, and read and
8 pray that your students or former
9 students aren't on that list.

10 I think one of the things that
11 comes out the most is the feeling from
12 both young people and from educators on
13 the ground that they need more in their
14 school on a regular and daily basis, and
15 they're talking about the social
16 workers, trauma specialists, counselors,
17 assistant principals, some service days
18 for teachers and staff so they can help
19 deal with some of the aftermath.

20 And so, I guess one of the
21 questions for Karyn Lynch and for the
22 School District is what are we doing to
23 increase these resources at the school
24 level knowing that the relationships are
25 what matters, not so much the services

1 provided, but the service is delivered
2 through the vehicle of a relationship.
3 That's how it continues. That's how it
4 kind of gets going and maybe that's how
5 it may ultimately be transferred off,
6 but young people don't feel like they
7 can access these services unless they're
8 basically committed to them or if
9 they're assigned, maybe they last or
10 not.

11 We've got these STEP teams.
12 We've got 50 of them. What can we do to
13 expand and to really make a real shift
14 in this time period. With so many young
15 people being impacted, I'm staggered by
16 the numbers -- I'll talk about that in a
17 little bit -- but just to get to those
18 schools that are deeply impacted for
19 trauma and violence.

20 Now, if we can't do it at every
21 school, can we make a commitment that
22 every single one of the schools that
23 showed up on that list will have a STEP
24 team assigned to it?

25 DR. LYNCH: Thank you,

1 Councilmember. I think history is
2 really important. And so, just very
3 quickly I will share that 10 years ago
4 when the Superintendent arrived we had
5 prevention and intervention liaisons.
6 We did not have counselors in every
7 school. We did not have school nurses
8 in every school, and part of the reason
9 was funding and the way that funding had
10 been used to fund positions. And when
11 money was lost, there wasn't an
12 opportunity to be able to sustain those
13 positions. It's one of the reasons why
14 we have reached out to community
15 partners who see children also within
16 the community, as I indicated, Children
17 and Families, Jill's agency and others
18 that have the primary responsibility for
19 providing these services.

20 We also recognize that
21 providing these services within our
22 schools to help students have closer
23 access is extremely important, so we've
24 invited these partners to actually
25 actively participate within our school

1 and become part of the school team and
2 augment the services and the
3 relationship building that we have. I
4 think Jill and the two colleagues that
5 she mentioned are about the process of
6 working with providers who are constant,
7 not coming and going within our school
8 so that they do have the opportunity to
9 build relationships and bring sort of
10 this.

11 But in addition to all of that,
12 I want to highlight that in the last few
13 years -- and you pointed this out --
14 through STEP program we have hired, and
15 again this is another program, that CBH
16 is paying for, the individuals are in
17 fact District employees and the support
18 team for educational partnerships is
19 actually one where while it does not
20 exist in every school, we have based on
21 the data placed these resources in more
22 than the 21 schools that we originally
23 started with. So schools based on their
24 data and based on their school
25 improvement plans and what they plan to

1 address moving forward do have some of
2 the support teams in them.

3 And moving forward, I know
4 factually that you're absolutely right,
5 we are looking for ways to ensure -- so
6 several of our schools have said we'd
7 like to have more social workers or we'd
8 like to have a social worker or we'd
9 like to have counselors. So to put the
10 same resources in every single school is
11 not the direction that I think we're
12 moving, but the direction of addressing
13 the needs of the students that are
14 within the schools is the direction that
15 we're moving in.

16 STEP is intended to be a Tier 2
17 support. And very, very frequently
18 students need a Tier 3 support and it's
19 not intended for that purpose. IBHS is
20 probably closer to that effort. And so,
21 I wouldn't make a blanket statement
22 about STEP going into every school as
23 much as I would say that where there is
24 a high need, resources have to be
25 provided and that's what we have been

1 doing over the last 10 years and what
2 we're going to continue to do moving
3 forward.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So your data
5 showed that 50 percent of shootings
6 victims can be found in about 25
7 schools.

8 DR. LYNCH: Yes.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Between
10 charter, District, alternative and
11 special assignment schools. What are
12 those schools getting specifically? We
13 can even go through -- 25 schools, we
14 can look at 50 percent of the shooting
15 victims in a 16-month period, which
16 again is just shocking, right, 753 young
17 people. It's a shocking number in
18 general.

19 But if 50 percent of them are
20 in just 25 schools, tell me what those
21 25 schools are getting. Does every
22 single one of them -- I know some of
23 these are charter. But for the District
24 schools, does every single one of them
25 have a STEP team?

1 DR. LYNCH: No. Every single
2 one of them has IBHS, and that's
3 intensive behavioral health services.
4 Every single one of them has that, and
5 again --

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: They have
7 prevention and intervention liaisons
8 allocated to all of them and that
9 includes the alternative schools?

10 DR. LYNCH: The alternative
11 schools have a prevention and
12 intervention liaison that is assigned to
13 the alternative schools. The
14 alternative schools I will highlight are
15 not -- they're contracted. And so, all
16 of the services that might be available,
17 some services come through contract so
18 they might have social workers or
19 additional staff that are provided, not
20 necessarily directly from the School
21 District but through the contract and
22 the contracted services that the
23 contracted entity has determined to
24 provide.

25 The services that we're talking

1 about are not services that are
2 available in charter schools. Every
3 single one of the School District
4 schools have Intensive Behavioral Health
5 Services available to them. And as I
6 shared, each of the prevention and
7 intervention liaisons has a complement
8 of schools that they work with.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Are you
10 saying there's only one prevention and
11 intervention liaison among the School
12 District schools that are on there?

13 DR. LYNCH: No. I'm saying
14 that there is -- that each prevention
15 and intervention liaison has a group of
16 schools that they work with.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So among the
18 25 -- I guess one question is, part of
19 what the data should show us is an
20 ability to understand how to allocate
21 some of these supports. And part of it
22 is, I understand that the prevention and
23 intervention liaisons are assigned to
24 schools, but there's only one prevention
25 and intervention liaison assigned to the

1 alternative schools; is that what you're
2 saying?

3 DR. LYNCH: Yes.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Even though
5 there are multiple alternative schools
6 on this list of schools that encompass a
7 huge portion of young people impacted by
8 violence?

9 DR. LYNCH: Yes, but that's not
10 the only support that they are
11 receiving.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: No, I
13 understand. It sounds like though the
14 prevention and intervention liaison has
15 a very specific role to play around
16 convening all of those actors.

17 DR. LYNCH: Right.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I guess if
19 you're looking at a school like MLK or
20 at an Overbrook -- I'm blanking on some
21 of the other schools that are on the
22 list that I recall from there -- or a
23 Lincoln, it almost feels that you would
24 want to ensure knowing that there's been
25 such a deep impact of over really a

1 short period of timing, you're talking
2 about 16 months that there might be
3 something more intensive that's going on
4 there.

5 Are you looking at this or what
6 can we tell some of the schools
7 knowing -- the data is very clear. How
8 are we using this to ensure that they
9 have more resources coming in right now?

10 DR. LYNCH: So looking at --
11 let's just take the alternative schools
12 as an example. We recognize that
13 prevention and intervention liaisons
14 have a great role in responsibility.
15 And if more has happened in those
16 schools looking at the data, increasing
17 the numbers of prevention and
18 intervention liaisons that are serving
19 those schools is important.

20 If you look at the transitional
21 services that we have available, you'll
22 consider schools that are on the list
23 like Overbrook and MLK. When students
24 are transitioning from detention
25 centers, when students are transitioning

1 from behavior health, we recognize that
2 more case management service is
3 necessary in order to ensure that
4 transition. And so, we have increased
5 the numbers of case managers. I think
6 we shared that with you. That came as a
7 result of the RTF discussions that we
8 had, so we've increased that number and
9 they're going to focus on those schools
10 like MLK and Overbrook that have the
11 greatest number of transitioning
12 students, students coming and going.
13 And so, we're in the process of hiring
14 those individuals right now.

15 So, yes, you're absolutely
16 right, looking at the data and providing
17 resources and providing them as quickly
18 as necessary is important. When the
19 resource isn't readily available to us,
20 being able to reach out to our community
21 partners and say here's where the
22 services need to be provided in a
23 particular school is absolutely
24 critical.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. So I

1 want to make sure that there's some time
2 here for other things, but I do want to
3 follow up for --

4 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Go ahead,
5 Madam Chair.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yeah.

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I will
8 defer because you are Co-Chair of this
9 hearing. Latitude is extended. Go
10 ahead.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Understood.
12 I'll make it quick. I guess one of the
13 questions that I have is for these
14 schools in particular. I understand the
15 importance of case managers. We have
16 gone through this before though. We
17 have seen millions of dollars invested
18 into a school wrapped around individual
19 students. And one of the benefits of
20 the STEP program and kind of looking at
21 schools within a holistic environment is
22 that the impact of violence is not just
23 on the one individual child or their
24 immediate family. It is on a broader
25 school community.

1 And one of the things that
2 we're most concerned about, especially
3 around prevention and intervention, is
4 that you don't want things to continue
5 to expand and spread, that young people
6 who have many young people around them
7 impacted by shootings in particular by
8 gun violence can be deeply impacted by
9 that.

10 So the question still remains,
11 that the school community, the school
12 community needs to help in addition to
13 the young person in the school. It's
14 not just that the young person goes to
15 school to receive those services. It's
16 that we're creating a community around
17 young people that is better equipped to
18 help them deal with broader issues and
19 their immediate networks of individuals
20 or other young people that they interact
21 with. I'm going to hold on that for a
22 minute because I want to press on that
23 because I think that's really important,
24 but I'm not going to do it right now.

25 I'm going to shift over to

1 asking Dr. Bowen, one of the complaints
2 that we hear over and over and over
3 again is that there are very long wait
4 times to access IBHS services. Do you
5 have an understanding of what a general
6 wait time might be?

7 DR. BOWEN: I don't, but
8 Dr. Williams might. I think you're
9 talking about during the pandemic that
10 there has been a wait time. Is that
11 what you have heard?

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: IBHS has
13 only come up during the pandemic, right?
14 Was it before --

15 DR. BOWEN: Yeah.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. So if
17 a counselor, a STEP, says that a child
18 desperately needs IBHS, to get referred,
19 we know how this works with young
20 people, right. This is not like our
21 usual let me put you on the agenda.
22 Time is humanity for them.

23 DR. BOWEN: Right. Agreed.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So not
25 responding means you don't care even if

1 it's not intentional or anything like
2 that. But what we hear over and over
3 again is we hear a lot of anecdotes. We
4 don't actually know the scope. So I
5 guess one question would be whether you
6 have a sense of the wait times?

7 DR. BOWEN: Yeah. Let's get
8 that answer from Dr. Williams. And I
9 completely understand how a wait would
10 be interpreted that way by the youth and
11 also by the families who --

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: We heard
13 weeks, for example.

14 DR. BOWEN: Yup.

15 DR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, so I can
16 speak to that. The issue around wait
17 times I think was more problematic under
18 BHRS, which as we know was changed to
19 IBHS through state regulations. And as
20 part of the regulations, they were
21 changed actually to address access. And
22 so, the new regulations really removed a
23 lot of the old barriers that were in
24 existence that created challenges to
25 access to BHRS, so those have been

1 removed.

2 And I would also say that
3 because in Philadelphia we have the
4 regionalized model, referrals and access
5 to IBHS should be almost immediate.
6 Because every student is assigned to an
7 IBHS provider, so there is no wait. And
8 we to date have not received any
9 complaints related to access or waits
10 for IBHS.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. One
12 thing that will be helpful, and I'll
13 make this of the Chair, if you could
14 maybe come back to us with comprehensive
15 data so we're not doing it just driven
16 by complaints, and I'm not doing it just
17 driven by anecdotes. It's definitely
18 not what we're hearing. We're hearing a
19 more consistent concern about wait times
20 and referrals and access.

21 I may not doubt that a child
22 may be referred to a provider. I'm just
23 saying by the time the provider gets to
24 a child, it may be a very long time.
25 And I guess I'm wondering if part of

1 IBHS can be collecting data on wait
2 times and ask if you can maybe come back
3 to the Chair or the Committee with a
4 little bit more information about that
5 would be helpful.

6 And I think I'll just close out
7 here by just saying that 50 percent of
8 the shootings in the last six months
9 have involved a young person at 25
10 schools, whether they are charter,
11 whether they are alternative schools,
12 whether they are under District control
13 or not. We have to drive resources to
14 those schools. We have to figure out
15 how to engage the school communities,
16 the young people, and be listening in
17 particular to the school leadership,
18 principals, educators, parents and
19 school staff as well as young people. I
20 think that this is a very important
21 issue.

22 Data isn't there just for us to
23 kind of look at it and marvel. It's
24 actually there for us to re -- it should
25 help us either ask for more questions or

1 redirect resources. Right now the
2 principals and the educators and the
3 students at those schools tell us they
4 do not have the resources that they need
5 to handle their current population on
6 top of the gun violence that they're
7 dealing with right now. We need to get
8 them the help that they need. We'll try
9 to make this a more central aspect of
10 their work.

11 Mr. Chair, I'll cede my time
12 for other Councilmembers.

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Madam
14 Chair, I want to do two things because I
15 see we have Councilwoman Brooks waiting
16 next. I want to be quick and have two
17 particular things addressed. Karyn, you
18 can respond because I see you have your
19 hand up.

20 But also, Madam Chair, you
21 talked about pressing before you pivoted
22 and talked about IBHS. And so, on the
23 particular topic did you get to your
24 point with regarding to Karyn?

25 And, Karyn, you can go ahead

1 and respond.

2 DR. LYNCH: Thank you. I think
3 that the Councilwoman asked in which of
4 the schools that are on the list is
5 there STEP services and I'm provided
6 with information and I want to share
7 that:

8 So King has a STEP team at
9 present. Bartram has a STEP team at
10 present. Overbrook has a STEP team at
11 present. Frankford has a STEP team.
12 Edison has a STEP team at present. West
13 Philadelphia has a STEP at present.
14 Dobbins has a STEP team at present.
15 Lincoln has a STEP team and South
16 Philadelphia High School also has a STEP
17 team. In addition, each of these
18 schools has counselors.

19 I think the only School
20 District school that's on this list that
21 doesn't have a STEP team is Ben Franklin
22 and the resources in addition that we're
23 providing for that school. That's the
24 school that we're looking to see for
25 additional resources and whether or not

1 a STEP team or some other service, there
2 are other services that are available at
3 each of these schools (inaudible). So
4 before you close the record, I wanted to
5 be able to share that information. I
6 think that was what you asked. Thank
7 you.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Madam Chair,
10 did you press?

11 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: There will
12 be continued efforts, Councilmember.

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I just
14 want to make sure that I'm extending the
15 time that you want to get your point
16 across regarding this particular topic.

17 I do want to go back, Madam
18 Chair, you talked about with IBHS the
19 wait time. Can Tamra please come back
20 on the screen.

21 DR. WILLIAMS: Hi.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Hi,
23 Tamra. Just give me an idea of the
24 staffing level because if Madam Chair is
25 saying from her perspective she's

1 hearing that there's a significant wait,
2 what is the staffing ratio in terms of
3 staffing levels there and response time
4 to providing services?

5 DR. WILLIAMS: Yeah. Sure. So
6 for the IBHS providers, they're required
7 to have certain types of staff as well
8 as a certain number of staff to be able
9 to accommodate any referral to their
10 agencies for IBHS. And those include
11 clinical staff as well as case
12 management staff and some of the
13 providers also have peer supports.

