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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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Room 400, City Hall  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Monday, May 17, 2004  
10:35 a.m.

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Bills 030372, 040257, 040258, 040313, 040009,  
040010, 040011, 040012, 040013, 040014,  
040015, 040016, 040017, 040018, 040019,  
040020, 040021, 040022, 040256, 040421,  
040422, 040423, 040259, 040260, 040262,  
040261, 040397, 040255

PRESENT: COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNA C. VERNA, Chair  
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE BLACKWELL, Vice Chair  
COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN  
COUNCILMAN DARRELL L. CLARKE  
COUNCILMAN FRANK J. DICICCO  
COUNCILMAN JAMES F. KENNEY  
COUNCILMAN RICHARD T. MARIANO  
COUNCILWOMAN JOAN L. KRAJEWSKI  
COUNCILWOMAN DONNA REED MILLER  
COUNCILMAN MICHAEL A. NUTTER  
COUNCILMAN JUAN F. RAMOS  
COUNCILMAN FRANK RIZZO  
COUNCILWOMAN MARIAN B. TASCO

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1                   COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: This is the  
2 public meeting of the Committee of the whole  
3 regarding Bill No. 040397, which reads as follows:  
4 An ordinance amending Chapter 19-1500 of the  
5 Philadelphia Code entitled Wage and Net Profits Tax  
6 by decreasing in six stages the rates of the tax  
7 imposed upon certain low-income persons providing  
8 for refunds of excess taxes made and directing the  
9 Revenue Department to prepare forms for use by  
10 eligible taxpayers seeking such refunds under  
11 certain terms and conditions.

12                   This bill is being continued until  
13 Wednesday, May 19, at 1:00 a.m.

14                   (Everyone yells "p.m.")

15                   COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: 1:00 p.m.

16                   Listen, we may be here until 1:00 a.m.,  
17 so don't correct it.

18                   This is also a continued public hearing  
19 of the Committee of the Whole regarding the  
20 following bills: Bill No. 040255, 040257, 040258,  
21 040261, 040313, 040009, 040010, 040011, 040012,  
22 040013, 040014, 040015, 040016, 040017, 040018,  
23 040019, 040020, 040021, 040022, also, 040256,  
24 040421, 040422, 040423, 040259, 040260, 040262,  
25 040397, 040255 -- I think I read that, did I not? --

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2 and Resolution No. 040276.

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Mr. Vallas, please.

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The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Brown.

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COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Madam President,

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thank you.

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I want to thank you, Mr. Vallas, and the

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School RC for adopting a soda policy for the School

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District and the decision you rendered with regard

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to noncarbonated beverages in our schools.

11

Can you give us an update, if you will,

12

on the next steps regarding nutrition underway in

13

the School District particularly around the school

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lunches and the like?

15

MR. VALLAS: First of all, thank you,

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and I want to congratulate the Council for their

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leadership. As you know, our action was in response

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to a resolution that the Council passed, and it has

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been very well received, although I did run in to a

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little 8-year-old girl the other day who asked me to

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put sodas back in her school, which I thought was

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the cutest thing.

23

We plan on having the policy implemented

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by the start of the school year next year. We're

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currently out to bid on our new soda contracts, but

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2 the policy will be fully implemented by September.

3

4 Our next step is to look at the issue of  
5 snacks because the District is moving towards a  
6 comprehensive rewrite of our family health  
7 curriculum, and we want to address all areas of  
8 family health including, obviously, the critical  
9 area of nutrition. So the objective here is just  
10 not only to make sure what we are selling in our  
11 machines and over the counter is nutritious, but to  
12 make sure that the students -- that we incorporate  
13 nutrition into the science curriculum, into the  
14 general sciences curriculum, so it becomes obviously  
15 a subject of regular discussion in the schools.

16

17 When we will be ready to go with the new  
18 snack policy, I'm really -- I'm not sure.

19

20 Hopefully, we will have the new policy before the  
21 start of the school year. Whether or not we will  
22 begin to change the machines around that early, I  
23 can't promise that. That would really be up to the  
24 SRC, but the new soda policy will be implemented by  
25 September, and we now, as we speak, are beginning to  
26 look at the whole issue of snacks and other  
27 consumables.

28

29 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you.

1

2                   Another safety issue that comes to mind,  
3 and former City Councilman Angel Ortiz really led  
4 the fight with regard to safe drinking water in our  
5 schools, and I know there has been some movement  
6 underway. Can you give us an update on that.

7

MR. VALLAS: As you know, about two  
8 years ago this really hit a crisis when we had, I  
9 think, well over a hundred schools that were in need  
10 of new filters on the fountains because of concerns  
11 or issues raised about the safety of the water.

12

We now have running water in all the  
13 schools. That doesn't mean that all of the  
14 fountains have had the filters installed, but we now  
15 have clean safe water in all of the schools. I can  
16 say that with confidence. We still have some  
17 schools where we are not -- where all the running  
18 water has not been purified. Of course, where it  
19 hasn't, those fountains are either shut down or they  
20 are marked so individuals are not using them, but  
21 the bottom line is I think we did well over a  
22 hundred schools in terms of going in, installing the  
23 filters, and doing the things that were needed to  
24 come into compliance with the environmental  
25 protection agency.

1

2                   And Karen has just nodded that that is  
3 correct. Anything to add, Karen?

4                   This is Karen Burke, our director of  
5 operations.

6                   MS. BURKE: Good morning. MR. VALLAS is  
7 correct. You know, the issue is really the number  
8 of outlets you have in buildings and we have a lot  
9 of buildings. We are ahead of schedule in all  
10 correction activity and have been working closely  
11 with the health department to bring the whole  
12 project on-line. We accelerated it last year; that  
13 is, we forwarded some money out there so we could  
14 fix the problem as quickly as possible. We are done  
15 with all initial testing. Most of the outlets have  
16 been replaced in the schools. There is a time lag  
17 on the testing where you have to come back after you  
18 install new faucets and so forth, retest the water  
19 and then go back in around 90 days, but we are  
20 totally on target, ahead of schedule, and I think  
21 everything agency is pleased with us.

22                   We will still have a couple of buildings  
23 that will be on bottled water, but in almost all the  
24 others most outlets have been corrected.

25                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I thank you for

1  
2 that testimony.

3           If we could go to testing and report  
4 card distribution. Last year the Taranova test was  
5 literally handed out to students on the last day of  
6 school, which made it somewhat difficult for parents  
7 to speak with teachers to try to get a handle in the  
8 interpretation of that test. This year the report  
9 card, the distribution of the report card, is now  
10 going to happen via the mail, which makes it  
11 difficult for parents to have a sitdown with the  
12 teacher prior to the summer.

13           Can you help us understand why now the  
14 report card distribution process has changed and  
15 will parents be able to receive those Taranova  
16 results before the last day of school?

17           MR. VALLAS: Parents will be able to  
18 get the Taranova results before the last day of  
19 school, and the last two weeks of school parents  
20 will be able to talk with teachers about the  
21 progress and performance of the students. In fact,  
22 we will be notifying parents before the last day of  
23 school. We have already begun to notify parents of  
24 children that are likely to have to go to mandatory  
25 summer school. So there is going to be early

1  
2 notification, but clearly the final report card in a  
3 lot of instances is going to have to be mailed to  
4 the homes, as it is in a lot of other districts, and  
5 the reason for that is for years the School District  
6 allowed or provided for the inputting of grades the  
7 first week of May.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see.

9 MR. VALLAS: So in effect instruction  
10 sometimes in some schools ended by the end of April,  
11 and what we have done is we have now set aside time,  
12 a half a day on the 4th and a half day on the 11th  
13 of June, for report card inputting. Those are two  
14 professional development days where we dismiss  
15 school a half a day. We are giving the schools, the  
16 teachers, that half a day to input the report card  
17 data.