14 I will say that some of the
15 providers during the pandemic have
16 reported experiencing some difficulties
17 hiring just because as a result of COVID
18 and people not being available because
19 of illness. But outside of that, they
20 have reported that they are able to meet
21 the staffing requirements as they're
22 expected to based on the IBHS
23 regulations.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And when
25 you talk about COVID having an impact

1 level, have you seen a significant
2 decrease and services provided just
3 based upon the impact of COVID, and
4 what's the plan to increase as we come
5 out of this pandemic hopefully?

6 DR. WILLIAMS: Yeah. I think
7 what we're seeing in Philadelphia is
8 very much what others are seeing across
9 the nation, that for certain types of
10 treatments and services, that there has
11 been a decrease in utilization. We
12 think that once things sort of "return
13 to normal," that we'll see those levels
14 re-adjust to pre-COVID. And so, that's
15 our expectation.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
17 Thank you very much. Thank you for your
18 testimony.

19 Councilwoman Kendra Brooks.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Thank you
21 so much, Councilmember Johnson.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
23 for your patience.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: No
25 problem. I have a lot of emotions on

1 this particular issue right now, so I'm
2 going to start there.

3 And I just want to ground it
4 with the conversation from last night
5 with one of the young persons. And my
6 question to him was if he had access to
7 services before he was incarcerated that
8 led him to be able to do work now around
9 trauma-informed intervention and
10 mediation, would he have been
11 incarcerated. He paused and really
12 thought about it. And that pause meant
13 a lot to me because he said a lot of
14 things. The final answer was, no, he
15 probably wouldn't have taken that path
16 if he had it.

17 And the reason I brought that
18 up is because, Ms. Lynch, you mentioned
19 about 10 years ago and the
20 disinvestments around the School
21 District and all the services being
22 removed. And if we do the math, that
23 means 10 years ago that disinvestment is
24 the same population of young men that
25 are dying on the street. And when I

1 went to visit the prison last Thursday,
2 it was the same age group, 18 to 24,
3 that are filling our prison systems.

4 And then you also added about
5 the number of schools that are receiving
6 STEP services and intervention and
7 they're all high schools, even though I
8 understand that a large number of the
9 folks that are involved in that are
10 coming from high schools, what are the
11 investments into young people? I'm
12 talking about the feeder schools that
13 feed into these high schools. Because
14 the majority -- I looked on that list, I
15 live in 19140 zip code. Every school,
16 charter and public, should have
17 behavioral health services,
18 trauma-informed in 19140 zip code.

19 And the reason I'm so emotional
20 because I say constantly, my kids have
21 buried more friends in their lifetime
22 than I can ever understand. And
23 listening to everyone that has something
24 to do with disinvestment in young people
25 10 years ago, this blood is on your

1 hands. And we need to make sure that
2 we're investing in our babies. And I
3 don't care how much it cost because
4 lives make a difference. The next
5 generation of Black men are in prison or
6 in the ground and that's unacceptable.

7 So I want to know what
8 investment is needed to make sure we
9 have these services starting in
10 kindergarten? Bethune, Steel,
11 Cleveland, all of these schools feed
12 into Gratz Mastery or Martin Luther King
13 or Ben Franklin, whatever school. What
14 schools are we investing in? We need to
15 invest in our babies immediately. We
16 can't talk about data from years ago
17 when we're burying kids every day in our
18 City.

19 So I just need a clear
20 understanding what is the plan for the
21 School District that every school in
22 these zip codes -- another statistic let
23 me bring up, 11 zip codes have the
24 largest mass incarceration in our City,
25 all of these zip codes. We need

1 investments, whether it's DBHIDS,
2 Department of -- I mean Education as
3 well as Parks & Rec. It's all hands on
4 deck. Our kids are dying and I just
5 don't hear that.

6 I hear things being put
7 together but not with the sense of
8 urgency that I see in the streets, that
9 I saw in the prisons and the trauma that
10 my kids are experiencing, because keep
11 in mind I have kids from ages 13 to 31.
12 And when you put that math in my head,
13 it immediately triggered why they're
14 losing all of their friends. And my
15 heart goes out to the teachers because
16 the teachers are suffering as well. We
17 talk about building communities.
18 Community means that everyone in the
19 community gets the services that they
20 need.

21 And to Yolanda, I love you.
22 She has showed up every time we called
23 her around trauma, and I have an open
24 door now that -- I worked with her
25 before I was a Councilperson. We need

1 to do more of that. When we had a
2 murder in my community, we called
3 Yolanda. It took a week for the School
4 District to open up a building for us to
5 have a meeting. That's unacceptable, a
6 week after a shooting when people are
7 traumatized immediately. We need to
8 have some emergency response teams
9 available, and emergency is 24 hours.

10 We need to make sure these
11 community-based organizations have
12 access to our school buildings without a
13 whole bunch of red tape. I understand
14 about liability and all of that. But if
15 we want the services, we have to allow
16 them to come into the building. And we
17 have to invest in our babies because we
18 can't talk about 10 years from now,
19 because we're not going to see better if
20 we don't do real prevention and it can't
21 be lip service. It has to be real.

22 So I just need to hear from the
23 School District. I need to hear from
24 DBHIDS. I need to hear from these
25 programs what's the plan immediately.

1 Statistics from 10 years don't mean
2 anything right now. And I know this is
3 a pandemic. A lot of things have
4 changed, but we need this immediately.
5 So I need an answer for like the next
6 week of 80-degree weather because that's
7 what I heard from the young people last
8 night on that call.

9 They're begging us for support.
10 And they said they're sick of us meeting
11 every week, every month and not seeing
12 any results. They're saying they need
13 trauma-informed. They're saying they
14 have PTSD. What's the answer? What are
15 we supposed to tell them? The system
16 takes a long time. That's not
17 unacceptable when they're burying their
18 friends. So I know that was loaded, but
19 I need to hear something more than what
20 I'm hearing right now because this
21 really triggered me today.

22 DR. LYNCH: So I will go first
23 and I will share a couple of things just
24 to correct. One, I feel a deep sense of
25 urgency in (inaudible) something

1 happens. I feel a deep sense of urgency
2 when I go into a prison and I see Black
3 males at the prison and I know that
4 those are my sons, those are my
5 husbands, those are my children, those
6 are my fathers. I recognize there's a
7 sense of -- I speak with a sense of
8 urgency. And if that hasn't been
9 conveyed in this conversation, then
10 please know that I think this is an
11 urgent matter.

12 When I see the children who are
13 dying, they are young Black males that
14 are dying. They're young Black males
15 that are dying within our communities.
16 So looking at me and knowing what I have
17 produced, know that I have a sense of
18 urgency because these are my sons, these
19 are my cousins, these are my nephews,
20 this is our future. So I feel a sense
21 of urgency that nobody can take from me
22 as a Black woman. I feel it. I
23 understand it and I work towards it.

24 The schools that I identified
25 that have STEP were just the schools

1 that were on the list of data that was
2 showed by Tonya Wolford. Other schools
3 throughout the District have STEP.
4 Other elementary, K through 8 have STEP
5 programs. They have behavioral health
6 supports, so I want to clarify that.

7 My reference to 10 years ago
8 was to show from that time forward we've
9 done a tremendous job as a community,
10 not just the School District of
11 Philadelphia, but filling the need. We
12 have more counselors than -- yes,
13 filling the need. We have more
14 counselors in our schools. We have more
15 nurses in our schools. Every single one
16 of our schools has a nurse, and that
17 nurse is part of the team that we're
18 talking about, because that nurse is
19 also providing trauma support. Those
20 counselors are also providing trauma
21 support.

22 The behavioral health staff
23 that we have is much larger today.
24 School District of Philadelphia staff,
25 much larger today than it was 10 years

1 ago, so there is the sense of urgency
2 and that staff is growing. That's the
3 other thing that I wanted to convey, and
4 I'm still conveying in conversation the
5 services that staff is doing.

6 We didn't have social workers
7 in our schools 10 years ago. We have
8 social workers in our schools today. We
9 didn't have behavioral health experts
10 and clinical coordinators. We didn't
11 even have a director of trauma support
12 in our schools before developing a plan
13 of trauma and teaching our teachers and
14 teaching our school-based staff how to
15 engage with children. There wasn't even
16 awareness of trauma or an awareness of
17 how to address the issues of trauma or a
18 recognition that very often the
19 behaviors that you see in a child inside
20 of a classroom have to do with that
21 child experiencing trauma. It's not an
22 effort on that child's part to behaving
23 poorly. It's an effort on that child's
24 part to deal with their own trauma and
25 deal with their trauma in a way that a

1 child deals with trauma. And very often
2 that is acting out and very often that
3 is an experience that many of us look
4 at, we say it's poor behavior and we've
5 taught our teachers and we're continuing
6 to teach our school-based staff that
7 that is not the case and that these
8 children are experiencing trauma, have
9 experienced trauma and that post-
10 traumatic stress and chronic trauma
11 leads to behavior that needs to be
12 addressed.

13 This is why we put standards
14 into our schools through our PBIS
15 efforts. This is why when we talk to
16 kids, we talk and reinforce the positive
17 behaviors that children have, and this
18 is why building relationships is
19 extremely important because children
20 need to know who they can trust, who
21 they can confide in and where they can
22 go for resources.

23 And in our K to 8, this is
24 something we're engaging with all the
25 time, including services that say to

1 students, how do you feel today, what's
2 going on with you today. And we're
3 infusing all of that into the
4 curriculum, and it's absolutely
5 important for people to know how they
6 feel and for young children to know how
7 they address the problems that they
8 have, how do they address the crisis
9 that they have and how do they express
10 their emotions and how do they say, I'm
11 not having a great day and I need help.
12 So the things that you talked about,
13 absolutely important.

14 The fact that we've been doing
15 this for the better part growing these
16 services for the better part of the last
17 10 years, I think it's important for you
18 to know. The last thing that I will say
19 to address the comments that you offered
20 is you asked what is in every single
21 school and what can you count on. I
22 would say IBHS is in every single
23 school. That didn't exist more than two
24 years ago, more than a year ago.

25 IBHS is a way to train our

1 teachers, it's a way to have a staff
2 person, the IBHS provider, who's inside
3 the classroom looking at the behaviors
4 of students and recognizing when a
5 student has experienced trauma and
6 engaging the teacher or the person who's
7 in the classroom with providing services
8 and supports and understanding and
9 recognizing what that behavior is and
10 how to adjust the behavior and to
11 encourage the child to adjust the
12 behavior, and also to carry that service
13 and that strategy into the home by
14 engaging parents and knowing exactly
15 what it is that will help their child to
16 have a much better experience to deal
17 with their trauma, exposing parents to
18 what trauma actually is and how to
19 address the needs of students.

20 So we're training school-based
21 staff through IBHS. We're engaging on a
22 one-to-one with children with IBHS, and
23 IBHS is also the service that can
24 provide the one-to-one supports that you
25 previously saw that was provided through

1 STS to students to have the need to have
2 a one-to-one support within the school.
3 So that is just a few of the things that
4 the services intended to do.

5 It's intended, as I said
6 earlier, to be culturally responsive.
7 It's intended to be able to continue the
8 supports not just in a school, but in
9 the community and in the home so that
10 children aren't and families aren't
11 engaging with different providers and
12 you can see a building of the skills and
13 the information or knowledge that's
14 essential. This is all part of what's
15 available today. This is part of what
16 the community is building today that did
17 not exist years ago, and each year we
18 build on the service that we have. And
19 I think it's really important --

20 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Excuse me.
21 Karyn?

22 DR. LYNCH: I'm sorry?

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes,
24 excuse me. Karyn, there's a call for a
25 point of clarification by Councilwoman

1 Helen Gym.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
3 very much, Mr. Chair.

4 I just wanted to clarify and to
5 Councilmember Brooks' point I think,
6 what I'm certainly talking about and I
7 think what I heard from Councilmember
8 Brooks a little bit is there's no
9 question that our young people need
10 mental health supports all across the
11 board. Every single school should be
12 entitled to it. We've got 25 schools
13 where 50 percent of the shootings are
14 happening to those children and then
15 those schools also have feeder schools
16 that go into them.

17 We need a clearer plan for
18 young people who are and schools that
19 are directly and overly impacted by
20 violence that is over and above what the
21 District is doing. We full-heartedly
22 support it, whether it's IBHS or STEP.
23 We want that. We want to make that
24 clear.

25 But the question today on the

1 table, we are having this hearing
2 because thousands of young people have
3 been shot. You have the data. You are
4 feeling the pain. And the schools that
5 are experiencing the most, the JJSC,
6 Martin Luther King, Overbrook, Lincoln
7 and their feeder schools, tell us what
8 additional they are getting, how are we
9 getting into those schools. And it's
10 not just you. It's also DBH, and darn
11 sure DHS is going to be here on this
12 conversation as well. But we need
13 something over and above what every
14 other child needs and deserves, and
15 that's what we're not hearing right now.

16 We need to know for these
17 schools, tell us how we're helping them
18 in cycles of violence and deal with the
19 trauma that they're facing right now.

20 DR. LYNCH: We're increasing
21 the numbers of prevention and
22 intervention liaisons as I said. We are
23 introducing the numbers of caseworkers
24 specifically to do transition services
25 as I said. We are increasing the number

1 of -- we're increasing the social work
2 supports. In fact, that's in my budget
3 request for this year to schools so that
4 the schools that need it are going to
5 receive the social service supports.

6 We have made the request to
7 increase the services and the review of
8 those residential treatment facilities
9 with children that are transitioning
10 back from detention so that we can
11 better prepare them for the transition,
12 but more importantly so that we can look
13 at the education that they are receiving
14 in these locations. This is just a few
15 of the things that we are doing
16 specifically for those schools that have
17 the greatest need. In addition --

18 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Can --

19 DR. LYNCH: Oh, sorry.

20 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I'm sorry.
21 Go ahead, Karyn.

22 DR. LYNCH: In addition, I want
23 to point out that these schools and
24 their school improvement plans have
25 requested and received additional

1 positions that I'm not readily prepared
2 to speak to today, but it's all part of
3 their plan for increasing and improving
4 the climate and the culture and
5 education within their schools. So
6 several have asked for additional
7 counselors. Some have asked for
8 behavioral health supports in addition
9 to what they have.

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:

11 Councilwoman Brooks.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Just for
13 clarity, with all of the data that you
14 have gathered, is there an ideal pattern
15 of supports that are needed in these
16 schools that can be implemented in the
17 25 schools and their feeder schools as a
18 way of prevention and to halt what's
19 happening now?

20 I don't know which gun violence
21 meeting I've been on, but we keep
22 talking about all hands on deck. And to
23 me, all hands on deck means having a
24 systemic plan that accomplishes this
25 across schools across the District. And

1 I just need to hear it. So some
2 principals ask for this, some principals
3 ask for that.

4 Have we identified the right
5 mixture for this to be right? Does this
6 also include smaller class sizes? I
7 need to hear what all is included
8 because I worked in school budgets
9 before and I know that the principal has
10 full autonomy to pick and choose a menu
11 of options when it comes to these
12 services.

13 Is there funding available for
14 a principal to have multiple resources
15 in their school? So if they want to do
16 PBIS and they want to do restorative
17 practice, and they want to do trauma-
18 informed and if they wanted to do
19 conflict resolution or whatever, can
20 they get all four or you have this pot
21 of money and you only can take two?