18 What that is going to do is extend the  
19 period of quality of instructions by another five  
20 weeks. But in order to facilitate that and to get  
21 the report cards out in a timely fashion, we have to  
22 mail the report cards, but using last year's testing  
23 data and this year's Taranovas, there will be enough  
24 information, as well as the progress reports of the  
25 children in the classrooms because, as you know, in

1  
2 all the elementary schools we do six-week  
3 assessments of the children. Every six weeks we do  
4 bench marks. The children's progress is evaluated  
5 and we assess how much -- how far the children have  
6 come toward reaching the bench marks.

7           The parents will get ample data before  
8 that final report card is sent out as to how their  
9 child is doing and whether or not they are going to  
10 have to go to summer school.

11           COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: My final question,  
12 and then I have a comment: As you are moving to  
13 build these eleven new high schools and I think it  
14 is eight elementary schools, the notion of grass and  
15 what that means for an environment, can you speak  
16 to -- first of all, has the School District had any  
17 conversations with Philadelphia Green or the  
18 Philadelphia Horticulture Society about that being a  
19 real component of the construction of the new  
20 schools?

21           MR. VALLAS: I'm asking Karen to step  
22 up. I believe we have had conversations with all of  
23 those groups including Earth Force or the -- Earth  
24 Force. I have to get these names right. So, in  
25 fact, we have met with them about this idea of

1  
2 basically doing campus parks where there is not only  
3 athletic fields and recreational fields and, in the  
4 case of the elementary schools, there also is play  
5 lots, but also there is greenery. We have met with  
6 most of the groups we have identified.

7 MS. BURKE: We have met with most of  
8 the groups out there. In our designs we are trying  
9 to encompass portions of Green schools. It  
10 certainly encompasses more than the grounds, but we  
11 that we make environmentally friendly schools. All  
12 of our projects on the new construction contain a  
13 portion for landscaping in there. It is more than  
14 just a couple of trees and grass. It could include  
15 shrubs.

16 We also have a campus park program for  
17 some of the larger sites but not necessarily so, and  
18 we are hoping to go into these sites -- these are  
19 ones that are not new construction but are existing  
20 buildings -- and we're trying to pull up a lot of  
21 the pavements because a lot of the buildings just  
22 have overasphalting, and we put in trees.

23 We are also working with the Eagles and  
24 others on some tree donations out there of a large  
25 number, and we are going to start evaluating all

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sites to get in more trees everywhere.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Did you say the  
Eagles?

MS. BURKE: Yes, ma'am.

MR. VALLAS: They will be donating trees  
to the District so we can install trees on as many  
campuses as can accommodate them.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And I suspect you  
have a priority listing of what schools will be so  
lucky to benefit from that kind of partnership?

MS. BURKE: Yes. We are also evaluating  
that now to see where we can do fill-ins  
particularly near the Parkway, but we agree with you  
totally that grass and trees is critical out there  
because it cuts down the heat in the building and,  
as you know, many of our building are open 12 months  
now.

MR. VALLAS: There are two things that  
are going to be consistent with all of our new  
construction and major rehab. One is greenspace  
greening and two is ADA, disability accessible. So  
all of the new construction and major rehab will not  
only be in compliance with ADA standards, but also  
where we have the campuses, we will green those

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2 campuses.

3           As Karen pointed out, besides the new  
4 building and the rehabs, there is money in the  
5 budget for an upgrade of the athletic fields, our  
6 campuses, our fields, our supersites, and there is  
7 also money in the budget specifically for campus  
8 parks. And we will give you a list, our preliminary  
9 list, of schools that this summer are going to  
10 undergo the campus park renovation.

11           Our goal for the next five or six years  
12 will be to create as many campus parks as we can  
13 financially afford.

14           COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I'll look forward  
15 to that list.

16           That concludes my questioning, Madam  
17 President.

18           I do want to thank the School District  
19 for partnering with my office regarding the business  
20 round table that we have held, our second, which has  
21 actually taken place now on the second floor. We  
22 appreciate the work of Kimberly Sangst and her team  
23 in creating access for NBE/WBE business. So thank  
24 you, MR. VALLAS.

25           COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

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2 The Chair recognizes Councilman DiCicco.

3 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you, Madam

4 President.

5 Good morning, MR. VALLAS.

6 A couple months ago you and I had some  
7 conversation about the field at 12th and Bigler, and  
8 I understand you are moving forward we renovating  
9 that site.

10 During that same conversation we  
11 discussed Southern High School and the area between  
12 the building, property line of the building, and the  
13 Broad Street sidewalk. There is some green space in  
14 there, but we had discussed that you had some ideas  
15 for that. Anything come about? Is there any plan  
16 that you can speak of today?

17 MR. VALLAS: I don't think South Philly  
18 High School is scheduled for major renovation. We  
19 have some -- we have had some discussion about what  
20 to do with the campus, although we have not made any  
21 final decisions, but I will tell you in the longer  
22 term plan, we have talked about trading some  
23 additional high school options in South Philly.

24 For example, it is no secret that we  
25 coveted Bishop Neumann as a site for a potential

1  
2 alternative school, but, as you know, the  
3 Archdiocese is going through its vetting process to  
4 determine what the most appropriate use for that  
5 site is.

6           Also, one of the candidates for  
7 conversion in South Philly is a middle school that  
8 we discussed converting, but that is something that  
9 is going to require a lot of community input.

10           If we had our way, we would like to  
11 decentralize or at least create a series of small  
12 schools in South Philly, which would then afford us  
13 the opportunity to construct a new South Philly High  
14 School that would be even smaller and perhaps locate  
15 it in a site that might be more appropriate to house  
16 a high school, so, in fact, you can get that  
17 building off Broad Street.

18           But there are still a lot of balls in  
19 play. There's still a lot of scenarios out there,  
20 and the only way to really attack the issue of that  
21 campus in an aggressive way is to begin to  
22 depopulate the school and to have maybe multiple  
23 sites, to perhaps put a Central High South campus in  
24 South Philly or maybe a Masterman South campus in  
25 South Philly, but to literally have three to four

1  
2 small school options so that you don't have all of  
3 the children concentrated in a large multistory high  
4 school.

5 But, you know, we don't have money for a  
6 South Philly replacement yet, and right now there is  
7 no major renovations beyond that, beyond looking for  
8 additional locations where we could provide South  
9 Philly with new high school options.

10 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: I assume from your  
11 conversation there are no other sites that you are  
12 looking at, or have you already?

13 MR. VALLAS: We have had conversations  
14 with -- we have had some preliminary conversations  
15 with representatives from the shipyard, the Naval  
16 Shipyard.

17 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: That is in the  
18 Council President's district.

19 MR. VALLAS: Yes.

20 But those are -- nothing is imminent  
21 right now. We are just -- we just feel that our  
22 high schools, whether it is Germantown or South  
23 Philly or, for that matter, whether it is -- our  
24 large high schools need to get smaller and our  
25 preference will be in the coming years to

1  
2 decentralize or depopulate some of our larger high  
3 schools.

4           Let me give you a quick example. In the  
5 case of the Mt. Airy/Chestnut Hill area, we are  
6 going to make Lankenau an independent school and  
7 expand the New Covenant Church Parkway High School  
8 to -- we are going to be adding -- we are going to  
9 be securing an additional building and we are going  
10 to be opening up a charter school. That will allow  
11 us to begin to depopulate Germantown High School,  
12 plus putting us in a position where we can build a  
13 new Germantown High School for many fewer kids off  
14 Germantown Road rather than -- because right now the  
15 high school literally goes to the curb.

16           So, again, we are looking at all of our  
17 major high schools in all of the areas with that in  
18 mind, is there a way for us to depopulate and to  
19 decentralize these schools by creating a series of  
20 small schools. Children and parents would have an  
21 option of sending them -- picking one of many  
22 schools rather than simply being stuck enrolling  
23 their children in a large behemoth high school.  
24 That is the game plan.

25           COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you. No

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2 further questions.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

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The Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney.

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COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Madam

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President.