22 So for me, all hands on deck
23 means that they have all four in their
24 schools ready to roll out next week or
25 as soon as we can hire folks up. It

1 doesn't mean this is a lot of money that
2 you're getting and that's it. That's
3 what I'm trying to hear. I need to hear
4 what this path looks like because that's
5 not what I'm hearing. I don't know.
6 Maybe some of my Councilmembers might be
7 hearing something different, but I don't
8 hear the all hands on deck that we're
9 talking about with clergy,
10 community-based organizations and
11 communities. I don't hear the
12 all-hands-on-deck approach in what
13 you're saying from the School Districts
14 starting with the feeder schools.
15 Because keep in mind, if your brother is
16 17 and he's murdered on the street by
17 one of your classmate's brother who is
18 also 17 who's in jail now, and then
19 you're back in school or on Zoom calls
20 right now together, that's trauma.
21 Are we addressing it from that
22 lens? And that's exactly how it
23 happens. That's what I need to hear.
24 And I don't know if you guys have
25 prepared it that way, but I just --

1 yeah. I just need more clarity as to
2 what this program looks like.

3 DR. LYNCH: The services that
4 we offer that I've described related to
5 crisis and crisis response would address
6 what happens when students are in feeder
7 schools and the services that have to be
8 provided within the feeder school. With
9 that aside, every single one of our
10 schools engages in a school improvement
11 plan process. That process includes
12 annually looking at the data that exist
13 in the school. And I'm talking about
14 all the data, both the academic data as
15 well as the climate data, where
16 incidents occurred within the school,
17 with what the suspension looks like, who
18 are the students in the school that have
19 trauma issues, what are the behavioral
20 health reports within the school, a
21 variety of data elements that exist.
22 Every single year we look this and we
23 sit down.

24 There are evidence-based
25 programs that the state has identified.

1 We look at the data. We meet with the
2 schools. We match the data with the
3 evidence-based programs to see what's
4 going to be available within the school.
5 Several of our schools have selected
6 PBIS. It's a service that's provided
7 centrally. Schools sign up for PBIS
8 based on the data and based on what it
9 is that we would recognize collectively
10 that needs to be achieved in the school
11 and that's the service that they
12 receive. Restorative practices, Youth
13 Court, all of these services and it's
14 timely because we're constantly looking
15 at this data and we're constantly
16 looking at what needs to happen within
17 the school to move forward.

18 The staff services that you see
19 in the majority of schools that I just
20 mentioned that are on this list are
21 services that were received through that
22 process. We moved STEP into the schools
23 because we looked at the data. We saw
24 what was taking place with young people
25 and we put staff into those schools. We

1 said to the school leaders, this is what
2 this service is for and this is what
3 this service is going to help provide.
4 So that's what I mean when I say the
5 plan that is serving the individuals
6 within the school and is addressing the
7 immediate needs. And these are services
8 that are provided from the Central
9 Office and coached and trained from the
10 Central Office.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: I have no
12 other questions.

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
14 Councilwoman Kendra Brooks.

15 I'm going to ask for -- I know
16 he said he would defer, but I'm still
17 going to give him the opportunity in
18 case he wants to, Isaiah Thomas.

19 I just had a quick question
20 because Councilwoman Brooks talked about
21 this. I know we had a preliminary
22 conversation about the services that are
23 provided to the District schools versus
24 charter schools, right. And from the
25 statistics that I just recently saw, you

1 have a significant population of young
2 people dying in alternative schools as
3 well as charter schools, which are
4 constituents I represent as well. And
5 so, at some point in time it seems like
6 we have two parallel tracks. Obviously,
7 the School District is focusing on
8 School District children.

9 I'm going to do a follow-up,
10 Madam Chair, to look at a deeper dive
11 with the Head of the Charter Office to
12 see what is the plan and how are they
13 organizing around those charter schools
14 which still report to the Philadelphia
15 School District -- I mean, I'm sorry,
16 the School Board at the end of the day,
17 and the District because the District
18 makes the decisions of who stays open
19 and who closes.

20 But for me, I don't get into
21 the nuances of that aspect. But for me
22 at the end of the day, kids are still
23 dying. That's all I see. The kid that
24 went to Prep Charter School got
25 murdered. I remember he got murdered.

1 His parents didn't call me and say,
2 well, this is a District child. The
3 woman just said, what are you doing to
4 help my family, bottom line, real
5 simple. No different than the kid who
6 got murdered outside Audenried High
7 School out in Grays Ferry and Tasker in
8 my area. They didn't call me and say,
9 is it a public school or charter school.

10 And so, some way we have to
11 figure this out separate from the
12 oversight politics because it's still
13 children dying and it seems like from
14 the steps I saw today, right, I don't
15 even know if there is a plan on the
16 charter school or the special
17 alternative school. And even the
18 special ed. schools, right, I have no
19 idea what their plans are separate from
20 the District. So I'm going to do a
21 deeper dive and we'll do a follow-up in
22 the future to come back to address that
23 issue, simply for the fact that these
24 are just children dying here in the City
25 of Philadelphia and they want our

1 support irregardless of where they go to
2 school at and it's incumbent upon us
3 because they are our constituents to
4 know what those plans are to make sure
5 these children are being serviced and
6 supported as they deal with this trauma.

7 And so, with that being said
8 I'm going to ask for Isaiah Thomas.
9 Councilman.

10 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Councilman
11 Johnson, can you hear me?

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes, I can
13 hear you.

14 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Okay.
15 Thank you again for this conversation.

16 I think in the midst of
17 listening to everything, I think what
18 Councilmember Brooks was asking for, and
19 I get all the things that's been done in
20 the past, but just in the midst of
21 listening I think what she's saying is
22 in these schools where we know that the
23 young people have a higher likelihood of
24 being involved in negative activity and
25 having these gunshot situations take

1 place, what would it -- and I'll come at
2 it at a different way. What would it
3 cost for us to have more climate staff
4 in every single one of those schools,
5 right.

6 So we're talking about
7 (inaudible), we're talking about people
8 pushing those schools. Councilmember
9 Brooks talked about teacher-classroom
10 sizes, what would it take to do that.
11 What if we had extended day. What if we
12 looked at changing their curriculum and
13 having it mandatory for them to
14 participate in maybe some type of mental
15 health support so it's not optional.
16 Looking at possibly providing workshops
17 for families and for other people who
18 live in the community maybe in a three-
19 block radius, option maybe for dinner,
20 extra-curricular activities. These are
21 just some examples of things that I
22 would like to see specifically in the
23 schools, right, not in any other
24 schools, but in the schools whether
25 they're public or charter, like

1 Councilmember Johnson said, where we are
2 showing the people in that neighborhood
3 that they specifically are a priority,
4 right.

5 So if that's not in the
6 works -- because I do think that a lot
7 of the measures that you talked about as
8 far as casework and social work and
9 things like that are important, but
10 those are things you need after
11 something traumatic happens. One of the
12 things that we talked about on the call
13 last night was high school is returning
14 back to school. What does that feel
15 like and look like after being off for a
16 year. Those are the things that we are
17 all worried about.

18 And to be honest with you,
19 Councilmember Johnson, the reason I just
20 put never mind in the questions is
21 because what Councilmember Brooks is
22 asking for, the basic answer is no. The
23 real answer is no based on what I'm
24 hearing. No, we don't have anything
25 special for these particular schools.

1 And the things that I'm hearing is just
2 general things that have been done that
3 are actually bare necessities. All
4 these things that I'm hearing are things
5 that schools should already have in
6 place.

7 I think what we're asking for
8 is a spark, something special in these
9 particular schools. We have a plethora
10 of money coming from the federal
11 government, and 20 percent of those
12 dollars that are coming to the School
13 District must go to addressing this
14 education gap. So we have the money to
15 be able to do all the things that I just
16 listed, plus a lot of other things, and
17 those dollars are specifically earmarked
18 to address these problems that we are
19 facing because of the pandemic. And for
20 us in Philadelphia, gun violence has
21 just been as bad as the coronavirus
22 crisis.

23 So I don't have a question
24 because clearly the answer is no. But I
25 hope that you hear the willingness from

1 us to invest in your innovation. I
2 think what we're frustrated with is the
3 lack of innovation specifically in the
4 schools and in the communities that are
5 suffering the most right now.

6 Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
7 appreciate it.

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: All right.
9 Thank you very much.

10 We have to move on, but I did
11 want to thank all our panelists that
12 took time out of their schedule.
13 Although this is the end of the
14 discussion, it's the beginning of us
15 trying to reset and address this issue
16 proactively, because at the end of day
17 we have to proactively make sure that
18 we're addressing this issue as
19 aggressively and making sure it's a
20 priority and most importantly,
21 supporting our youth as best as we can.
22 But I do thank all the panels for taking
23 time out of your schedule, and thank you
24 for being here.

25 Will the Clerk please call the

1 next panel.

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Councilmember Johnson --

4 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I'm sorry.

5 Let me back up --

6 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

7 -- I have a point of information.

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: --

9 Councilwoman Maria Quinones-Sanchez.

10 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

11 Yes. Council President -- again, I
12 appreciate all the conversation. My
13 initial question to Ms. Jill Bowen was
14 specifically around the service
15 providers and the intervention
16 strategies because we never saw the work
17 of behavioral health being in isolation
18 of the School District, right, and I
19 think that we still don't see the
20 connectivity between the services and
21 the School District, which is why I
22 think Councilmember Brooks is so
23 frustrated, right.

24 So, Ms. Bowen or Ms. Williams,
25 can you be more specific around the

1 scope of services these behavioral
2 health people are supposed to be
3 providing for the schools? An incident
4 happens, what does the provider do, what
5 services do they provide to the child,
6 right, and what recommendations do they
7 make to School District staff? I think
8 that's what we're asking for. Something
9 happens yesterday. Today the kids go to
10 school. What happens?

11 DR. BOWEN: Thank you --

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I wanted
13 to do this just real quick. Can you
14 summarize and be direct because I really
15 do have to move on to the next panel.
16 We've been here for two hours on one
17 panel. And so, I do want to get to the
18 root of Councilwoman Sanchez's question,
19 but also I have to move on. And so --

20 DR. BOWEN: Just summarize.

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: -- please
22 be direct, yes.

23 DR. BOWEN: Okay. I do want to
24 say that Councilmember Brooks' comments
25 are very much along the line of the

1 urgency, the triggering that is
2 happening across the board. And I think
3 that we need to convey that at DBHIDS we
4 are talking today about a few programs
5 that are part of a comprehensive
6 approach.

7 There is a system, and you'll
8 receive some of that material after the
9 hearing because it's really hard to get
10 all of that out, but it is intentional.
11 It is both responsive and also upstream.
12 So what we're doing in the schools is
13 one piece of an overall approach that
14 includes upstream preventive -- so this
15 response to the trauma, this prevention,
16 and there is treatment.

17 And so, I want to be able to
18 convey that there is a tremendous amount
19 of effort even beyond the Network of
20 Neighbors. There's a whole number of
21 approaches that are working together to
22 address prevention. When Councilmember
23 Gym spoke about mentorship, jobs,
24 trusted adults, meaningful and safe
25 spaces, housing stability, social

1 isolation, internship programs, all of
2 that is part of the overall package.

3 And so, when we talk about
4 what's happening in the schools, this is
5 a new and intensive approach that really
6 hasn't had a chance to fully realize so
7 we are absolutely looking forward to
8 being able to spread the wings, I would
9 say, of what is possible through IBHS,
10 which is more than connecting to
11 treatment but connecting to treatment is
12 essential.

13 So if you want to hear those
14 specifics in response to Councilmember
15 Sanchez, maybe Dr. Williams can in a
16 very brief maybe one to two sentences
17 say more about the prevention efforts in
18 the schools, the climate addressing
19 along with the connection to the
20 community and the parents and the home
21 that are part of this effort that is
22 centered in the school but goes beyond
23 the school.

24 DR. WILLIAMS: Yeah. Sure. I
25 can just take one minute. I do want to

1 acknowledge that the school does offer
2 trauma-informed training for their
3 teachers and that STEP also provides
4 critical prevention and first-line
5 supports. So IBHS is considered a Tier
6 3 treatment intervention for those who
7 are showing significant clinical
8 symptoms, but we know that kids start to
9 demonstrate some behaviors that quite
10 honestly often are mistaken as acting-
11 out behaviors and the response is
12 punitive. And so, STEP is really there
13 to sort of be the frontline support in
14 sort of identifying those students.

15 IBHS offers a holistic
16 approach. The providers are able to
17 work with children and families in their
18 homes as well as in other community
19 settings as well as in the schools. So
20 I'll leave it at that. There's a lot
21 more that we can say in terms of
22 prevention as well as treatment, but I
23 want to respect the time.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I would
25 say this as well, Dr. Jill, just provide

1 for both the Chairs and members of the
2 Committee an overview, right, of the
3 prevention services that are provided
4 and also the partnership with the
5 District in terms of services provided
6 and to what schools.

7 DR. BOWEN: So for IBHS, it's
8 in all of the schools so it's in every
9 school. And the connections to the
10 classroom is through an approach called
11 Bridge, which allows the -- and again,
12 Dr. Williams could do this better than I
13 can, but you're talking about a strategy
14 in the classroom to help with managing
15 challenging behaviors and conflict
16 resolution, the kinds of skill-building
17 for the adults that help to create the
18 kind of nurturing and supportive
19 atmosphere that is helpful in preventing
20 ACEs, right. But once someone's
21 traumatized, then you have a different
22 approach. You have a preventive
23 approach and you have an approach that
24 works to mitigate the impact of the
25 trauma.

1 And I can't stress enough the
2 treasure that PACTS is for the City of
3 Philadelphia. The number of providers
4 that have this skill set, this
5 incredible evidence-based skill set
6 particularly for the children of
7 Philadelphia, and what's really
8 important especially in these times is
9 to elevate the connection that people
10 know about the services that are
11 available. What troubles me is that
12 there is so much and we still are
13 working hard, the whole point behind
14 Boost and the trauma-specific lane in
15 Boost is to try and connect up for
16 people that this is there, because there
17 are folks who are not making those
18 connections and it's on us as well to
19 find ways, and we seek your assistance
20 too, and we work with the kids and we do
21 have Youth M.O.V.E. and other programs
22 that work directly with the kids to help
23 advise. But we have all of this and
24 still need to help make those
25 connections elevate that.

1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: If you and
2 your team can just provide the services
3 that are provided to the District in
4 writing to both Chairs, so we can
5 distribute it amongst Members who may
6 want additional information for
7 follow-up, that will be very, very
8 helpful.

9 DR. BOWEN: Absolutely.

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And for me
11 that would be in writing, this is our
12 plan, this is exactly what we're doing
13 to address your issues and then we can
14 also do a follow-up for feedback.

15 DR. BOWEN: Appreciate that
16 very much. Thank you, Councilmember.

17 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
18 welcome. So thank you, Dr. Jill. Thank
19 you, members of the District, for being
20 on this call.

21 Next we're going to ask the
22 Clerk to please call the next panel.

23 THE CLERK: Aliya Bradley
24 Dr. John Rich and Caroline Glavin.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Mr. Chair.

1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes, Madam
2 Chair.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I had a very
4 brief comment and my hope will be
5 that --

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:
7 Absolutely.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you.
9 My hope will be that Dr. Bowen and the
10 School District, DBH and anybody else
11 who's on the City might continue to
12 listen in on especially the testimony
13 that comes afterwards. One of the
14 things that is hopeful if we feel that
15 you have providers that meet
16 requirements, our shift is to outcome
17 honestly, that we're not just trying to
18 match people together, but we're trying
19 to understand whether these outcomes
20 managed match the expectations that we
21 have laid out for ourselves.

22 And I think what you're going
23 to hear is we need staff on the ground,
24 you can train as many people as you
25 want. But if you don't have staff on

1 the ground in the schools, it's really
2 overwhelming. And I think you'll hear
3 some gaps about what it is that
4 principals and school staff may need,
5 and I hope we can take from a place of
6 not being defensive, but continuing to
7 evolve programs so that they actually
8 get the outcomes that we say that we
9 want for the young people.

10 So thank you very much,
11 Mr. Chair.

12 DR. BOWEN: Understood. Thank
13 you.

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
15 Will the first panelist state your name
16 for the record and begin your testimony.

17 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: Good
18 afternoon. No -- it is afternoon now.
19 Good afternoon. My name is Aliya
20 Catanch-Bradley. I'm the proud
21 Principal of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune
22 Elementary School, where she is our
23 anchor ancestor and encourages all to
24 enter to learn and depart to serve.

25 So I've been asked to come and

1 discuss some aspects of trauma and how
2 they have impacted the Bethune community
3 and what are some of the strategies that
4 we are using here to work with our
5 community partners, work with of course
6 our School District to ensure that we
7 are doing the most that we can for
8 children and families in need.

9 So I want to first say that
10 when I became the principal of Bethune,
11 I was coming from being the assistant
12 principal at South Philadelphia High
13 School. And so, in my time at South
14 Philadelphia High School, we have been
15 so impacted by gun violence and the loss
16 of life of young people that it was
17 truly a saturating experience.

18 What I didn't realize until I
19 got to Bethune was that I was leaving
20 one truly trauma-impacted community and
21 coming to another. So the Councilwoman
22 who spoke about living as a resident in
23 the 19140 zip code and all of the true
24 needs that we have, Bethune sits as one
25 of the feeder schools to some of the

1 high schools aforementioned that is in
2 the 19140 zip code.

3 So when I got here as the
4 principal three years ago, I realized
5 that there were so many needs and that
6 all the needs that we had were not
7 necessarily able to be met from just one
8 source to the pot. We have a lot of gun
9 violence. We also have a lot of issues
10 with food insecurity. We have issues
11 with the lack of permanent housing for
12 many of our families. And as we are not
13 necessarily an official community
14 school, one of the true underpinnings
15 that I got from being an assistant
16 principal at South Philadelphia High
17 School which is a community high school,
18 is that schools need to be hubs in the
19 community.

20 And so, I went and worked on
21 getting some partners to help support us
22 in this very important work. So in
23 order for our children to thrive and not
24 just survive in the need for academic
25 success, we have to remove all barriers,

1 and all barriers are not just those that
2 work with just our basic content
3 information.

4 So one of our partners for
5 Bethune is Temple PHASes. Part of what
6 we work with Temple PHASes, I really
7 have to thank Karyn Lynch because she
8 was pivotal from our District's
9 standpoint in supporting and helping
10 navigate our MOU and relationship to get
11 Temple PHASes on board with us as a
12 partner.

13 All partners are not
14 necessarily approved. It has to go
15 through a series of vetting processes to
16 make sure that organizations, learning
17 institutions, especially hospitals,
18 medical team members are not doing
19 things that will be adverse to already
20 fragile communities of students and
21 families. And so, through the vetting
22 process when all was approved, we began
23 working with Trauma 101.

24 What I realized very quickly
25 after getting here was that in order for

1 us to work with trauma with students, we
2 first had to work with trauma with
3 adults. So it goes back to the adage of
4 if you're on an airplane, first you need
5 your own oxygen before getting oxygen to
6 others or you won't be able to make it.
7 I didn't understand the issues with ACEs
8 scores impacting trauma, compassionate,
9 resilience and how as teachers who are
10 here, some of which have been in this
11 community for 22 years, what does that
12 fatigue look like when you are
13 constantly giving and your cup is not
14 necessarily continued to be refilled.

15 So we first had to start
16 working with Temple to do a lot of work
17 with the adult culture on trauma for us
18 to really understand that sometimes when
19 children are impacted by consistent
20 traumatic events, particularly in 19140
21 with the gun violence, homicide rates
22 are high as they are here, that there is
23 always a cousin, sister, brother, aunt
24 or uncle that we have issues of violence
25 and loss of family. And so, it's

1 compounding trauma. It is someone
2 that's being shot, but someone is the
3 shooter and many times both are in your
4 family organization of schools, and so
5 how do you mitigate those things.

6 So we really started working
7 with Temple to have trainings for our
8 staff on what is the safety plan, how do
9 you invoke your safety plan, what are
10 some of those issues that come up, and
11 then how do you rectify that. If we
12 don't have money in the budget for
13 fidgets and other different tools that
14 we know our children need, how do we
15 then work with partners like Temple to
16 produce those types of resources so that
17 we can be best outfitted.

18 I think it's also important to
19 note that urban trauma-responsive
20 schools that exist in the way in which
21 we are here at Bethune, there is not a
22 national model for here are all the
23 steps so that you can become this
24 complete trauma-informed school. So
25 we're working towards something that

1 does not necessarily exist, and we're
2 doing that with all different kinds of
3 partnerships to respond to what is
4 needed for this community of learners.

5 So the teaching of children in
6 poverty and the teaching of Black and
7 Brown children in particular, although I
8 would say I'm definitely not a
9 politician, but our teaching of our
10 children has always been political. So
11 what we have to remember is that our
12 activism, my activism as a principal, is
13 really from the seat of making sure that
14 this community does not stay
15 disenfranchised and that this zip code
16 is as worth as many resources and
17 accolades as any other.

18 So we champion around making
19 sure that we can kind of support and do
20 those different initiatives to make sure
21 that we can be as successful as possible
22 for our children, because we believe
23 here at Bethune that each and every
24 student here is worth it. And so, we
25 work in partnerships to make sure that

1 we can give the teachers the additional
2 supports. We go to conferences that our
3 partners have paid for so that we can
4 continue getting that next level
5 training for trauma-informed work
6 because we know that it's necessary so
7 that we can continue the work that we're
8 doing.

9 Hopefully, that's kind of
10 giving some input on how one school at
11 least works within our District but also
12 with our partners that have been
13 approved to try to get to such a very
14 unprecedented time where we are now
15 virtual and many of our students are
16 just not doing well, and all of the
17 issues that they were facing before are
18 compounded now by issues that have come
19 with this pandemic. And so, we really
20 stand on alert to support, but also to
21 continue to reach out for more supports
22 so that we can do what we can do that is
23 best for this community that we serve.
24 Thank you.

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

1 The next panelist can begin.

2 THE CLERK: Dr. John Rich.

3 DR. RICH: Thank you so much.

4 Good afternoon, Councilmember Gym,
5 Councilmember Johnson, members of the
6 Committee on Gun Violence Prevention,
7 Children and Youth. I'm John Rich. I'm
8 a primary care physician. I'm also a
9 Professor of Health Management and
10 Policy at the Drexel University Dornsife
11 School of Public Health, where I also
12 direct the Center for Nonviolence and
13 Social Justice. I'm here to speak in
14 support of the resolution to provide
15 access to universal trauma counseling in
16 support for Philadelphia youth.

17 You've already heard a great
18 deal today about the impacts of trauma
19 and adversity, so I won't go over those
20 in detail. But I do want to emphasize
21 that we know that these adversities and
22 traumas that young people experience as
23 youth come out later in terms of chronic
24 disease such as heart disease, diabetes,
25 alcoholism, substance abuse, even poor

1 work performance. And we know that
2 these future health concerns are great
3 concern to us in public health and to
4 the health of our Philadelphia
5 community.

6 We also know that young people
7 who experience these forms of trauma and
8 violence are also at high risk for poor
9 school performance and that is
10 predictive of other adverse life
11 consequences, including involvement in
12 violence. And then we've heard a great
13 deal as we talk with young people in
14 communities that young people feel
15 chronically unsafe as a result of
16 exposure to community violence and
17 mistrust of the police and the intrusive
18 symptoms of post-traumatic stress who
19 may turn to violence or weapons to
20 defend themselves against perceived
21 threat. Of course, the proliferation of
22 firearms and the absence of effective
23 regulation is a root cause of this
24 problem.

25 So youth who have been exposed

1 to trauma and violence are also more
2 likely to harm themselves directly or in
3 terms of substances that will also
4 impact their futures. But we also note
5 that these young people have incredible
6 potential, even if it's unrecognized by
7 many. And if they don't have the chance
8 to deal with these traumas, they may not
9 be able to fully flourish and we all
10 suffer as a city because of that.

11 We also know that trauma is in
12 a very real sense contagious. And the
13 community members who are not directly
14 harmed by that violence actually also
15 manifest these symptoms of trauma, and
16 community trauma impacts neighborhoods
17 across Philadelphia negatively affecting
18 health and well-being. But we also know
19 from public health and medical science
20 that we can intervene at the individual
21 family and community levels to decrease
22 the manifestations of these traumas,
23 both prevent and to decrease them after
24 the fact, and also to better equip those
25 who come into contact with youth to

1 address these challenges.

2 At Drexel University, we have
3 Healing Hurt People which is a
4 hospital-linked trauma-intervention
5 program supported by DBHIDS and we work
6 with young people between the ages of 8
7 and 35 and mostly connecting with them
8 in hospital settings, those who have
9 suffered violent injury from gunshot
10 wounds, stabbings or assaults as well as
11 those in their families and their circle
12 of friends who have been affected by
13 this violence.

14 Our work has shown that early
15 intervention can decrease many of the
16 trauma-related consequences of violence,
17 including helping with depression,
18 improving sleep quality and decreasing
19 stress. We've also found that healing
20 circles where groups of young people
21 come together to support one another to
22 normalize the experience of healing and
23 to build effective community is also a
24 powerful way to help young people heal.

25 Our trained social work staff

1 use specific trauma-supported specific
2 therapy such as trauma-focused cognitive
3 behavioral therapy to help youth who
4 have been victims of violence to manage
5 their trauma symptoms. Our community
6 health worker pairs young people that we
7 train up through a 9-week training
8 program are young people who have the
9 lived experience of trauma and have
10 embarked on their own healing journey,
11 and they work as a part of the team to
12 help traumatized youth find healing and
13 safety. These interventions also engage
14 family members who themselves are
15 impacted by vicarious trauma.

16 Based on our experience, we
17 believe that there are a number of key
18 ingredients to providing effective
19 healing services to youth. We need
20 highly trained diverse culturally
21 responsive staff to support trauma
22 treatment wherever it happens.

23 Services must embody anti-
24 racist principles and be linguistically
25 and culturally acceptable, intentionally

1 so, that we have to focus on healing and
2 not stigmatizing labels that really are
3 dehumanizing so that survivors are not
4 retraumatized by the very systems that
5 are there to help them.

6 Healing services need to be
7 provided in conjunction with other
8 concrete services to address food
9 insecurity, issues of housing and
10 poverty. That's a key way to draw young
11 people into care. We have to tailor
12 these services to the needs of youth
13 rather than one size fits all. Some
14 young people have had a tremendous
15 amount of trauma and loss in their
16 lives. Other young people may not have
17 experienced it directly and we have to
18 make sure that we're addressing their
19 specific needs.

20 We have to also understand that
21 not every intervention is clinical. We
22 know from a wide range of research that
23 music, yoga, meditation, drumming,
24 movement and arts, many of the
25 powerfully provided services in school

1 can be a part of the overall healing
2 approach. We believe that strongly in
3 community health workers and certified
4 peer specialists, young people with a
5 lived experience because they're a
6 critical asset in helping to normalize
7 the experiences of young people.

8 There's been a lot of talk
9 about social media. Social media can be
10 used to ignite a broader conversation in
11 Philadelphia about trauma and healing.
12 And we a couple of years ago launched
13 Our Words Heal, a social media campaign,
14 to really create a space where community
15 members who are really the experts in
16 healing, they have done so for
17 generations, can really inform all of us
18 about how to approach this. And so, I
19 thank you for the opportunity to support
20 this critical work through testimony and
21 I'm available to answer any questions
22 that you might have.

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
24 Dr. Rich. And as always, I appreciate
25 your hard work, particularly around this

1 issue.

2 Will the Clerk please call the
3 next panelist -- not next panelist, the
4 next individual.

5 THE CLERK: Caroline Glavin.

6 MS. MENAPACE GLAVIN: Good
7 afternoon. Can you hear me okay?

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes, we
9 can.

10 MS. MENAPACE GLAVIN: Good
11 afternoon. My name is Caroline Menapace
12 Glavin. I am the Trauma Assessment
13 Specialist for the Children's Hospital
14 of Philadelphia Violence Intervention
15 Program and CHOP's Healthier Together
16 Initiative Growing Resilience in Teens
17 program. We work with youth ages 8 to
18 18 years old to address social
19 determinants of health, specifically
20 around youth's exposure to community
21 violence and trauma.

22 We provide intensive case
23 management and trauma therapy to youth
24 and their families to help them heal
25 from their experiences, reduce reinjury

1 and bolster resilience. The violence
2 intervention program, which is a program
3 within the Center for Violence
4 Prevention at CHOP, is an example of
5 many programs around the country such as
6 Healing Hurt People, that is dedicated
7 to breaking the cycle of violence for
8 children and young adults following a
9 violent injury. Because we know that
10 violence permeates communities, impacts
11 entire families and can lead to poor
12 outcomes, our program provides
13 assistance to youth and families with
14 case management in order to support a
15 family as they obtain medical follow-up
16 care, navigate the legal system and
17 engage in trauma-focused mental health
18 treatment.

19 I appreciate the opportunity to
20 speak today on this very important issue
21 of universal trauma services for young
22 victims of gun violence. I hope to
23 provide insight based on my work that
24 can improve access, resources and
25 policies that support universal trauma

1 services for young victims of gun
2 violence.

3 There are three co-occurring
4 epidemics currently faced by children
5 and youth in Philadelphia. Gun
6 violence, COVID-19 and mental health
7 crises. The intersection and severity
8 of these epidemics have exacerbated
9 pervasive psychosocial problems and the
10 needs of youth and families exceed the
11 current resources designed to respond
12 and provide support. These co-occurring
13 epidemics are also shedding light on
14 longstanding disparities, as they are
15 disproportionately impacting Black,
16 indigenous and people of color both in
17 Philadelphia and around our nation.

18 As challenging as the last year
19 has been for our community, it has also
20 provided an opportunity to step back and
21 reflect, an opportunity to think
22 creatively and collectively in order to
23 identify the real issues and the
24 sustainable solution to address our
25 City's struggles.

1 We know that youth who are
2 exposed to community violence are at
3 risk for long-term mental health
4 problems. A study done here at CHOP and
5 the University of Pennsylvania showed
6 that children who lived closest to
7 incidents involving guns were more
8 likely to have emergency department
9 visits for mental and behavioral health
10 issues in the weeks after those
11 incidents. Beneath the numbers of
12 gunshot injuries and deaths are the
13 stories that I hear on a daily basis
14 from the children and families impacted
15 by violence.

16 The youth I work with at CHOP
17 are clearly experiencing increased
18 trauma symptoms. Many of them have
19 trouble sleeping, nightmares, suicidal
20 thoughts, trouble focusing and are
21 hypervigilant and afraid to walk down
22 certain streets. Our children tell us
23 that they can't stop worrying that
24 something bad will happen to them or to
25 their family and loved ones. We need to

1 do better. We need to come together to
2 prioritize the health and well-being of
3 our children.

4 While no one program initiative
5 or intervention is going to fix the
6 crisis that our children face, we can
7 work together to ensure that we care for
8 the entire family to provide a holistic
9 approach. I have learned firsthand the
10 importance of wrapping services around
11 the entire family directly, especially
12 after gun violence. One way that we
13 address the symptoms following a
14 traumatic experience is by providing
15 trauma-focused cognitive behavioral
16 therapy, which you have heard about
17 today and which is an evidence-based
18 treatment for children impacted by
19 trauma as well as their parents and
20 caregivers.