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I don't have a question, but I just have

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a comment. I have been here -- this is, I guess,

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the 13th year for budget hearings in the School

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District, and the last couple of years have been a

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totally refreshing experience compared to what we

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have been through.

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In the areas of curriculum and class

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size, I think you have made great strides and

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approached things in a real practical way. Your

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teacher recruitment and professional development

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efforts have been, I think, extraordinary, and I

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think it is going to have an effect on the attitude

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and morale of teachers overall.

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The finances I think are obviously a

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major goal and a major accomplishment, which has

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given this District renewed credibility with

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Harrisburg. I think once we get our budget issues

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resolved there in Harrisburg with gaming and other

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things, I think you are going to see some help from

1  
2 there and earned help because you have earned it.  
3 You haven't whined about it. You just went ahead  
4 and did what you had to do to get yourself back in  
5 shape.

6 I think your labor relations -- in  
7 private discussions with union leadership, they say  
8 you guys get it. You value their input. There is  
9 that friction that is normal with labor and  
10 management, but it seems to be more of a teamwork  
11 effort and attitude from union leadership at PFT. I  
12 think that has been tremendous. And I think your  
13 capital program has been a terrific plan that gives  
14 people hope into the future that the entire system  
15 is going to have a new look in the next three, five,  
16 six, ten years.

17 I don't think in any way this district  
18 is perfect. It is really large. It has a lot of  
19 problems associated with all of the kids and the  
20 problems they bring to school, but I think overall  
21 you have done a tremendous job in changing the  
22 attitude that we have as legislators toward the  
23 district, that Harrisburg has towards the district,  
24 and I just want to commend you and your staff and  
25 ask you to keep up the good work because I think as

1  
2 time goes on -- you know, the initial years are the  
3 hardest and I think as time goes on, we start seeing  
4 some of the fruits of your labor.

5 And I just wanted to compliment you  
6 personally and compliment your staff. It has been a  
7 pleasure working with you.

8 MR. VALLAS: Thank you. On behalf of  
9 the SRC, we appreciate your confidence in us, and,  
10 as you pointed out, we have a long, long, long way  
11 to go, but we are not going to make excuses. We  
12 feel that we can make progress with the resources we  
13 have.

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: You're on the right  
15 road.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.  
17 The Chair recognizes Councilwoman  
18 Miller.

19 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you, Madam  
20 Chair.

21 Good morning, MR. VALLAS.

22 MR. VALLAS: Good morning.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I was just  
24 wondering -- and I just want to say I agree with  
25 some of what -- I didn't hear everything, but what

1  
2 Councilman Kenney, the accolades he expressed. I  
3 think that the School District's information is very  
4 succinct, and I think you are probably the first, I  
5 will call you, superintendent that can come and just  
6 talk about everything. You are well-informed.

7 I was wondering when you are talking  
8 about building new high schools, we get a lot of  
9 requests in my office and I'm sure in other offices  
10 to help children get into schools such as Masterman,  
11 Central, Girls High, and I know that the plan to do  
12 more AP classes and whatnot is a good plan, but do  
13 you ever think about expanding or building another  
14 academic high school?

15 MR. VALLAS: First of all, let me  
16 preface my remarks by saying -- well, rather than  
17 prefacing my remarks, the answer is yes, but our  
18 thrust is going to be to create new magnet schools  
19 and put magnet programs in neighborhood schools.

20 For example, when we have talked  
21 about -- we talked about there is a middle school in  
22 Northeast Philly, Rush, which we are going to  
23 convert to a high school, but that is not going to  
24 be a regular high school; it is going to be a  
25 Northeast Kappa.

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The Franklin Science Institute in South Philly, we have talked about when we looked at -- we are looking at sites to locate the Franklin Science Institute either just south of Center City. We have looked at potentially even the Durham site for that. It is the same thing. When we talked about looking at Bishop Neumann, we want to open up a neighborhood high school if we are able to access it. We talked about doing a south campus for Central.

So we want to take our Mastermans, our Kappas and our Centrals and give them second and, in some cases, third campuses so we are expanding the number of high-caliber high school options, and we are giving families choice. And that will allow us to buy ourselves time to revamp and revitalize all of our high schools, putting international baccalaureate programs in neighborhood schools, advanced math, science and academy programs in the neighborhood schools.

So it is twofold: One is to do what you requested, which is to have more, let's call them, high academic magnet schools because our objective is to make all of our high schools academic high schools while at the same time magnetizing our

1  
2 neighborhood schools with our honors and our  
3 advanced placement and our international  
4 baccalaureate programs.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: That's good  
6 because my next question was actually going to be:  
7 I guess one of the things that myself and my staff  
8 wonder is that when youngsters don't get accepted to  
9 one of those schools or any of the schools that they  
10 have actually applied for, what does the School  
11 District do in terms of helping them understand why  
12 they were accepted or even why they were rejected?  
13 And what do you have in written materials that is  
14 available to parents that helps them understand the  
15 dos or the whys and the hows of applying for some of  
16 these magnet schools, and not just to high schools;  
17 it is elementary schools too like the Fidler, some  
18 of those alternative schools that are City-wide, not  
19 a neighborhood elementary school.

20 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, Madam Councilwoman.  
21 This year for the first time we created a brand new  
22 directory for school enrollment. In that directory  
23 we outlined for each of the schools what the  
24 application process would be and what the criteria  
25 would be for students entering those programs, and I

1  
2 believe it helped us a great deal this year as we  
3 looked at the number of students who had to make  
4 selection choices and move forward.

5                   We also got that book out in early  
6 November. We are going to attempt to do the same  
7 thing this year, which gives families and schools a  
8 lot more time to explain the entire process to their  
9 entire school population, so that book is in place  
10 and it has worked for us so far.

11                   MR. VALLAS: With respect to your  
12 question what type of notification do they get,  
13 first of all, there are so many applicants that we  
14 get for our magnet high schools and our few magnet  
15 elementary schools, and really the magnet elementary  
16 schools we have, there are a handful of magnet  
17 middle schools, that the notification is simply  
18 notification that they were not accepted. We will  
19 then obviously -- if further explanation is needed,  
20 we will then respond, but we would be responding  
21 to -- you always want to be careful about  
22 identifying in writing in detail why someone was  
23 rejected or not accepted for that type of program.  
24 That in itself creates a lot of controversies and a  
25 lot of problems, but the sheer volume of the

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2 individuals who will apply to a Masterman or will  
3 apply to a Kappa for us to go in and to prepare  
4 individual responses is something that would be  
5 beyond their capacity to do, and we would be  
6 reluctant to provide more details other than to say  
7 "Look, you just haven't made the grade."

8 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I guess those  
9 parents have more information during the application  
10 process --

11 MR. VALLAS: Yes.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: -- and they have a  
13 better feel for whether their child qualifies or  
14 whatnot?

15 MR. VALLAS: Yes. As Craig points out,  
16 we now have this options book, which really lists  
17 all the high school options in great detail. And as  
18 new high schools are added or as magnet programs in  
19 neighborhood high schools are created, that book  
20 will grow and the options will increase. Plus, if  
21 we are able to decentralize some of our large,  
22 behemoth high schools, as I mentioned, in the  
23 Germantown area and some of the others and create  
24 more high school options within the community  
25 itself, not only will -- if parents try to get their

1  
2 children into Masterman and they are unable to do  
3 that, they won't just be left with that neighborhood  
4 high school. There may be three or four small  
5 schools in that neighborhood that they will have a  
6 chance to apply to. So it will give them a second  
7 tier of schools that they can -- a second tier of  
8 school choice options for their children.

9 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I would like to  
10 request that City Council receive a copy of  
11 options --

12 MR. VALLAS: Absolutely.

13 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: -- a couple copies  
14 per office.

15 I remember years ago before I came to  
16 Council there was a book out called options that  
17 actually gave us a lot of good information on  
18 helping parents. I worked with a Corestate  
19 representative and used to handle his School  
20 District activities.