21 When youth and family members
22 understand that their trauma symptoms
23 are not their fault or because of
24 something that they have done wrong,
25 they can start to heal and function

1 better in the outside world. So my work
2 as a trauma therapist, I have seen youth
3 write trauma narratives that highlight
4 their strengths and resilience rather
5 than define them by their trauma. While
6 our services focus on youth, I have seen
7 the gratitude in the hearts of our
8 caregivers when we walk alongside them
9 and help them navigate services after
10 their child is shot or otherwise
11 impacted by violence. Providing safe
12 spaces for youth and caregivers to speak
13 freely to express their fears and to
14 give kids a voice is an immeasurable
15 gift.

16 Trauma-focused therapy works
17 when done by well-intentioned,
18 well-trained practitioners. There is a
19 network of dedicated brilliant
20 practitioners which you have already
21 heard about today called the
22 Philadelphia Alliance for Child Trauma
23 Services. This network of child-serving
24 systems provides evidence-based
25 practices like TF-CBT for traumatized

1 youth and their families across the City
2 of Philadelphia.

3 The mission of PACTS is to
4 increase the number of children and
5 families who receive the most effective
6 trauma-specific care in Philadelphia.
7 While we know that TF-CBT works and the
8 PACTS network is strong, the current
9 needs of our children and families are
10 far exceeding our capacity. We must
11 come together to identify systematic
12 sustainable ways to support the growing
13 need for trauma-focused treatment in
14 Philadelphia.

15 One child's story comes to
16 mind. A 15-year-old African-American
17 female entered CHOP's violence
18 intervention, which we call CHOP VIP,
19 last November after being assaulted in
20 her community. With the support of her
21 family and her CHOP VIP case manager
22 from our program, she made great strides
23 to heal and recover from her violent
24 injury and she was excelling in school.
25 Then this past month, she was walking

1 down the street with her best friend
2 when they heard gunshots and her friend
3 pushed her to the ground. She quickly
4 realized that he was hit and this young
5 girl had to witness her best friend die
6 for no reason other than where they
7 lived. This girl, like so many that I
8 work with, experienced more than one
9 traumatic event in a short time span.
10 She is currently enrolled in
11 trauma-focused CBT and she's processing
12 the multiple traumatic experience that
13 she has been through.

14 By engaging in this trauma
15 therapy, she has a safe space to discuss
16 her experiences, her fears, her emotions
17 and her hopes. By engaging in trauma
18 therapy now, she is less likely to
19 experience long-term mental or physical
20 health issues. But unfortunately in our
21 current landscape, the need is outpacing
22 the available services when it comes to
23 mental health support. There is a
24 necessity for more readily available
25 trauma therapy and services in addition

1 to what's already being provided.

2 We know that stories like this
3 are all too common and we need to
4 provide better support for the chronic,
5 recurrent and complex experiences of our
6 youth. Trauma-focused treatment needs
7 to be consistently and readily available
8 for youth and families in Philadelphia.

9 In my experience, we as providers tend
10 to focus services on the identified
11 victims of the gun violence. While this
12 is essential, we know all too well that
13 each victim is someone's child, best
14 friend, sister, brother, cousin, niece
15 or student.

16 We know that for each episode
17 of gun violence an entire community is
18 crushed. We must work together to
19 create a larger more robust network of
20 trauma-focused providers so that every
21 child in Philadelphia and their loved
22 ones have access to the care they need
23 and deserve. I want to thank
24 Councilmembers Johnson and Gym for the
25 invitation to testify today and for

1 holding a hearing on this important
2 issue and I'm also happy to take
3 questions.

4 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
5 very much.

6 Will the Clerk please call the
7 next witness.

8 THE CLERK: Dr. Kathleen
9 Reeves.

10 DR. REEVES: Good afternoon.
11 Thank you, Co-Chairs Gym and Johnson as
12 well as Committee and Councilmembers,
13 for the opportunity to talk with you
14 about trauma, violence and our children.
15 My name is Kathy Reeves. I'm a
16 pediatrician. I serve at the Lewis Katz
17 School of Medicine, Senior Associate
18 Dean for Health Equity at Temple
19 University, and I also direct the Center
20 for Urban Bioethics, which houses
21 Philadelphia Cure Violence and
22 Philadelphia Healthy and Safe Schools or
23 PHASeS.

24 I hope to share with you a bit
25 more about Temple University's vision

1 for how we hope to support all of you
2 and all of our City organizations around
3 violence prevention, especially as it
4 impacts Philadelphia's youth. I'm an
5 academic clinician and researcher. My
6 job is to bring new knowledge on how to
7 treat disease. In collaboration with
8 public health, government and university
9 researchers, we have all worked together
10 so many times to prevent and cure
11 disease.

12 HIV and cancer were once always
13 a death sentence. Now, both are often a
14 chronic disease. In the past, society
15 criminalized people with tuberculosis.
16 Now, we have a medicine to treat it as
17 the infection that it is. You heard
18 from the people on this panel as well as
19 many of our colleagues last week about
20 the fact that we know in health care as
21 Dr. Rich said, violence is a public
22 health epidemic, it's a disease and it's
23 contagious.

24 The CDC has known this for over
25 10 years. It's not a debate. When

1 people, especially when children see
2 violence, they are far more likely to be
3 violent and to be victims of violence.

4 And that's not an excuse but an
5 explanation and it's also a big part of
6 the solution. We already know that a
7 public health approach if it's
8 reproduced with fidelity will decrease
9 violence. We know that because of the
10 work we did together, Philadelphia and
11 Temple University.

12 We worked together to study an
13 evidence-based public health approach to
14 violence prevention based on the Cure
15 Violence model. And in that study, we
16 saw two-and-a-half fewer shootings per
17 10,000 people per month in Cure Violence
18 sites versus sites without Cure Violence
19 teams. Since then, we've done a return
20 on investment.

21 We calculated that most of the
22 shootings in 2018 were in 6 police
23 districts. We saw even conservatively a
24 return on investment just from Medicaid
25 and just from direct health care costs

1 to the primary shooting event of over
2 \$1.60 was saved for every \$1 spent. If
3 we include just secondary health care
4 costs, mental health care costs,
5 criminal justice costs, we see \$32 saved
6 for every \$1 invested. And it's not a
7 hard thing to see that it's a smart
8 thing to do for the health of our
9 children and it should be something that
10 we can absolutely afford. In fact, it's
11 something that we cannot afford not to
12 do.

13 Over half of these shootings in
14 2018 occurred in these 6 police
15 districts. That was over 650 shootings.
16 About 350,000 people live in those
17 police districts. So based on this data
18 using the numbers from 2018, if Cure
19 Violence was present in just these 6
20 police districts, we can conservatively
21 project back then a reduction in
22 shootings by 220 people, 220 fewer
23 shooters. That means 245 fewer people
24 shot. That's based on data from 2018
25 when there were 353 shootings and 75

1 deaths.

2 In 2021, we already have 129
3 deaths and we're in April. We're on
4 track to see over 600 shootings. So
5 what does this mean for our children?
6 So I want to talk just a little bit more
7 about how we hope to help support our
8 youth and protect them from being
9 negatively impacted by violence in the
10 first place.

11 And know there are proven
12 models that work. We have evidence.
13 And like any other epidemic, we need to
14 reproduce what works with fidelity to
15 build a public health approach that's
16 centered on prevention and vaccination.
17 Trauma-informed public health spaces
18 work to address trauma and decrease
19 violence. So I want to share with you
20 what a trauma-informed neighborhood
21 could look like. And it's been such a
22 pleasure to work with Principals Bradell
23 and Dr. Bradley and with Mastery Gratz
24 High School and Dobbins High School.

25 A trauma-informed neighborhood

1 is centered in the school in those
2 neighborhoods and it's carried through
3 into the local community. It requires
4 significant evidence-based intervention
5 with even more significant returns. And
6 just like providing the best treatment
7 for heart failure, for cancer or for
8 COVID-19, we all study what works and
9 then reproduce it exactly how it was
10 studied. I can't say this enough.

11 We know when we're giving
12 Moderna or Pfizer, we know the right
13 dose to give and we know that it must be
14 given twice. We would never decide to
15 give a lesser dose because we didn't
16 have enough money or we would never
17 decide we should only give one dose. We
18 would do what works. But sometimes with
19 violence and sometimes with trauma, we
20 look at the evidence and we do part of
21 it and we don't reproduce it completely
22 and then it doesn't work.

23 So imagine in Philadelphia
24 neighborhoods with schools with
25 afterschool safe havens for young people

1 who have witnessed great trauma and that
2 are trauma-informed spaces for children
3 and for families to feel safe. Imagine
4 this connected to street teams that are
5 based on a Cure Violence model, that are
6 surrounding these schools, working to
7 decrease neighborhoods in those
8 communities where the children live.

9 Imagine healing hurt people as part of
10 that, directly counseling our youth.

11 Imagine principals, like Principal
12 Bradell and Bradley moving through that.

13 This is what we're hoping to
14 create with the Philadelphia Healthy and
15 Safe Schools Cure Violence partnership.

16 As already noted, we've been working
17 with DBHIDS, with the Philadelphia
18 School District, which we're grateful
19 for their support, at Bethune, at
20 Kenderton, at Dobbins and at Mastery
21 Gratz High Schools. And we're
22 developing a stronger and stronger
23 relationship with Healing Hurt People.

24 With all of these amazing
25 partners, we believe Philadelphia can

1 create trauma-informed neighborhoods.
2 And there's no doubt this trauma-
3 informed work is very hard. It is work
4 that requires expertise. It is work
5 that requires all stakeholders to be
6 engaged. This means the School
7 District, the teachers, the school
8 administrative and services staff, the
9 universities, the government, the
10 Mayor's Office, City Council, the
11 hospitals, the children, the families,
12 everyone must be engaged and we're
13 grateful to be part of such a great
14 team.

15 This is what needed to happen
16 with COVID. This is what we need to do
17 for violence. And we've engaged with
18 community and parents around describing
19 what trauma-informed is. And to be
20 honest, this made us really nervous. We
21 were very concerned that families would
22 not be receptive to what we're saying,
23 but that isn't what happened.

24 The caregivers and the families
25 are all too familiar with childhood

1 trauma because they suffered from it as
2 well. These entire families and
3 communities deserve better.
4 Philadelphians want to find a way to
5 break the cycle for their children to
6 heal and for their neighborhoods to
7 heal. So making the school safe as
8 Principal Bradley pointed out is a great
9 start, and then we must also have a
10 presence in the neighborhoods.

11 Again, the numbers are
12 staggering. Over 75 percent of the
13 children in the 19140, just as the
14 Councilmember previously stated, 75
15 percent of the kids have heard gunshots.
16 65 percent of have seen a drug
17 transaction. 75 percent or more by the
18 time they are in middle school knows
19 someone who was shot and/or someone who
20 is incarcerated because of violence, and
21 many have seen someone stabbed, someone
22 beaten or a dead body. How can we ever
23 expect people to just go on as if
24 nothing happened when this is their
25 experience.

1 So why do we think
2 trauma-informed neighborhoods work?
3 Again, it's science. There are a few
4 states who have really implemented some
5 pilot trauma-informed studies,
6 Washington state, Wyoming,
7 Massachusetts, Louisiana and California.
8 And what families and neighborhoods have
9 seen is remarkable.

10 In my testimony, I have shared
11 with you over 20 references where such
12 public health-driven trauma-informed
13 work has led to less violence and
14 healthier communities. And again, we
15 need to reproduce these programs as they
16 were studied. It's worth it. It's the
17 only way we're going to see positive
18 outcomes and in the long run, we will
19 save dollars and save lives. And we
20 understand we have to move forward. We
21 must look at sustainability. As health
22 care providers, we believe in the long-
23 term. Trauma-informed spaces should be
24 funded with public and health care
25 dollars.

1 We believe that the amount of
2 money spent right now trying to treat
3 children suffering from mental health
4 disorders or going to the emergency room
5 on a regular basis for asthma or
6 suffering from ongoing violence is far
7 more than the cost of creating
8 trauma-informed neighborhoods.

9 Insurance payers will save significant
10 dollars, Department of Health and Human
11 Services will save significant dollars
12 and there's plenty to invest to make
13 this happen. And we need people to
14 understand investing health care dollars
15 in prevention matters.

16 Right now Medicaid won't pay
17 for a nutritional counseling or
18 education for a child who shows signs of
19 pre-diabetes, only after they have
20 diabetes. We can't wait to support
21 people with trauma-informed programming
22 until after they have been traumatized
23 or after they're a perpetrator or a
24 victim of violence. We need to do it as
25 a prevention.

1 And very quickly, I'd like to
2 just share with you two very quick
3 stories from one of these cities that
4 implemented a trauma-informed program, a
5 trauma-informed neighborhood. The first
6 is Michael. So Michael grew up in the
7 inner city. He had a brother who was
8 two years older than him. Michael and
9 his brother were raised by their
10 grandmother. And Michael's grandmother
11 was a wonderful hard-working woman. She
12 provided Michael and his brother with a
13 good place to stay, good food as best
14 she could and love.

15 No matter what she did, Michael
16 and his brother were on a bad path.
17 Michael had been physically abused in
18 the past, had witnessed a lot of
19 violence in his neighborhood. And when
20 Michael was 10, his brother was shot and
21 killed only blocks from their home. In
22 school, Michael quickly earned the
23 reputation of being a bad seed. If
24 someone bumped into him in the hallway,
25 he often reacted by pushing back or

1 punching the other student.

2 One day in his 7th grade math
3 class, the student next to him made a
4 joke because Michael got an F on a test.
5 Michael picked up his desk and threw it
6 at the other student. The teacher
7 grabbed him by the arm, physically
8 pulled him into the principal's office.
9 The police were called. He was forced
10 to leave the school. He was suspended
11 and his grandmother was told his
12 behavior would no longer be tolerated,
13 and she didn't know what to do.

14 Michael stopped going to
15 school. He became well-known in the
16 juvenile system, was in legal trouble
17 since he was 15, stole a car, was caught
18 with a handgun. And by the time he was
19 19, he was in prison for shooting a
20 20-year-old man, who grew up around the
21 corner from him and his brother.

22 The other story is about Kelsy.
23 Kelsy grew up in the same neighborhood
24 as Michael. When she entered 8th grade,
25 her mother was struggling with

1 addiction. Her mother experienced
2 terrible abuse when she was a child and
3 was working hard to overcome her own
4 depression and anxiety. Kelsy didn't
5 often feel safe and experienced and
6 witnessed a lot of trauma during her
7 childhood as well.

8 She was often disruptive in
9 school and her current school thought it
10 was detrimental to the other students
11 for her to remain. She was transferred
12 to another school that was trying
13 something new. It was a trauma-informed
14 school in a trauma-informed
15 neighborhood. Kelsy says she was
16 shocked when after participating and
17 starting a violent fight with another
18 girl during school, she wasn't
19 immediately arrested and kicked out of
20 school. Instead she went to the
21 principal's office to cool off and was
22 given a bottle of water, a gentle pat on
23 the back and time to reflect on my
24 behavior. Even the school cop talked to
25 me calmly and helped me discuss what I

1 had done.

2 There were consequences. She
3 was given a three-day inschool
4 suspension and an official complaint was
5 made with the police, but those three
6 days were spent keeping up with her
7 schoolwork while she took part in
8 intense sessions with trained social
9 workers who helped her understand the
10 trauma. Graduated with a 4.0 GPA and
11 now is in community college. She's
12 pretty clear if it wasn't for that
13 transfer, she's not sure she would even
14 be alive today.

15 So it's not rocket science.
16 We've known since 1998 and other people
17 have said, adversity and childhood leads
18 to chronic heart disease, cancer,
19 addiction and violence. You've heard
20 that people who suffer from childhood
21 trauma are three times more likely to
22 have heart disease, four times more
23 likely to have asthma, six times more
24 likely to suffer from addiction, eight
25 times more likely to have their life

1 negatively affected by violence.