21 One other question: When do you  
22 anticipate receiving -- this is regarding the  
23 privately managed schools. When do you anticipate  
24 getting results of standardized test scores from the  
25 companies that are privately managing our schools?

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MR. VALLAS: We will get to turn over the results in June, and, of course, we monitor all of the testing. They have to take the same test our students take. So we will get our initial results in June because, as you know, at the end of the year, if we are going to take any action with any of the privately managed entities, we have to take it, I think, by June. I don't know what the exact deadline is. There is a specific date by which we have to initiate action, not that we are anticipating it, but by June we will at least have Taranova data on charter schools and EMO schools as well as our own public schools.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: There is always information or sometimes there is information in the newspaper regarding charter performance, but I don't think we have heard too much about the EMOs and/or the privately managed, and I don't know whether EMO is the acronym for that. Is that it, EMO?

MR. VALLAS: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And so when you get it, and whatever you decide to do, can you also make sure that Council offices have that report?

MR. VALLAS: Absolutely. We will

1  
2 circulate it. And the report we circulate will be  
3 similar to last year's in which we will separate the  
4 public schools from the charter schools and the EMO  
5 schools and we will separate the magnet schools from  
6 the aggregate numbers too. So we will provide you  
7 with that comprehensive list.

8 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

9 Thank you, Madam President.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're  
11 welcome.

12 The Chair recognizes Councilman Nutter.

13 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam  
14 Chair.

15 Good morning, MR. VALLAS.

16 Let me start where I think we may have  
17 left off last week with a couple items. Can you  
18 give me an update on where we stand with regard to  
19 information requests from last week?

20 MR. VALLAS: All the information that  
21 was requested will be sent to each of the Council  
22 members I think by -- at least by Wednesday we will  
23 have the information, and that includes details  
24 about the contracts awarded as well as there are  
25 those questions about alternative schools, test

1  
2 scores. There have been seven or eight requests  
3 made, so we should have all of the information that  
4 we will give to the Council President's office for  
5 distribution no later than Wednesday.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: No later than  
7 Wednesday?

8 MR. VALLAS: Yes, sir.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I heard you mention  
10 in response to another member's question, you made a  
11 reference to Lankenau School in the context of it  
12 being independent school. Could you share a little  
13 more information with me about that? I have not  
14 heard much about it. Lankenau, while I know is  
15 connected directly to Germantown High School, it is  
16 actually physically located in --

17 MR. VALLAS: Quite a distance.

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- the fourth  
19 district, so could you share with me what is going  
20 on?

21 MR. VALLAS: What we will do is -- what  
22 we are planning to do with Lankenau we are planning  
23 to do with all of the branches, and that is renovate  
24 them and make them independent, freestanding high  
25 schools. They will continue to serve the same

1  
2 enrollment area that the large behemoth high school  
3 serves, but they will offer a second and in some  
4 cases a third or in the case of Bartram a fourth  
5 choice, a fourth high school choice, in that  
6 individual area, but what we are going to do with  
7 Lankenau is in the capital plan you will notice that  
8 the game plan is to renovate the Lankenau's existing  
9 building, which is in very, very poor condition, at  
10 least by my definition, and build an addition, and  
11 that addition will house a modern gymnasium, a  
12 multipurpose room.

13           So in effect we will -- I think we are  
14 going to be pending upwards to \$11 million on the  
15 renovation, which will begin hopefully this summer,  
16 and it will take us a little more than a year to  
17 complete, but then Lankenau will be a freestanding  
18 high school, and residents in the Germantown  
19 catchment area obviously will have more than simply  
20 the main Germantown High School as an option. They  
21 will have two and there is a charter that is also  
22 going to be opening funded by the Gates Foundation,  
23 a charter that is going to be opening in the area,  
24 and then, of course, the Parkway School, which is on  
25 the New Covenant Church campus.

1

2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Hold on for a  
3 second. Where is the new Gates Charter?

4 MR. VALLAS: I don't think they  
5 finalized their site yet. It has been approved, but  
6 it is contingent on them being able to secure a  
7 site. There were a couple of sites identified, but  
8 I don't want to get ahead of them.

9 Then on the Parkway campus we are going  
10 to be accessing additional buildings on the New  
11 Covenant Church campus and then we are going to be  
12 expanding Parkway, and Parkway will also become a  
13 Germantown catchment area school. So parents who  
14 live in the Germantown area will no longer just have  
15 Germantown. They will have Germantown, independent  
16 Lankenau, independent Parkway, and possibly the  
17 independent charter school funded by Gates, so  
18 literally within the next year moving forward, there  
19 will be four high school options, and, again, that's  
20 the strategy.

21 For example, in the Northeast, building  
22 a new high school in the Northeast and converting  
23 Rush Middle School to a Kappa North. That will  
24 create two additional high school options for  
25 children who are located in the Northeast.

1

2                   So, again, the operative here is to  
3                   create more options and Lankenau is going to be one  
4                   of those options.

5                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let's go back for a  
6                   second.

7                   In terms of both the renovation as well  
8                   as expansion, have there been discussions with the  
9                   local community about proposed changes and expansion  
10                  of the school?

11                  MR. VALLAS: Not yet. Well, there has  
12                  been some general discussions about Germantown,  
13                  about the Germantown High School per se --

14                  COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand.

15                  MR. VALLAS: -- but we have not had  
16                  specific discussions with the Lankenau School.

17                  COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Lankenau is not in  
18                  Germantown.

19                  MR. VALLAS: Right, but it is part of  
20                  the Germantown catchment area.

21                  COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that  
22                  and I'm clear on that. What I'm asking is if you  
23                  are anticipating renovations or an expansion  
24                  project, I think you said this summer, then what has  
25                  been the discussion with the nearby neighbors who

1  
2 are not in Germantown, would not be aware of  
3 proposals related to, quote/unquote, the Germantown  
4 catchment area or a school connected to Germantown  
5 because the school is not in Germantown --

6 MR. VALLAS: Right.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- it is in  
8 Roxborough.

9 MR. VALLAS: Well, we have not had  
10 conversations with the community on Lankenau yet  
11 because basically what we would do first with  
12 Lankenau is renovate the existing building, which is  
13 a terrible building, so -- and we won't be expanding  
14 the enrollment at Lankenau. If anything, we're  
15 going to be modernizing the building and giving them  
16 a gym. So the number of kids entering that school,  
17 the population will remain roughly the same. But we  
18 will do community reachout and we will probably do  
19 it towards the end of the school year because we  
20 will not begin the conversion of Lankenau or we  
21 won't begin to modify the catchment area if we do  
22 anything like that really until a year from  
23 September. Right now we are kind of locked in. The  
24 kids who applied to Germantown or who have chosen to  
25 go to Lankenau, they are already going; they are

1  
2 already there.

3           Any change, any -- you know, any change  
4 in terms of how we select kids or how we place them  
5 or whether we have a neighborhood set aside for  
6 Lankenau will probably be September 2005, but right  
7 now we will be reaching out to the community, but  
8 given the fact that all we are doing over the summer  
9 is renovating an existing building and trying to  
10 modernize an existing building, we didn't feel the  
11 same sense of urgency that we would if we were  
12 tearing down the building and constructing a brand  
13 new high school.

14           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: No, I understand  
15 that. Let me say this and we can move on: As we  
16 have had other discussions about other buildings  
17 being renovated, I think it is critically important  
18 that the local neighbors, even if it is just a  
19 renovation project, the school is, as you well know,  
20 in a pretty isolated part of the city. Anything  
21 that goes on over there is actually noticed, and you  
22 are not just going to renovate the building in the  
23 long run.