2 The majority of people
3 incarcerated for violent offenses have
4 experienced chronic significant
5 childhood trauma. It is the biggest
6 underrecognized epidemic of our
7 generation. And it's scientific.

8 And the last example I'll give
9 you: Imagine you're in a forest and a
10 bear is chasing you. Your adrenaline
11 and your cortisol and other hormones are
12 very high because right now you don't
13 want to solve a math problem, you don't
14 want to interact with someone else, you
15 want to run or you want to fight back.

16 But what happens if the bear
17 chases you every day. What happens if
18 your brain is bathed in adrenaline and
19 cortisol every day. We know from PET
20 scans, from MRIs, from blood tests, that
21 the physiology of children is changed
22 because of chronic elevation in stress
23 hormones. We also know this can be
24 reversed with trauma-informed healing
25 practices and it has to happen in

1 childhood.

2 So what we're proposing with
3 PHASeS and Cure Violence and that model
4 together working with the School
5 District, with DBHIDS, with Healing Hurt
6 People is looking at neighborhoods that
7 create healing spaces that will help
8 children heal from the negative effects
9 of this ongoing cortisol and adrenaline
10 and trauma they face each and every day.

11 So again, I want to thank you
12 for your dedication to helping our most
13 vulnerable children. The science is
14 clear. The research that's done with
15 this is as clear as it was decades ago
16 linking high cholesterol to heart
17 disease. If we want our children and
18 our Philadelphia neighborhoods to be
19 safe, we must be directed, we must be
20 clear and reproduce with fidelity the
21 same way we would do with vaccinations,
22 cancer or HIV treatment and provide
23 support in neighborhoods in ways that
24 help children be healthy.

25 We know it works. I hope, my

1 hope, our hope is to see Philadelphia as
2 the first city to support all of our
3 neighborhoods to become trauma-informed
4 spaces. Thank you very much for your
5 time and attention. I really appreciate
6 the opportunity.

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
8 Councilwoman Gym.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yes. This
10 was a -- first of all, I want to thank
11 all of the panelists really for your
12 expertise. We spent a lot of time with
13 a number of you talking through some
14 things.

15 And I think, Dr. Reeves, your
16 testimony really did lay out a broader
17 vision for what we need to be doing and
18 I would love to continue to press
19 forward on some of the things that you
20 raised.

21 My first question is for
22 Dr. Rich and to ask you, what kind of
23 rating -- I don't know if you do this,
24 this may not be entirely within your
25 work -- would you give the City of

1 Philadelphia in our ability to meet the
2 needs, the trauma needs of young people
3 given what we're facing now?

4 DR. RICH: Yeah. I don't know
5 that I could give a rating compared to,
6 for example, other cities. I think that
7 Philadelphia has a set of unique issues
8 that relate to, for example, the levels
9 of poverty, the racial composition and
10 make-up, the prevalence of racial trauma
11 in the City. What I would say is that
12 Philadelphia has great potential because
13 I think of all the places, many of the
14 places across the country, there has
15 been an ongoing conversation about
16 trauma and healing in Philadelphia and
17 the vision of a trauma-informed city
18 really leading the nation I think over
19 the past few years.

20 Now, obviously implementation
21 of that is key. We're obviously not
22 where we want to be. I think there's a
23 great potential for us to not have to
24 overcome the burden of even convincing
25 folks that trauma is important.

1 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yes, I
2 should not have put you in a place
3 where -- you heard some of the testimony
4 from before about a lot of us have been
5 in this space for a very, very long
6 time. We work with a lot of
7 institutional entities. One of the
8 things I guess that I would ask just
9 because you've seen a lot of this is
10 that even though there's been a lot of
11 explicit commitment, there's a clear
12 recognition there isn't clarity about
13 whose responsibility it is to pull these
14 elements together. So we can have a
15 School District that has a lot of data,
16 that they're not in a formal binding
17 relationship with the charter schools
18 except in the most contractual of
19 things. Maybe we have DBH doing their
20 work within a broader system of care.
21 You've got the police department.
22 You've got different agencies and
23 others.

24 Are you seeing something -- do
25 we actually need kind of what Dr. Reeves

1 was saying that you really need a
2 broader system? You have Councilmembers
3 really complaining about there's not
4 really a plan here. We have resources
5 now which is very different from where
6 we were 15 years ago. We're not in
7 austerity mindset necessarily. But do
8 you feel like we need to really be
9 pulling all these entities together
10 within neighborhoods, within a city,
11 within taking a look at school systems
12 or do you think that we should just go
13 and move as quickly as we can in the
14 spaces that we can, which is sometimes
15 what we do when we are bereft of a
16 larger organizing entity?

17 DR. RICH: I think it's
18 critical that we don't have silos in
19 this. Trauma cuts across so many
20 systems. When a child leaves a school
21 and walks down the street, we can't
22 assume that that child has left the
23 umbrella of protection of the City
24 because the baton has been passed to
25 police, for example.

1 So I do think from a public
2 health perspective we need to coalesce
3 the data. So as Dr. Reeves was saying,
4 we need the data to drive us to not only
5 what works but where the key confluence
6 of issues is. So I would say we do need
7 a larger strategy that falls under a
8 public health approach, not a criminal
9 justice approach, but a public health
10 approach, but we also can't stop doing
11 what we're doing.

12 This is the challenge to
13 both -- we obviously have to deal with
14 the emergent needs of young people today
15 and what they're facing, but I think we
16 can do both at the same time. It really
17 is a need. It's not an either or. And
18 especially as you point out, if we have
19 new resources coming together to make
20 sure that we are the best stewards of
21 those resources to have a coordinated
22 strategy, I couldn't agree more with
23 that.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. And
25 then, Dr. Reeves, you talked a lot about

1 the need for these healing spaces. Are
2 these healing spaces as diverse as the
3 children and the neighborhoods and the
4 City that we're in? Can it be small
5 organizations when we talk about healing
6 spaces? Can it be schools? Are you
7 talking just generally that all spaces
8 could be healing spaces or are there
9 specific spaces that we need to make
10 sure are healing spaces should they
11 exist, i.e., a rec center, a school, an
12 institutional anchor of some sort within
13 a community?

14 DR. REEVES: So I think in a
15 similar way that violence is contagious
16 so can healing be. We are a city of
17 neighborhoods and our schools are
18 central to that. And I think if we
19 start in schools and then move out to
20 the other primary stakeholders, but we
21 need people involved that really
22 understand the communities. There are
23 amazing community organizations out
24 there with infrastructure that can do
25 amazing things and create these spaces.

1 There's other organizations that are
2 struggling that would need more support
3 before they can do that and we need an
4 organized way to evaluate that.

5 We're also a city with great
6 poverty, with great violence, who we
7 haven't been able to implement any kind
8 of afterschool safe-haven, weekend,
9 summer program. And I think that
10 finding a way to build spaces in
11 schools, safe havens, afterschool
12 programs and then moving them to bigger
13 organizations, having those bigger
14 organizations help the smaller
15 organizations. Now, eventually it will
16 help the families.

17 Families want this in their
18 homes and people didn't experience it
19 because a lot of the caregivers today
20 were victimized by the same generational
21 trauma that's victimizing their
22 children. So I think it's all spaces.
23 We just have to be really thoughtful on
24 how we move it out is my thought.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Is Principal

1 Bradley still on the line? I don't know
2 if she had to --

3 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: Yes, I am
4 here.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Hi,
6 Principal Bradley. Thank you so much
7 for joining us.

8 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: Yes.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Have you
10 thought about -- I think you made this
11 extremely compelling argument about why
12 even though we may see many of the high
13 schools being impacted for the older
14 students, that actually we really need
15 to think about the feeder schools into
16 those high schools. This is a very
17 important issue. You're looking at
18 communities, neighborhoods. High
19 schoolers have siblings, as has been
20 well-noted, and how important it is.

21 Now, you're at Bethune
22 Elementary. You are a K to 8 school; is
23 that right?

24 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: We're
25 Pre-K to 8, so we start with

1 preschoolers.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: In your
3 ideal staffing model if you can create,
4 as Dr. Reeves has said, a healing space
5 for the children and families that you
6 serve, what kind of staffing would you
7 ideally want at Bethune?

8 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: I think
9 ideally some things that would -- some
10 positions of support that would help
11 enhance our efforts would be definitely
12 a social worker on staff. We do have a
13 wonderful counselor, but I would also
14 have an additional counselor because we
15 just have that amount of trauma that is
16 impacting our community.

17 So don't forget that little
18 people grow up to be bigger people. And
19 so, when a former Bethune student is a
20 victim of gun violence, it still kind of
21 reverberates and ripples back down to
22 the elementary where their younger
23 siblings and families still reside. So
24 we've lost in the last two years about
25 eight former Bethune students to gun

1 violence. And many of them have younger
2 cousins and family members still here at
3 the school. So we also would really
4 want a full-time trauma specialist. One
5 who really knows about how to help our
6 community, teachers, support staff as
7 well as families navigate in trauma.

8 So the supports that we do have
9 from Dr. Reeves and Temple PHASes are
10 helpful, but we share those resources
11 and we don't necessarily have anyone who
12 just exclusively lives at Bethune. And
13 believe it or not, we would also love to
14 have other community liaison kind of
15 supports, someone who can really help
16 families with how to fill out for bail
17 funds and food scarcity, and all of
18 these things as academicians we don't
19 know what to do with, having a community
20 liaison that knows all those ins and
21 outs would also be helpful.

22 Bethune is also working on
23 encouraging urban agriculture. So
24 someone who would be a part-time urban
25 farmer that really could help take our

1 little five garden boxes and turn that
2 into a more fruitful investment would
3 also be some of the types of positions
4 that we would love to benefit from as a
5 school community.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And have you
7 made those requests to the School
8 District of Philadelphia out of
9 curiosity?

10 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: I think
11 some of these positions do exist. So to
12 be really clear, we are always tasked
13 with choosing from a litany of the needs
14 that we have and try to give priority to
15 those that are more immediate than
16 others. So I'm sure that the District
17 is well aware of my request for a social
18 worker and other supports. But as was
19 evident earlier, many of those resources
20 are going into secondary where there is
21 that direct correlation between the gun
22 violence and the victim and the shooter,
23 but they do come from elementary schools
24 where if we can even get more
25 preventative measures in place, we may

1 be able to kind of lesson some of what
2 is happening in high school.

3 If we can show little people
4 how to deal with conflict on schoolyards
5 before they become bigger students and
6 their schoolyards become neighborhoods,
7 we may be able to be more preventive in
8 some of the violence that we have.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: You spoke
10 about how many students and former
11 students at Bethune had been harmed by
12 gun violence. I did also just want to
13 say there may have been 600 homicides,
14 but there are far more shootings -- I
15 think that might have been a statistic
16 that was raised -- four times more
17 shootings that are involved. And
18 obviously, you've been at South
19 Philadelphia High School, so you
20 certainly saw this.

21 If someone's harmed, a former
22 student is harmed, you know that family
23 members or siblings may be involved at
24 your school, what happens the next day
25 after a violent might occur, what kind

1 of things kick into place for Bethune?

2 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: So I
3 think the most important thing is that
4 we have earned the trust of our
5 community. So most of the times those
6 incidents, particularly if we're not
7 directly impacted because it's not one
8 of our current students, our community
9 members let us know what is happening.

10 We do then invoke, of course,
11 first and foremost our counselor who has
12 a myriad of supports that she can reach
13 out to outside of the school that are
14 inclusive in District supports if there
15 is a greater need. But here because of
16 our relationship with Temple PHASes, we
17 also reach out to our trauma support
18 that we have there if the family, not
19 necessarily the student because of the
20 protections for students, et cetera, but
21 we do also offer families if there's
22 some outside supports that they may
23 need, that we are here.

24 So we really try to be very
25 responsive even when it's not a current

1 student, but someone who may have been a
2 student three or four years ago, they
3 are still a part of the Bethune family.
4 So these things don't -- trauma doesn't
5 happen in isolation. So often times you
6 still have the cousins, the little
7 people. And so something happens in a
8 high school and it reverberates back to
9 elementary where many of the younger
10 siblings are often met with just the
11 grief of it without a proper language
12 and how to express it, so we just jump
13 into action as best we can to support
14 the family and the community.

15 We also do yearly a balloon
16 release. We do have -- for those who
17 are also concerned with the environment,
18 we did have the research done. These
19 are the types of balloons that then
20 evaporate. They're very dispensable,
21 but balloons nonetheless. But we do a
22 release type of ceremony with support,
23 with counselors, et cetera, to help our
24 children kind of release some of the
25 pain and angst, and we have additional

1 counselors on schedule at that time.
2 But those are some of the other ways
3 that we look to honor the lives that are
4 lost even when they are lives lost after
5 we leave the school.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And let's
7 see, I guess I'm hearing that you will
8 say that unless it's a student at
9 Bethune, you are not necessarily alerted
10 that a former graduate might have
11 impacted; is that right?

12 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: Correct.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So you would
14 have to hear it from an external source
15 of some sort?

16 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: Right.
17 We have so many boots on the ground.
18 Those things really come back to the
19 school a lot faster than even official
20 channels would be able to do. I get
21 texts from community members, et cetera.
22 So I just think that there is so much
23 pain that young people are feeling and
24 the more ways that we can get on
25 hearings and calls and come up with

1 solutions, that really will feed into
2 direct action and impact on our
3 constituents. And for me, those
4 constituents are those in the 19140
5 Bethune area, the better it is for us
6 all.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yeah, we
8 fully support that. And then I'm
9 hearing that you're saying that you have
10 a counselor who's on staff and you have
11 the partnership with Temple University.
12 Are you outreached to any other
13 agencies, either a CUA, a DHS or other
14 entities? Because it sounds like you're
15 dealing with trauma and even though it's
16 not directly your student who is
17 directly in front of you, you're still
18 impacted by it and still needing to
19 provide services over and beyond what
20 you would normally do during the school
21 day; is that fair?

22 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY:
23 Absolutely. I think that we also have
24 the preventive specialist that the
25 counselor can always reach out to if

1 there is --

2 (Background noise.)

3 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: Is
4 someone else talking?

5 (No response.)

6 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: We do
7 have also other District supports if, in
8 fact, there is something that is
9 overwhelming or out of the purview of
10 our school counselor that we can always
11 call to get direction. We do work with
12 CUA workers of course and DHS, but not
13 necessarily for violence-impacted issues
14 that come up as one-off situations. We
15 work with them all the time as they have
16 cases of course, but there really to my
17 knowledge are not a lot of official
18 things that have been with the feeder
19 schools if the violence and the life
20 loss was that in high school unless we
21 kind of do our own informal networks.

22 And also, principals of course
23 support one another. And so, if in fact
24 there's something that's happening at a
25 high school and they know that there's a

1 sibling that attends your school, we as
2 administrators always reach out to speak
3 to one another to try to make sure that
4 we are as supportive as possible. So we
5 have a lot of informal networks, but not
6 necessarily all solidify District policy
7 to my knowledge.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Sure. And
9 then finally since you don't have a
10 social worker, you're not part of the
11 STEP program for the School District,
12 right?

13 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: I am not.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And how many
15 students did you say had been impacted
16 by gun violence since 2020, would you
17 say?

18 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: Well, as
19 you stated before --

20 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Well,
21 former.

22 MS. CATANCH-BRADLEY: We've
23 lost six and some say eight. We're
24 trying to get clarity there on how many
25 of our former students have been lost,

1 lives lost to gun violence. We're
2 actually working on a mural to
3 commemorate that loss at this time.
4 However, we don't have necessary
5 official numbers because they're not
6 current students, so we really are
7 working with our community to kind of
8 give us that information so that we can
9 then memorialize them here as best we
10 can as they are still always a part of
11 our community.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so
13 much, Principal Bradley, for all your
14 work and stay in touch and keep
15 advocating for the resources that you
16 need, and just thank you very much to
17 all the testifiers today.