24           So I think it is important and, quite  
25 frankly, demonstrates a certain level of respect to

1  
2 the nearby residents that they fully understand what  
3 the entire proposal is, that there is renovation,  
4 there is potential expansion, there might be change  
5 in focus of the particular school, and I think the  
6 neighbors up there at a minimum deserve that kind of  
7 information. I would certainly like to be more  
8 fully briefed myself. Again, I understand that  
9 Germantown High School is located in Councilwoman  
10 Miller's district, but there have been -- there is a  
11 long history with Lankenau. It was not necessarily  
12 some years ago by a different administration looked  
13 upon maybe the same as you and your administration  
14 are looking upon it, so there are significant  
15 sensitivities, if you will, with regard to the  
16 school, and I think that the nearby neighbors should  
17 be the first to know what is actually going on in  
18 their neighborhood.

19 MR. VALLAS: We will do that, sir.

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, what is an  
21 independent school?

22 MR. VALLAS: An independent school is a  
23 school that has site selection. It is a school that  
24 obviously -- I really would characterize it as like  
25 a public school charter. In other words, right now,

1  
2 as you know, view schools have site selection, but  
3 when you create an independent school or a  
4 demonstration school, you are able to create a  
5 school where you can basically --

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Site selection is a  
7 student issue or a --

8 MR. VALLAS: No; site --

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- teacher issue?

10 MR. VALLAS: -- selection is a teacher  
11 issue. You are able to select your staff without  
12 having people with seniority bounce into the  
13 vacancies.

14 So as we convert middle schools to high  
15 schools or as we create new schools or, for that  
16 matter, as we make independent branch schools  
17 independent schools, some of those schools, we want  
18 those schools to be site selection schools.

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How will students  
20 access this particular school? Will it be just an  
21 open enrollment, or is it still -- is it a Form EH  
22 36?

23 MR. WILLIAMS: Currently the Lanckenau  
24 School for the purposes of understanding the  
25 independent terminology, independent in this

1  
2 particular case for the first year would mean that  
3 they would have their own administration, their own  
4 budget, their own principal, and their own staff.

5                   Currently the staff, the principal and  
6 the budget is shared between both schools --

7                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right. I know.

8                   MR. WILLIAMS: -- so giving them that  
9 independent status.

10                   So for the first year the school will  
11 operate and enroll schools currently as it does  
12 being in the Germantown population. So all of the  
13 incoming students for September have already applied  
14 to Lankenau/Germantown as they have done in the  
15 past. This allows us a full year to allow the  
16 school and its new administration to establish any  
17 type of different process than that which is already  
18 established.

19                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So how is it  
20 envisioned that students will be able to attend  
21 Lankenau? And should I assume that all of the  
22 current students will be able to come back?

23                   MR. WILLIAMS: Absolutely. All of the  
24 current students will return.

25                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What about new

1  
2 students?

3 MR. WILLIAMS: New students coming in  
4 have already been selected through the prior  
5 process.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Through the what?

7 MR. WILLIAMS: Through the prior  
8 process, through the Germantown/Lankenau enrollment  
9 process.

10 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

11 MR. WILLIAMS: So for September those  
12 young people have already made a selection and have  
13 been chosen for that particular school.

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What about going  
15 forward?

16 MR. VALLAS: Going forward that will  
17 really require interaction with the community,  
18 which, incidentally, we planned on doing. Since  
19 nothing in Lankenau was going to change this year  
20 other than us renovating the building and, you know,  
21 if you have ever seen the Lankenau school, it is  
22 like a little elementary school housing a high  
23 school. It's a very unattractive building and it's  
24 a very limited building.

25 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I've been to the

1  
2 school.

3 MR. VALLAS: Of course.

4 Our feeling was there was not that sense  
5 of urgency since nothing will change with Lankenau  
6 in the coming year other than the fact that it will  
7 be independent. The second year, though, we will  
8 decide whether or not we want to modify the  
9 catchment area or the enrollment boundaries or other  
10 changes that we may want to make to the school, and  
11 obviously we will not move forward on that until we  
12 have had community input.

13 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That would be good.

14 Is there something else you want to tell  
15 me?

16 MR. VALLAS: No; other than the option  
17 -- as the schools move forward, independent or  
18 demonstration schools will have the ability to do  
19 site selection. So, in other words --

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But, again, that's a  
21 teacher issue?

22 MR. VALLAS: That's right, which becomes  
23 a teacher issue.

24 Of course, we hope by June or July when  
25 we have a new contract that will no longer be an

1  
2 issue, but the issue of selection of staff is also  
3 an issue that is on the table. And the School  
4 District does have the authority to create  
5 independent or demonstration schools, which gives  
6 the School District the ability to designate those  
7 schools as site selection schools.

8 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that.

9 Let's go back to future years. The  
10 school is independent. Who will actually decide  
11 what the student selection or ability to attend  
12 process is?

13 MR. VALLAS: The SRC. In other words,  
14 if we are going to change the enrollment boundary or  
15 change the selection process, say if we were to give  
16 Lankenau a new enrollment boundary, that would be  
17 something that would have to be approved by the SRC.

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that,  
19 but do you get in the school by just applying, or do  
20 get in by a special transfer? Do you have to take a  
21 test? Is there extensive review of test scores  
22 similar to whether it is Saul or some of the other  
23 schools that may not necessarily be designated  
24 magnet schools, but they have admission criteria or  
25 admission eligibility criteria that are established?

1

2 What would be the process at Lankenau?

3 MR. WILLIAMS: Currently the Lankenau  
4 process is attached to the Germantown process.5 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that.  
6 We assume we are moving on from that.7 MR. WILLIAMS: That will continue for  
8 the first year. Any change in that will be  
9 determined after a new principal and obviously a  
10 school administration is in place to discuss those  
11 kinds of changes with their staff and with their  
12 community. We are attempting to establish the same  
13 process for all of the small schools that we are  
14 going to put in place.15 Once you have a principal in place, an  
16 administration in place, that becomes the body that  
17 actually starts the process and establishes the  
18 communication with the neighborhood and sets up the  
19 groups and those kinds of things.20 Well, do they establish it on their own,  
21 or do they need approval by the CEO or the SRC?22 MR. VALLAS: They would need approval by  
23 us, but right now we are not planning -- we have not  
24 decided on just what changes we will make to  
25 selection process or to enrollment boundaries or,

1  
2 for that matter, whether or not there will be any  
3 additional criteria for enrollment in that school.

4           So I think what Craig is saying is that  
5 once we -- the first step is to make the school  
6 independent and then the second step obviously is to  
7 decide -- is to make decisions on what type of  
8 school that will be going into the future, and  
9 obviously that step, as you correctly pointed out  
10 and reminded us, is going to require intensive  
11 community input.

12           And given the fact that Lankenau is so  
13 far from Germantown, it is not like the Bartram  
14 branches where they are within walking distance.  
15 It's quite a distance. Lankenau is going to be --  
16 is not going to be as simple as giving the Bartram  
17 branches independence and just allowing them to draw  
18 on the same catchment area.

19           But let me point out that we are not  
20 getting ahead of anybody on this. The first step is  
21 the building is atrocious and it needs to be  
22 renovated --

23           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Got you.

24           MR. VALLAS: -- and the kids literally  
25 have no gym or lunch room or anything, and that

1  
2 building needs to be modernized and upgraded. I  
3 think that will be a positive. And since we are not  
4 increasing enrollment, we are not going to impact  
5 the existing community.

6                   Then the next step will be once that  
7 school has independent leadership and is a  
8 free-standing high school in its own right, we will  
9 sit down -- and I'm talking about over the summer --  
10 and talk about perhaps other changes we want to make  
11 to the school not beginning September of 2004, but  
12 rather September 2005, and that will not occur  
13 without heavy community involvement.

14                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I appreciate it.

15                   Let's talk about the outreach effort.  
16 How does that take place? Who is in charge of it,  
17 and what's the process?

18                   MR. VALLAS: I'm going to ask Karen  
19 Burke to go through the process by which we do  
20 community outreach.

21                   MS. BURKE: Good morning.

22                   We do have an outreach process in the  
23 office that we use. Part of it is staffed by our  
24 program manager, URS, and the other by inhouse  
25 personnel. For all projects that we have out there,

1

2 once it hits the glimmer in the capital program --

3 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I apologize, Karen.

4 You said you have inhouse staff and what else?

5 MS. BURKE: Yes, sir; we have inhouse  
6 staff that is supplemented by contracts out there to  
7 create a large enough unit to deal with this many  
8 projects.9 We believe it's important to have input  
10 from the community. In fact, we learn quite a bit  
11 when we are out there. When a project is coming  
12 into being, most likely at a schematic stage, just  
13 the general kind of outline etching of a project and  
14 we have a budget, we go out and meet with the  
15 school, any school parent councils and members of  
16 the community.

17 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who is "we"?

18 MS. BURKE: That would be the outreach  
19 section. Anton Hackett heads up that section for  
20 us.21 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is that the name of  
22 this entity, the outreach section?23 MS. BURKE: It's with the capital  
24 programs, sir, inhouse, and I'm just saying it's a  
25 division that we have in there that deals with the

1  
2 outreach.

3 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many people are  
4 in this unit?

5 MS. BURKE: We have two people that are  
6 funded from our own budget out there and roughly  
7 three others or four others that come through a  
8 contract.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What are the costs  
10 involved? You said two people inhouse and three  
11 people on contract?

12 MS. BURKE: Right. And I will get you  
13 those costs, sir.

14 Anyway, out there we have this project  
15 that is designed up schematically. We set up  
16 meetings with the school. Principals are important  
17 to us, parent councils and others out there. These  
18 are open forums, and we discuss and bring in our  
19 architects out there. We have a managing architect  
20 with the program, and they would start to walk  
21 through what the budget is and what the program is  
22 to encompass. But we have noticed also, too, that  
23 members of the community have other needs out there  
24 that they like to come in with the building.  
25 Sometimes they will ask us about community

1  
2 opportunities from a recreational side and how we  
3 will build and other things. We attempt to hold to  
4 the budget, but I must say that in a fluid process  
5 like this a lot of good ideas do come up.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: In accordance with  
7 the recent borrowings, how many projects will you  
8 have going on during FY '05.

9 MS. BURKE: That will require outreach?

10 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yes.

11 MS. BURKE: I would have to count them  
12 up for you.

13 Probably 40 meetings.

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: 40 meetings? Did  
15 you say 40 meetings?

16 MS. BURKE: I'm saying 40 -- it looks  
17 like to me just on a quick count -- and I will count  
18 that up for you when I step back from here, but  
19 those are the larger projects out there, the  
20 renovations and new schools, if you will, or  
21 additions.

22 We also have, of course, a series of  
23 smaller projects that we also meet on too, but those  
24 would be your fire alarm replacements and boilers  
25 and so forth, but even those merit a meeting.

1

2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How is it -- I mean  
3 what did the district do in the past? I know we  
4 didn't build a lot of schools, but we certainly have  
5 had renovations over the years. How did the  
6 district communicate with people in the past about  
7 projects?

8 MS. BURKE: Let me see if I can find  
9 some history here for you.

10 MR. LEWIS: Good morning, Councilman.

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Good morning, Jim.

12 MR. LEWIS: In the past the School  
13 District has, as part of their --

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You might want to  
15 identify yourself.

16 MR. LEWIS: Jim Lewis, administrative  
17 assistant.

18 In the past the capital program had  
19 outreach through its inhouse staff. Whenever we had  
20 any type of renovation --

21 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: People in the  
22 capital office?

23 MR. LEWIS: Yes.

24 Whenever a project would come about, we  
25 met the capital program folks. We went out and

1  
2 initially met with the principal, who is the key to  
3 any renovation, and it would filter down from there.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So how is this  
5 process different than what you have done in the  
6 past and what's the purpose?

7 MR. LEWIS: I think the district through  
8 the capital program has URS as our program manager,  
9 and, because of the size of the capital budget and  
10 the capital program for the next five years, has  
11 increased the outreach staff.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What is URS?

13 MR. LEWIS: They are our program  
14 manager.

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What does that mean?  
16 What do they do? Are they going to build the  
17 buildings?

18 MR. VALLAS: No. The way we are  
19 organized is we outsource most of the management of  
20 our capital programs. It's very simple. We have a  
21 program manager. We then have construction managers  
22 that operate under that program manager, and then we  
23 have general contractors. Now, it's a standard  
24 design that we have used elsewhere with phenomenal  
25 success and that many of the larger school districts

1  
2 with more modern operating procedures use, and it  
3 allows us to, in effect, not spend a lot of time and  
4 money on inhouse staff managing our programs and it  
5 allows us to set up a series of quality controls so  
6 that we can control costs.

7                   And let me point out that the percentage  
8 allocation from the capital plan that goes to a  
9 combination of CMs, PMs, and general contractors at  
10 least by kind of regional standards is still  
11 relatively low. So we use -- we use bench marks in  
12 terms of -- because -- in terms of what we allocate  
13 to the PMs and what we allocate to the CMs, or, for  
14 that matter, the general contractors.

15                   But basically the senior entity or  
16 the -- that manages our capital plan is URS. They  
17 are our program managers.

18                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who is URS? Where  
19 are they located? Who are the principals?

20                   MS. BURKE: My recollection is that  
21 their corporate office is in San Francisco. They  
22 work internationally and they are a very large firm,  
23 and I can get you some of the prospectus on that  
24 company, but they are very, very large.

25                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who is the person

1  
2 from the company responsible for the City of  
3 Philadelphia?

4 MS. BURKE: Jack Kelly would be the  
5 executive representative on that project. He's just  
6 kind of over on a regional basis there. And then we  
7 have Pamela Johnson, who is our day-to-day factor  
8 out there, and she is a licensed engineer.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What was that name  
10 again?

11 MS. BURKE: Pamela Johnson.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So she is physically  
13 here?

14 MS. BURKE: Yes, sir.

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So she is here on a  
16 day-to-day basis?

17 MS. BURKE: Yes, sir.

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what's the  
19 contract with URS and how did we find them?

20 MS. BURKE: Sorry, sir. Can I get your  
21 last sentence?

22 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Sure. How did we  
23 find them?

24 MS. BURKE: We RFP'd out there for those  
25 services, and this is going back in time here. I

1  
2 believe we had about seven respondents. And these  
3 are all pretty large firms. And then the firms were  
4 first vetted financially and then we had committees  
5 that went through a selection process with them and  
6 ranked them, and they were the highest ranking for  
7 this service.

8 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what is the cost  
9 of the contract?

10 MS. BURKE: Just a second.

11 It is 24 million over three years. And  
12 I should explain these contracts can vary. Their  
13 contract also contains a planning requirement as  
14 well as a managing architect service, you know, to  
15 take those projects through schematic.

16 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand.

17 Madam Chair, I know I'm way over my  
18 time. I do have some other questions in this area,  
19 but I can come back.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you  
21 Councilman.

22 Councilman Ramos.

23 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Good morning, Mr.  
24 Paul Valas, and your representatives from the School  
25 District. I have been involved for many years in

1  
2 education. My family has made a very strong  
3 commitment through some very humble parents, who  
4 were not very educated, but who were very insistent  
5 that we become educated, and I am a product of a  
6 good public school education, a good Catholic school  
7 education as well.

8 I commend the efforts and the hard work  
9 that has gone on under your leadership as the head  
10 of our School District, but it's still frustrating.  
11 I know it is frustrating for you and the staff  
12 because there is so much yet to do. There is so  
13 much yet to fix, but within that framework there is  
14 still a lot of hopes, a lot of hope with parents  
15 that their children continue to get a good education  
16 in our public school system, and we support  
17 wholeheartedly our public school system of this  
18 country and of this city.

19 I want to touch on an issue concerning  
20 your last-dollar scholarship. You came out publicly  
21 a few weeks ago in support of last-dollar  
22 scholarships for all children in Philadelphia.  
23 There was some comments -- I don't know if they were  
24 ever made in an official capacity -- that that might  
25 not be the position of the School District. Is that

1  
2 your position still today?