18 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
20 Madam Chair.

21 Thank you everybody who
22 testified on this panel. Will the Clerk
23 please call the next panel.

24 THE CLERK: It's Chantay Love.

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And

1 Kathleen Reeves, I would like to follow
2 up with you regarding the Cure Violence
3 model as well.

4 DR. REEVES: Absolutely,
5 Councilmember. I look forward to it.

6 THE CLERK: Chantay Love.

7 MS. LOVE: Good afternoon.
8 Thank you, Council Gym and Council
9 Johnson, for allowing me to have this
10 opportunity to talk. I am in awe and
11 excited that we are having this
12 dialogue. I'm upset that we have to
13 have it. The great part is that what
14 I'm hearing is my colleagues that I work
15 with, we are all still doing phenomenal
16 work on trauma and how important it is.

17 Let me first tell you I'm one
18 of the Founders and Directors of EMIR
19 Healing Center, which started behind the
20 murder of my brother, Emir Green which
21 occurred in 1997. And I will tell you
22 that murder and violence changed the DNA
23 of our family and our community. The
24 dreams and opportunities that was
25 supposed to happen were completely being

1 railroaded, that as a family we also
2 believed in a concept of the African
3 proverb village, so we always acted that
4 way.

5 So in our humble beginnings, we
6 studied when we decided that we were
7 going to form EMIR Healing Center, which
8 stands for Every Murder Is Real, we
9 studied countries that had exhibited
10 war. And so more than 20 years ago, we
11 were looking at not only countries that
12 had had war, but also soldiers who had
13 experienced it.

14 And at that time, we compared
15 the level of violence from wars to our
16 communities, and we knew at that time
17 more than 20 years ago that our
18 communities were in trouble, and that we
19 knew that our children would be in
20 trouble, our families would be in
21 trouble, our schools would be in
22 trouble, and we know that the evidence
23 that showed the exposure to this level
24 of violence was going to rip at the pure
25 fabric of not only an individual, a

1 family, a neighborhood and a city. And
2 ripping at that fabric of violence would
3 cause a level of pain and trauma that is
4 unheard of.

5 I will tell you the difference
6 between war is that when it's over, then
7 we flood resources to rebuild. The
8 problem is that our war is not over. We
9 are constantly living in communities or
10 constantly living in that. I don't have
11 to tell you a lot about what trauma does
12 to individuals and families because it's
13 been shared by a lot of my colleagues.

14 What I will tell you is that
15 the resolution that was offered about us
16 having trauma throughout I totally
17 support because it's necessary for us
18 all to reset, that this epidemic of
19 violence that's inside of a pandemic
20 that we have been exposed to and seen
21 the level of violence that's unheard of.

22 This week we are looking at a
23 trial and our young people are
24 experiencing the murder of George Floyd
25 and witnessing right before their eyes.

1 And at EMIR Healing Center, we have
2 started -- we have been doing this work
3 for more than 20 years, looking and
4 having a holistic and trauma-informed
5 approach to healing our families and our
6 communities, and we have been doing this
7 since the beginning because we
8 understood and knew that trauma that
9 would be experienced needed to be felt
10 at the community level and it needed to
11 be felt so that community members knew
12 what it looked like, understood it,
13 trained for it, so that they can manage
14 something different.

15 At EMIR Healing Center, we are
16 healing components which is our
17 wellness, is that we offer healing
18 circles for families to go through the
19 healing process. Our support groups
20 allow us to work with moms, aunties as
21 well as pop-pops and uncles and brothers
22 and young people.

23 We believe in alternative ways
24 along with our therapy and our
25 counseling, that the alternative ways of

1 healing is extremely important because
2 the method of getting trauma care has to
3 be versatile. It can't be a
4 one-fit-all. And it can't be that
5 because people are very different.

6 We have art therapy for young
7 people which I'm very proud of, but I'm
8 very saddened that I had to have an art
9 therapy group on a Sunday. And so, last
10 month we seen 180 young people from the
11 ages of 12 to 16, not expected to do
12 that. We weren't expected to be at that
13 type of level working with young people
14 that's been experienced -- that has
15 suffered from homicide, the exposure of
16 it, their ability to no longer trust
17 systems or each other, living on the
18 edge in the state of flight or fight,
19 their adrenaline still moving, teaching
20 them how do they have concrete skills in
21 healing and in learning and how do they
22 do that and also creating and changing
23 the landscape. It's extremely important
24 that our communities understand that and
25 know that.

1 And so, along with our yoga,
2 our meditation, our healing through
3 music as well as through nutrition, we
4 know that coping mechanisms and that
5 people will gravitate towards what they
6 know that comforts them. And if
7 comforting them is food or alcohol, then
8 they will do that. But it's that small
9 window that when something happens, that
10 very small window that we have the
11 opportunity to get in and to be able to
12 help them walk differently to also not
13 only validate that pain, but give them
14 the skill set so they can move forward
15 in a healthy way, and it needs to happen
16 all over.

17 I will tell you about our We
18 Live Project. Our We Live Project is
19 made up of all young people who drive
20 the messaging of hope and peace and
21 love. Understand, learn about trauma.
22 Learn about the issues that young people
23 go through, but also take control over
24 it. It's youth-led and it's
25 adult-supported.

1 The work that we're doing with
2 young people around trauma is
3 beneficial. Not only is it beneficial,
4 it's necessary. It has to continue
5 throughout our City, that our
6 continued -- what we're doing in the
7 Northwest is that we've created a
8 collective. And in that collective it
9 works with trauma. Their jobs is that
10 community groups have come together to
11 have a trauma-informed community that
12 has restorative justice behind it.

13 And what does that look like.
14 That looks like community members that
15 are groups that work on education,
16 groups that work on the poverty, groups
17 that work on economics, groups that work
18 on homeownership, is that we all come
19 together and we teach everyone, mom-mom
20 and pop-pop that sit on the porch, what
21 trauma looks like, the corner guy knows
22 what trauma looks like and how to
23 relate, the funeral home director can
24 know what trauma is. And knowing that
25 allows and giving people the skill set

1 to engage with each other differently is
2 too important.

3 It can't be from a level of
4 learning trauma from here and coming
5 down. It has to be us bringing
6 evidence-based and evidence-informed
7 where the rubber meets the road right
8 here and we drive it, and that the
9 community creates that narrative. I am
10 excited that the faith-based we just met
11 with has come on board where they will
12 learn about what trauma is so that they
13 not only know what it is, that they
14 could also not retraumatize, but also be
15 a support. And that if we're looking at
16 communities as a whole and looking at
17 schools as a whole, I will tell you that
18 the largest challenging component is
19 community partners being able to partner
20 sometimes with schools. Because what we
21 do know is that the community partners
22 have the pulse of the environment and
23 it's an asset, that we have been able to
24 link the schools up from elementary all
25 the way to high school where we will

1 work together and work with them to
2 create that. Not only that, but to be a
3 resource for those principals and a
4 support.

5 Doing that is necessary because
6 trauma impacts our families and our
7 communities at age 0 from the wound
8 because of the family who has
9 experienced overexposure to it. We
10 can't stop there. The work that EMIR
11 Healing Center is doing with all of our
12 community partners is invaluable, in
13 that we must be able to teach and not
14 only teach across the board, it has to
15 be in schools, it has to be in faith-
16 based, it has to be in neighborhoods and
17 in rec centers.

18 I will tell you that we had the
19 opportunity to do a healing component
20 for a rec center who had a shooting at a
21 pool. And our main job was to bring
22 young people in to not only teach them
23 what trauma was and how do they cope,
24 but in different ways, through financial
25 literacy, through activities, through

1 creating messages and social media and
2 videos, to all those things that are
3 required to have a healthy neighborhood
4 and we are successful with it.

5 But what's the problem is that
6 there needs to be a level of resources
7 that is committed to driving that and
8 there needs to be a level of commitment
9 that connects us all that doesn't leave
10 anyone out because it's too important,
11 because it's too necessary. When we're
12 looking at trauma around our
13 neighborhoods and our schools, it is
14 essential that not only do the educators
15 know what trauma is and learn about it,
16 but they're able to eliminate it.

17 I do believe that at times that
18 they are so overwhelmed that they have
19 become desensitized. And so, getting
20 them the resources as well. So I do
21 support this resolution with all of my
22 recommendations that we're able to do
23 this, and I believe we can because we
24 are together doing it. I thank you.

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

1 Thank you, Chantay Love. And as always,
2 good seeing you. Always on the front
3 line speaking truth to power in
4 addressing the most critical issue that
5 needs to be support, so thank you very
6 much.

7 Will the Clerk call the next
8 witness.

9 THE CLERK: Dr. Kahlila Lee.

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
11 Dr. Lee.

12 DR. LEE: Good afternoon,
13 Councilman Johnson. Councilwoman Gym,
14 thank you for inviting me. Can
15 everybody hear me okay?

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

17 DR. LEE: Okay. So I'm just
18 going to start before I share with you
19 my written component that I wanted to
20 share with you all as an invite. I just
21 want to talk about just a few numbers
22 that I heard as everyone was presenting.

23 So I saw the table that
24 Dr. Wolford shared from the School
25 District. And I just want to say that I

1 was taken aback that Overbrook was No. 6
2 on that list. And when we're talking
3 about approximately 200 schools in the
4 City of Philadelphia, that means that
5 Overbrook is at the top 3 percent of
6 that list.

7 When we're talking about the
8 crises and checking the pulse of our
9 young people, just in the School
10 District of Philadelphia schools that
11 are being serviced, that's approximately
12 126,000 students. As I hear all of the
13 wonderful organizations that spoke this
14 morning and this afternoon in regards to
15 gun violence and how we can support
16 young people and how we talked about
17 communities, what I did not hear was
18 schools being at the hub of the
19 community.

20 Often times, organizations
21 making decisions about schools and
22 leaving school leaders, teachers and
23 students and parents out of the
24 conversation in regards to the resources
25 that we need as a school. So I'm going

1 to share my piece with you all that I
2 was asked to share.

3 Good afternoon, Councilmembers,
4 Councilwoman Gym, Councilman Johnson.

5 My name is Dr. Kahlila Lee and I am the
6 proud Principal of Overbrook High
7 School. But like many of you here
8 today, I also wear many other hats as a
9 mother and a fellow Philadelphian. On
10 March 18, 2021, I shared a very brief
11 three-minute testimony at the School
12 District of Philadelphia's board monthly
13 meeting.

14 Though nothing I would say was
15 especially profound about what I said,
16 what I did share is the calling of three
17 names, Wahseem Mason, Sabir Mack and
18 Tamir Brown, three students of Overbrook
19 High School who were murdered via gun
20 violence within a span of five months.
21 I heard the gasp of air and I saw the
22 shaking of heads. And as I continued to
23 speak, I simultaneously thought, oh,
24 wow, are there really people who do not
25 believe that this is the day-to-day of

1 so many children in our City, and how it
2 is very unfortunate that this is our
3 reality. And because it is such a
4 reality of our children and what they
5 face, they face trauma. Trauma that
6 children do not know how to manage,
7 navigate or contain. And then what
8 happens, the cycle continues.

9 Often times the evidence of the
10 traumatic experience our children have
11 to cope with is acted out and maybe the
12 only place, and I've heard this word
13 shared continuously this morning and
14 this afternoon, that many of our
15 children feel safe are in schools.

16 Additionally, there's trauma,
17 the weight of loss and grief and
18 violence is carried not just by the
19 students, but by the staff and the
20 caretakers and the entire school
21 community. But sometimes the resources,
22 and I know we have a lot of resources, I
23 heard it, you heard it, but they are not
24 necessarily always the right resources
25 or they're not enough resources or the

1 resources may seem not reachable to
2 students that may not have the health
3 insurance or they need to go to a place
4 versus having people go to them.

5 I know we have resources in the
6 District. I know we have resources in
7 our City, but they may not be the right
8 resource for our schools. When placing
9 resources or selecting resources in
10 schools, it cannot be a cookie-cutter
11 approach. And I heard the physician
12 Dr. Rich clearly say that there's no one
13 approach. Parents, teachers, school
14 leaders, students, community members,
15 you guys, Councilmembers, you should be
16 part of the decision-making.

17 And so, I heard the word STEP,
18 and I do have a STEP team here at
19 Overbrook as Karyn Lynch mentioned. I
20 have a clinical social worker, Dana,
21 she's phenomenal. I have a social
22 worker case manager, Iesha, she's
23 phenomenal. They're just two people.
24 They have done a remarkable job when our
25 young people call in the middle of the

1 night where they have to partner with
2 our counselor, Counselor Poland or
3 Counselor Davenport, to go reach our
4 students, and they do meet with our DHS
5 worker, and they do meet with our CUA
6 resources and we do have an MOU with the
7 intensive behavioral health services.
8 We do have those things. But they're
9 not coming in the middle of the night.
10 They're not coming on Saturdays and
11 Sundays.

12 This looks fantastic on paper.
13 But how it looks day-to-day in the lives
14 in our school is much different. It
15 does not feel like a partnership. When
16 we are not the ones, the school leaders
17 at the hub, basically controlling what
18 we need and what that looks like for our
19 young people and our students. As a
20 school, as a principal, it feels like
21 missed resources.

22 And so, I share with you about
23 gun violence. But let me give you
24 something else about a young person that
25 happened on March 20th. She called my

1 counselor in a frantic on an early
2 Saturday morning on the 20th, saying she
3 was violently assaulted by girls and
4 that she's now stuck in Bensalem. My
5 counselor immediately called me and
6 she's like what do I do.

7 So immediately to myself, I say
8 who do I call, where do she go, what is
9 the plan, where do I go, where do I as
10 the school leader how do I advise my
11 counselor, where do we go for help
12 because I know I can't leave her in
13 Bensalem, I have to go get her. I have
14 to be with her.

15 There are many questions and
16 decisions I have to deal with as a
17 principal. Following the death of a
18 student, it will be helpful to have
19 additional information and support
20 laying out how certain situations will
21 be handled or should be handled. And,
22 yes, as a District, we do have a
23 flowchart, but it's jut not a District
24 issue. It is an everybody's issue.

25 And so, I get a white paper.

1 That's how I'm notified, or I think one
2 of my colleagues mentioned maybe
3 somebody in the community may send me a
4 text or call. But then whose
5 responsibility is it to rally all the
6 people. The school is in the center of
7 West Philadelphia. Whose job is it to
8 say, okay, I need help here, I need help
9 here, we need support here. I don't
10 know if they're hiding guns outside the
11 door. We don't have alarms on our
12 doors, all of those things, whose
13 responsibility is that.

14 How do we make sure that even
15 though every school is different, but we
16 have templates to be able to communicate
17 with families to get those letters and
18 that communication out quickly. And
19 then what are the additional safety
20 measures that can be put in place to
21 help establish a feeling of safety in
22 schools. So we talk about our children,
23 but we also have teachers and other
24 members in this school that me as the
25 principal is responsible for making sure

1 they are safe.

2 People, everyone, this is the
3 life of a principal. This is my life.
4 So when we are asking for counselors or
5 assistant principals or additional
6 support or climate managers, it is
7 because we need responsible confident
8 adults who will help us as principals
9 when we get the late-night or the
10 early-morning call, who will walk with
11 us for blocks, and I mean blocks, to
12 protect our children from harm's way,
13 we're doing that. And our children are
14 saying, can you just help me, I need
15 help and I don't know where to turn.