3 MR. VALLAS: That's my personal opinion.  
4 We felt that if the City allocated money it  
5 shouldn't be allocated exclusively to the public  
6 schools. So as far as I'm concerned, we would be  
7 supportive of a measure to provide last-dollar  
8 scholarship funding for all the children regardless.

9 The proposal that we put forward  
10 includes charter schools, which, of course, we have  
11 responsibility for, but the bottom line is we think  
12 it should be shared by everybody. But that's my  
13 personal opinion. That's not an official position  
14 of the school. I don't think they have taken a  
15 position on that. That was just my personal opinion  
16 that I offered.

17 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: So this is your  
18 personal position, but it says a lot when the head  
19 of our School District makes a personal opinion on  
20 the matter that has caused a great deal of  
21 discussion around here and public discussion and  
22 editorials and so forth.

23 You think that with the money that has  
24 been allocated for last-dollar scholarships, that  
25 within that amount of money we should share this

1  
2 with nonpublic school children?

3 MR. VALLAS: Well, you know, it is --  
4 you know, the issue was whether or not the City  
5 Council, in allocating its share of the last-dollar  
6 programs, should limit it exclusively to public  
7 school children. I felt that it should include all  
8 children. I was asked my opinion, and I basically  
9 provided it. And, you know, whether or not it is  
10 going to be enough, it's hard to say. I think the  
11 first year of the program you are not going to get  
12 the participation levels that perhaps we had  
13 anticipated or we had budgeted for. So there may be  
14 certainly some flexibility because I don't think  
15 participation this year will be as great as  
16 anticipated.

17 So monies that were identified for this  
18 program, at least the first year it may be easier to  
19 cover both public and private school children the  
20 first year because you are not getting the  
21 participation rights.

22 We have been registering kids, and we  
23 think that the number of students signing up for the  
24 program is going to be less than we projected. That  
25 doesn't mean in the out years that we are not going

1  
2 to need more money, but the bottom line is the first  
3 year of any program like this, you are not going to  
4 get the levels of participation anticipated. So I  
5 think for at least the first year the money that has  
6 already been talked about publicly may be enough to  
7 provide not only public school children with the  
8 last-dollar scholarships, but also private school  
9 children.

10 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: You know, I have made  
11 the same argument. I believe because of the way  
12 this -- these programs worked that in this first  
13 year we seem to have not enough children/parents  
14 applying for these scholarships, so if you and I and  
15 many here in City Council and all the people that  
16 have been involved in this public discussion believe  
17 that in the first year we might not have enough of  
18 our public school children/parents applying for  
19 these scholarships, why not extend it then to other  
20 deserving children whose parents in most cases are  
21 probably struggling to pay Catholic school tuition,  
22 you know, in tuition-based schools other than our  
23 parochial school system.

24 MR. VALLAS: Again, I was just asked my  
25 personal opinion, and I felt -- I always feel that

1  
2 -- my approach with parochial and private schools is  
3 to be very supportive of them. I'm going to support  
4 things that benefit kids regardless of whether it is  
5 parochial, private or charter.

6           The heyday for many of the communities  
7 or the heyday for the public school system also  
8 happened to be the heyday for the Catholic school  
9 system and vice versa. I think when you have good  
10 schools, whether they are parochial, private or  
11 charter, you have stable communities. So I'm always  
12 going to be supportive of measures to benefit  
13 private and parochial schools, just as I would  
14 expect them to be supportive of measures to support  
15 public schools.

16           But what obviously -- I mean, obviously  
17 what the City decides to do or what the Council  
18 decide to do, obviously they will decide to do on  
19 their own. I just want to make the observation,  
20 though, from the level of participation that we have  
21 seen -- and we have been very aggressive. We have  
22 extended our enrollment dates and everything. We  
23 are just not getting the level of participation that  
24 we had projected, although I felt, we felt, that the  
25 first year you are always going to get a lack of or

1  
2 less participation in the first year than in out  
3 years.

4                   So I just felt that this might provide  
5 us -- this might provide us with the financial  
6 opportunity now to go beyond just the public schools  
7 and benefit the children.

8                   COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I agree with you. I  
9 want you to help us get this spread out throughout  
10 the different school systems. I stopped a long time  
11 ago just worrying about our public school situation,  
12 though that is a place where we have to defend the  
13 system regardless of its challenges, but I stopped  
14 just saying public schools because the bottom line  
15 in our city with our residents is that we need to  
16 get our children educated. So the descriptive  
17 adjective of whether it's public, parochial, Hebrew,  
18 or Islamic or whatever it may, Christian academy  
19 type of schools, what is important is that we have  
20 them in school, that we have them getting an  
21 education, and that our parents know that they have  
22 choices. And most of our parents choose to send  
23 them to our public school system, and we have had so  
24 many, thousands upon thousands, of good products of  
25 our public school system, but we still have a long

1

2 way to go.

3

4 Do you know how many children have  
5 applied for last-dollar scholarships up to this  
6 point?

7

8 MR. WILLIAMS: Roughly we have over  
9 2000, maybe 2100 students.

10

11 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: That have applied?

12

13 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes.  
14 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Have you gone to the  
15 point of how many of those 2000 plus would be  
16 eligible for last-dollar scholarships.

17

18 MR. WILLIAMS: We will not complete the  
19 vetting process until the first week of June.  
20 Obviously we extended the date to include more  
21 children, so the deadline is, in effect, June 1 or  
22 2.

23

24 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: When you extended the  
25 deadline, it was not extending it so nonpublic  
26 school kids would be able to apply; it was only  
27 extended so that our public school kids can continue  
28 to apply?

29

30 MR. WILLIAMS: That would be correct.

31

32 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: So the extension was  
33 to be able to get more of our public school kids to

1  
2 be able to apply. I understood it as well, from my  
3 involvement with trying to get this worked out, was  
4 that it was also to give us some time to work this  
5 out, but yet it has not been worked out yet. The  
6 Catholic Archdiocese sent me a letter asking me what  
7 is happening with the deadline. We are running out  
8 of time here, so if we are going to make a move  
9 here, we better make it very, very, very soon  
10 because when are the other kids going to be able to  
11 apply?

12 Even if we decide here or the  
13 administration agrees that we should extend it to  
14 nonpublic school kids, the school year is almost  
15 over, so when do they get to participate?

16 But I guess, Madam President, that is  
17 going to have to be an issue that we have to tackle  
18 in the next couple of days because we are out of  
19 time.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I think we  
21 made our position very clear several weeks back,  
22 last month as a matter of fact.

23 How does this process work if the  
24 parochial school children were also eligible? Would  
25 the applications be sent from your office, MR.

1

2 VALLAS, to the parochial schools, and would the  
3 applications then have to be returned to you? How  
4 is that process going to work?

5 MR. WILLIAMS: If we were to include the  
6 parochial schools, very quickly we would have to  
7 come up with a process similar to what the public  
8 School District uses. We have an application  
9 process, and the young people through their  
10 counselor at their local school sends an application  
11 to our office, and then we take that application to  
12 the group that is handling the scholarship, which is  
13 referred to as the Core Philly group.

14 The private schools or the parochial  
15 schools will, in essence, have to do the same thing.  
16 They will have to submit their application to the  
17 Core Philly group after they have indeed vetted  
18 those applications.

19 As it relates to time, there is still  
20 time; however, we do need to move quickly simply  
21 because the young people are graduating, but I  
22 believe that the private and parochial schools  
23 probably do a very good job with identifying who the  
24 young people are and what schools they will attend.  
25 Once that information is given to the Core Philly or

1  
2 to the party that is handling the applications, we  
3 still have, in essence, until August to make the  
4 first semester tuition payment to whatever school  
5 those young people will be attending.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Point of  
7 information. The Chair recognizes Councilman  
8 Kenney.

9 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Madam  
10 President.