16 APs, climate managers,
17 additional support are those same
18 individuals I call to do grief
19 counseling, to do home visits with me
20 when we experience something as three
21 murders in five months. They help in
22 connecting the dots, the students and
23 families. So why is it that they're not
24 at the core of this work? We need more
25 caring adults who can build trusting

1 relationships with our youth and
2 families, who can help not only respond
3 to violence, but to also engage in
4 mental and young people towards
5 opportunities and relationships that can
6 help avoid and prevent gun violence.

7 So me sharing my thoughts is
8 simple. Again, it is nothing profound.
9 It is nothing profound about what I'm
10 saying. And I don't want to discredit
11 anyone's work. Simply to say, help us
12 help the children we serve in a way that
13 actually feels resourceful. Engage
14 schools, school leaders, students,
15 teachers, counselors, climate managers
16 in a conversation of what we need to
17 support the children that we see every
18 single day in dealing with trauma.

19 Let's have a plan that outlines
20 as a school, a district and a city that
21 what we do after I receive a white paper
22 and an email before the tears come
23 trickling down my eyes to say that we
24 lost another child that has been
25 murdered and gunned down in the street,

1 that we are saying that we're going to
2 do better.

3 And this is not to say that we
4 don't get it done. We get it done.
5 We're very good at being responsive,
6 reactive, pulling together all the
7 resources. We do that very, very well,
8 but why should we have to keep doing it
9 less and less.

10 And then I'm going to conclude
11 with this, how do we help and tell our
12 fellow Philadelphians that every time
13 unfortunately that we lose a child, that
14 we are sorry and as public servants in
15 this City that we will do better. Thank
16 you so much for your time and thank you
17 for inviting me.

18 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: (Muted).

19 THE CLERK: Mr. Chair, you are
20 on mute.

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Just for
22 the sake of time, I'm going to call on
23 my colleagues before we have to do a
24 recess because we do have a hearing
25 that's coming up at 2 o'clock so we will

1 not be able to go but so much farther.

2 But prior to that, I just want
3 to check with my Clerk. Is there anyone
4 else on this particular panel before I
5 allow my colleagues to ask their
6 comments and questions?

7 THE CLERK: Yes. We have John
8 White, Jr.

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: On this
10 particular panel, okay. Call Mr. John
11 White, Jr. And then we'll have the
12 comments from my three colleagues, and
13 then we will formally go into a recess
14 until April 15th at 1:00 p.m.

15 Will the Clerk please call the
16 witness.

17 THE CLERK: Mr. John White, Jr.

18 MR. WHITE: Good afternoon,
19 members of Council.

20 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good
21 afternoon.

22 MR. WHITE: In recognition of
23 our time, I'm going to try and make a
24 couple of simple points. Number one,
25 it's funny how the past, our history,

1 repeats itself. In 1974, there were 43
2 young Black men who were shot and killed
3 to gun violence. The way it was
4 addressed was simple. The community was
5 so outraged that they got the courage to
6 confront it. They were so outraged they
7 had the courage to confront it, whether
8 it was the mothers, Mom Cuples(ph) and
9 Roxanne Jones and Denise Brookins who
10 stood on the corner with their group and
11 ran these kids off the corner.

12 What was a blessing was the
13 officials like Lucien Blackwell and Dave
14 Richardson, Hardy Williams who used
15 their political influence and pressured
16 City government back then to fund a
17 program called Crisis Intervention.
18 That's 1973.

19 What's missing today is that
20 community outrage, that community
21 outrage that will give them courage to
22 confront their neighbors' children in an
23 effort to end the violence. As much as
24 you have done as Councilmembers in
25 bringing your respective districts

1 together, it still has not generated the
2 outrage necessary for addressing this
3 issue from the bottom up effectively.

4 Because of the work that I've done
5 around the country, I can tell you
6 without any fear of successful
7 contradiction that Philadelphia has more
8 services provided to its citizens at the
9 community level than any other citizen
10 in the United States of America.

11 We yet have no really
12 appreciation for the expertise, the
13 commitment, the compassion that so many
14 people have in the City of Philadelphia
15 to address these issues. The failure is
16 this, we are so wealthy with services we
17 don't even know who's providing the
18 service. We don't know each other.
19 We're all working in the same space, but
20 the absence of collaboration among those
21 who are providing the professional
22 treatment and assisting people around
23 accessing these services cannot
24 (inaudible).

25 We need to not only share in

1 the hearing such as this, the next
2 meeting ought to be all of the folks
3 that have been identified so we can
4 share our information and share our
5 resources. There is no reason why the
6 principal of my neighboring high school
7 does not know or does not have access to
8 information that will guide them to the
9 crisis services that are available to
10 address the situations that are before
11 us. We don't know each other. And it
12 is an embarrassment of riches that we
13 have not shared amongst each other.
14 That's critical.

15 I'm hearing all these different
16 issues and I'm noticing how many
17 providers in the City of Philadelphia in
18 the behavioral health space are
19 operating evidence-based programs to
20 address some of these issues, to engage
21 some of these children, to engage these
22 families in addressing traumatic
23 situations and ongoing trauma.

24 And I use the word ongoing
25 because trauma is reinforced in the

1 eyes, the ears and the minds of our
2 young people 24 hours a day. I get it.
3 People around the country are interested
4 in the trial of Chauvin in Minneapolis.
5 Children, our children, my
6 grandchildren, my sons are watching a
7 traumatic event all day long.
8 Everywhere they turn, their trauma is
9 being reinforced. We have to counter
10 that.

11 Lastly this, when I was
12 fortunate enough to serve in the Cabinet
13 and we started the first effort to
14 provide community-based services with
15 some focus on prevention, the Budget
16 Secretary said to me, well, that sounds
17 good but nobody is advertising that the
18 Governor help keep me off of drugs.
19 They put that money into railroads and
20 highways, completely signed, paid for or
21 brought to you by his excellency, the
22 Governor of the Commonwealth of
23 Pennsylvania. But (inaudible) there's
24 no such (inaudible).

25 Prevention is the least -- it

1 does not feel like it is a priority in
2 any budget in any of our legislative
3 bodies. Prevention, in addition to all
4 the testimony this morning, prevention
5 was the least emphasized. Folks have
6 mentioned it and correctly so, but the
7 focus -- yes, address the trauma. There
8 are trained professionals already in
9 that space, but what are we doing to
10 prevent the next traumatic situation
11 from occurring.

12 And I'm going to leave it at
13 there, Councilpeople, in hopes that some
14 of this makes sense to you and allows
15 you to think beyond what the obvious is.
16 In a city as rich as this one and the
17 services provided to the community, we
18 ought to know that work, where we look
19 for avenues, not to collaborate but to
20 coordinate the services that we're
21 providing in the schools and the
22 neighborhoods.

23 Trauma is an uphill battle.
24 You take one step forward, two steps
25 back. During a therapeutic session,

1 you're addressing it with that young
2 person or with that group and then they
3 go home. And later that night, they
4 hear the same gunshots that have made
5 them feel in a traumatic situation to
6 begin with, so you start all over again
7 in trying to instill confidence in young
8 people that they can be safe.

9 So I thank you for just this
10 opportunity to share. But what we at
11 the consortium should consider some
12 basics about how to address the myriad
13 of problems. They are not disconnected.
14 They are, in fact, connected. You got
15 to find a way to bring all of these
16 highly qualified, compassionate,
17 committed people on the street,
18 Councilmember Johnson, so that we can
19 share the information, share our
20 services.

21 There are plenty of evidence-
22 based programs that operate in the City
23 of Philadelphia, plenty, plenty, but
24 we're all disjointed. And we're just as
25 guilty. We're just as guilty. So you

1 can bring the pressure. You can be the
2 impetus taking all of these rich,
3 well-serving, effective providers across
4 the spectrum and let us come together in
5 a united and coordinated way to address
6 these issues that are so dear. And so I
7 thank you, Councilman and
8 Councilmembers.

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
10 very much.

11 I'm going to call on Isaiah
12 Thomas, then Kendra Brooks. And then
13 Councilwoman Madam Chair Helen Gym will
14 give the closing remarks. We will be
15 recessing and picking up exactly where
16 we are leaving off on Thursday, April
17 15th at 1:00 p.m. to address this
18 critical, important issue.

19 And I want to thank all of my
20 panelists who are participating, but
21 those who have not had the opportunity
22 to go based upon us running out of time
23 because we have another hearing that's
24 scheduled that's supposed to start at
25 2 o'clock, we thank you for being

1 patient with us and hopefully, you will
2 be able to participate next Thursday,
3 April 15th at 1:00 p.m.

4 Isaiah Thomas, Councilman.

5 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank you,
6 Mr. Chair. I appreciate it. I'll pass
7 on my comments because I wanted to do a
8 deeper dive with Dr. Kahlila and some of
9 the things that were discussed there.
10 So I will pass in the interest of time
11 and I look forward to us having this
12 conversation in the future.

13 Thank you, Mr. and Ms. Chair.

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
15 Councilmember Kendra Brooks.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Yes,
17 Mr. Chairman.

18 I kind of just wanted to thank
19 all the panelists that had spoke. I do
20 appreciate them confirming my earlier
21 passion around some of these issues.
22 It's very affirming, being very
23 passionate about these issues. And I
24 look forward to the next hearing. I
25 won't do any questions. I'll follow up

1 with several of the principals at a
2 later date. Thank you so much.

3 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
4 welcome.

5 Councilwoman Katherine Gilmore
6 Richardson.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you so
9 much, Mr. Chair.

10 I too will follow up at our
11 next hearing and I just wanted to thank
12 you and Councilmember Gym for this
13 hearing.

14 Also, I want to thank Dr. Lee
15 for her poignant testimony, representing
16 Overbrook High School. I taught at
17 Overbrook early on in my career and
18 recognize the challenges that are still
19 faced there and look forward to working
20 with her and all those who have
21 testified to ensure we are making a
22 difference for our young people,
23 particularly through the school year,
24 but throughout this entire summer.

25 Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
2 welcome.

3 And I'm going to also ask if
4 there aren't any other panelists who
5 already testified who has an interest in
6 coming back next Thursday, April 15th at
7 1:00 p.m. to do a follow-up as it
8 relates to their comments because some
9 Members may have some burning questions
10 that they may want to address in the
11 public in a transparent setting, feel
12 free to follow up with my office.

13 I'm going to turn it over to
14 Madam Chair Helen Gym.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
16 very much colleague, and again
17 appreciate your tremendous leadership on
18 this issue.

19 Grateful to all our colleagues
20 who joined us on here and especially to
21 our panelists, many whom waited for a
22 significant amount of time in order to
23 be able to testify to lend their
24 perspectives and expertise.

25 And, Dr. Lee, we really

1 appreciate your testimony as a
2 principal. I think you drove home what
3 many of us feel is a very important
4 issue, and what I think Mr. White also
5 said is our responsibility right now.
6 You asked after a horrible incident of
7 violence whose job is it. And the fact
8 that you as a principal of the school
9 that is clearly at the epicenter of all
10 of this is asking that question means we
11 have to do more. There is no question.
12 I think our Councilmember's frustration
13 earlier, Councilmember Brooks, is shared
14 by many of us who's been in this space
15 for a very, very long time, and that we
16 need to be purposeful about this work.

17 I think we need to spend more
18 time, Councilmember Johnson. I think we
19 need to spend more time with our youth.
20 I think we need to spend more time with
21 our principals and with educators who
22 are on the ground in order for us to be
23 able to meet where Mr. White is saying
24 all these other providers who are --
25 again, as Dr. Lee said, it's not meant

1 to impugn anybody.

2 People are busy. They're doing
3 their work. But every once in a while
4 we got to step back from what we're
5 doing right now, and now is that time to
6 really ask ourselves is this going the
7 way we need, are we reaching the young
8 people that we need to reach, are we
9 saving enough lives. And that answer
10 right now is no. No matter how hard
11 we're working, the answer is no. Our
12 young people are telling us no. Our
13 principals and our educators are telling
14 us no. So it's not to say that we're
15 not well-intentioned in this space,
16 we're not working hard enough. We need
17 to step back right now and reassess what
18 we're doing.

19 We got to get support to those
20 schools that were identified. And,
21 Councilmember Johnson, I think in the
22 seven days that we've got until our next
23 hearing, we want to get more information
24 from the School District. We want to
25 spend some more time with those

1 principals at those schools, and we want
2 to send a clear message.

3 Hearings are not all about
4 getting answers all the time. Sometimes
5 we're lucky. We can get a commitment
6 because it's been a pressing thing. I
7 think we are here making a -- I think
8 what's been made really clear is that a
9 plan still needs to be carved. We've
10 known that for a while, but it's never
11 been made more explicit or more urgent
12 by the testimony of Dr. Lee, by
13 Principal Bradley and many, many others.
14 And we've been shown that there's a
15 path, Dr. Rich, John White, Dr. Reeves,
16 Chantay Love, there's a path. We do
17 need to apply ourselves to get there.

18 I just want to thank my partner
19 always, Councilmember Johnson, for being
20 such a great colleague and really
21 devoted to that mission. Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

23 MR. WHITE: And we're also
24 very, very grateful, Councilwoman.
25 Thank you.

1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
2 welcome. Thank you for taking time, all
3 of you for being here on this probably
4 if you would ask me is one of the most
5 critically important issues that we are
6 addressing right now.

7 Also, I want to acknowledge my
8 colleague Councilman Mark Squilla for
9 taking time out of his schedule, for
10 being here.

11 We see a lot of great things
12 taking place here in the City of
13 Philadelphia. But I always view the
14 City of Philadelphia as a tale of two
15 cities. We see great development taking
16 place all throughout the City, but we
17 also see a city in crisis right now.
18 And so, on top of a pandemic, we're
19 dealing with a gun crisis where we can
20 possibly lose a whole generation of
21 young people if we stay continuously on
22 this path that we're on.

23 So for me, having this hearing
24 really just gets to the heart of the
25 nature of why we do the work that we do,

1 but really stepping up to the plate and
2 rising to the occasion when it comes to
3 saving our young people, but most
4 importantly doing a deeper dive and
5 addressing the root cause of why our
6 young people are so angry, why our young
7 people are picking up guns in the first
8 place and deciding to take the lives of
9 one another and the purpose of why we're
10 having this issue, how are they dealing
11 with this trauma.

12 And for me, it just hits home
13 because I'm born and raised in South
14 Philadelphia. Most of you know my
15 story. And so, for me this is a very
16 serious issue and it has me thinking
17 about the type of support that was there
18 for me as a young man growing up in the
19 streets of South Philadelphia and the
20 type of support that I didn't have, but
21 therefore through the grace of God did
22 get out. And so, I speak from the sense
23 of passion of personal experience and I
24 just thank all my colleagues for being
25 on this call.

1 I want to also acknowledge our
2 Majority Leader Councilwoman Cherelle
3 Parker for being on the call but also
4 being an ally in addressing this issue.

5 And so, with that being said due to the
6 sake of time in the next hearing, we are
7 going to recess this very important
8 hearing until Thursday, April 15th at
9 1:00 p.m. and we'll pick up right where
10 we started. But it will also give us
11 the chance within this next week to
12 continue to do a deeper dive to have
13 additional information and questions
14 prepared for the next hearing.

15 And so with that being said,
16 this hearing is recessed. Madam Chair,
17 thank you also for your partnership on
18 this. Thank you very much, everyone.
19 Take care.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you.

21 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you
22 all.

23 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
24 you.

25 (Joint Special Committee on Gun

Violence Prevention and Committee on
Children and Youth concluded at
1:48 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, hereby certify that the
proceedings and evidence noted are contained
fully and accurately in the stenographic
notes taken by me in the foregoing matter,
and this is a correct transcript of the
same.

TANEHA C. CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

(The foregoing certification of
this transcript does not apply to any
reproduction of the same by any means,
unless under the direct control and/or
supervision of the certifying reporter.)

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