11 I want to echo Councilman Ramos'  
12 position on this. We have been kind of in this  
13 together since it started.

14 What is the source of the money that's  
15 going to the School District for this program?

16 MR. WILLIAMS: The source of the money?  
17 The Geroff funding.

18 MR. VALLAS: The Geroff funding.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What is it?

20 MR. VALLAS: The Geroff funding, the  
21 federally funded Geroff program, which is  
22 Congressman Fatah's program that provides school  
23 districts with funding to basically help promote --  
24 help increase the number of students who are college  
25 bound. It's a segue, a transition program, from

1

2 high school to college, and it is very successful.

3 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: It is federal funds?

4 MR. VALLAS: Yes.

5 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So that's federal  
6 funds, and we are being asked to provide \$4 million  
7 in City funds?

8 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: And 6 from over  
9 there, I believe. Is \$6 million the figure?

10 MR. VALLAS: Well, we feel -- we are not  
11 sure how much we will need in federal bureau money  
12 because let me point out this is still --

13 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I'm sorry. Is there  
14 three sources?

15 MR. VALLAS: Pardon me?

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Is it two or three  
17 sources?

18 MR. VALLAS: No, no. Well, there is two  
19 sources. One is Geroff, federal bureau money, and  
20 one is the money we received from the City.

21 But while we are not sure how much we  
22 will need to take out of the Geroff program,  
23 obviously this is money that is used for other high  
24 school programs. So we are not -- it is not just  
25 new money we have been provided. It is existing

1  
2 money that we have to reprogram.

3 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I'm confident -- I'm  
4 hopeful that this can be worked out. I have had a  
5 conversation with Councilman Fattah who tells me  
6 that he's confident this can be worked out.  
7 However, in the worst case scenario -- and I can  
8 speak for myself -- I will be down at 6th and Market  
9 at Federal Court as soon as we know that this is not  
10 going to be worked out. It is just unconscionably  
11 unfair.

12 And I understand your position,  
13 Mr. Superintendent, your personal position.  
14 Granted, you are under control of the SRC and the  
15 powers that be, but to me it is unconscionably  
16 unfair to even consider the use of federal tax  
17 dollars and the use of City tax dollars for people  
18 whose parents also pay taxes to be excluded from a  
19 program based on the fact that they go to a  
20 religious or nonpublic school. To me, I can't  
21 imagine a federal judge allowing that to happen.

22 And I don't want to get there, but what  
23 concerns me -- and I think this is reflected in  
24 Councilman Ramos' questions -- is that as time goes  
25 on, we are running out of time. The June deadline

1  
2 is what it is and you can do this until August  
3 according to Mr. Washington, but it is not going to  
4 happen by just ignoring that core of people who pay  
5 their taxes just like the public school parents do,  
6 who have similar needs, who struggle to send their  
7 kids to college, who have concerns about those  
8 issues.

9           And I know you empathize with those  
10 feelings, but the thought of using a taxpayer-funded  
11 program and eliminating or excluding a group of  
12 people based on some nonsensical decision, to me is  
13 just ridiculous. And I think a large number of  
14 Council members in this body feel the same way.

15           You know, there is some type of myth out  
16 there that parochial school parents and nonpublic  
17 school parents are wealthy, that they don't have the  
18 same economic needs as public school parents do.  
19 And I know firsthand that I spent, as Councilman  
20 Ramos has, my entire life in the parochial school  
21 system. My father worked three jobs at any given  
22 time, and my mom worked two, one inside the home and  
23 one outside the home, to pay those tuitions. And I  
24 know parents are still doing that today.

25           I hope it gets worked out. I'm

1  
2 confident that people in the Archdiocese and  
3 Councilman Ramos and the Mayor's office are trying  
4 to do something to work this out, but I can assure  
5 you if it is not worked out, we'll be in court.

6 MR. VALLAS: Let me point out -- if I  
7 can just make some general comment, Geroff is a  
8 federally funded program. That program was created  
9 for public schools. We're not the only recipient of  
10 the Geroff money. It is used federally.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: How much is  
12 being contributed toward tuitions?

13 MR. VALLAS: It's hard to say what we  
14 will use this year, but I think given the level  
15 of -- the reprogramming of federal dollars, Geroff  
16 money is really going to fully -- for this program  
17 is really going to fully impact us next year rather  
18 than this year because of the budget cycles. So in  
19 order for us to participate this year, we have to  
20 scrape together what Geroff funds we have not  
21 committed to our traditional college-bound programs,  
22 and that's probably going to come to about \$2  
23 million.

24 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Not \$6 million? I  
25 heard the number 6 million.

1

2 MR. VALLAS: I think the number -- well,  
3 no, I mean right now we feel with 2200 -- assuming  
4 we get maybe 3000 students who participate with an  
5 average -- you know, 2 million, 2 million or more,  
6 or slightly more than that, should be able to cover  
7 us, particularly if we got some additional money  
8 from the city.

9 Again, we feel that we could be covered  
10 this year in this program with about \$4 million, 2  
11 million from us perhaps at the very least and 2  
12 million from the City and that would cover us.

13 I know that what has been talked about  
14 publicly is the City providing \$4 million. Again, I  
15 don't think we would need more than \$2 million of  
16 that to cover the scholarship, to cover those who  
17 are signed up for the program today.

18 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I'm sorry to intrude  
19 on your time, Councilman --

20 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I'll yield my time.

21 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: -- because I know  
22 how strongly you feel about this.

23 One final comment I want to make is I  
24 think this program is important. I think it's well  
25 thought out. I think it is something that we need

1  
2 to do for these kids, all of these kids, and I guess  
3 the thing that's most upsetting is that the core of  
4 people we are talking about who are being excluded,  
5 those families, made a conscious decision to remain  
6 in Philadelphia when many of their peers, many of  
7 the same families, the same structure families, were  
8 moving into Washington Township, Delaware County,  
9 Montgomery County, and going to public school out  
10 there.

11                   These parents made a conscious decision  
12 to stay in the city and to be loyal to it, only to  
13 be told that their kids and their needs are not  
14 going to be met or are going to be excluded as a  
15 reward for staying in the City of Philadelphia.

16                   MR. VALLAS: Well, we have not told them  
17 that.

18                   COUNCILMAN KENNEY: No, no. Again, I  
19 preface all of my remarks by saying I understand  
20 your personal opinion, but I want to make sure it's  
21 clear as time goes on and the clock ticks, we are  
22 getting to the point where it is not even going to  
23 be effective for some of these kids to apply because  
24 the time frame is going to be gone.

25                   MR. VALLAS: So there is absolutely no

1  
2 confusion, you bring me here, you expect me tell you  
3 the facts. The bottom line is we feel that we won't  
4 need any more than \$2 million from the City to fund  
5 the program the first year and we don't think we  
6 will need more than 2 million in our Geroff money,  
7 which we have to scrape together. 4 million should  
8 cover it based on our assumptions about the average  
9 tuition subsidy that they would need, and the  
10 enrollment to date.

11 We are anticipating, obviously, that we  
12 may approach 3000 by the time we are over, but for  
13 that year -- for this year we think 4 million can  
14 cover it. And, again, we have two million in Geroff  
15 and of course we would not need the full amount that  
16 the Council has -- that was in the original budget  
17 that was presented to the Council.

18 So I mean that is just a fact. You  
19 know, we don't have the enrollment that we  
20 anticipated. Next year it will be a different  
21 story, but next year we will have more Geroff money  
22 freed up. We think it's a good program.

23 I can't argue with your points. I  
24 think when it comes to these type of programs, all  
25 of the children should participate. And let me

1  
2 point out that our numbers include charter school  
3 children too, so we have a responsibility to provide  
4 those services or that type of subsidy to the  
5 charter school kids too.

6 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

7 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I'm very glad to hear  
8 that the head of our School District agrees with us  
9 that this should be shared with --

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Apparently  
11 there are a lot of people that are agreeing, but  
12 nothing is being done.

13 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: We are going to have  
14 to -- something has to be done very, very shortly in  
15 the next few days.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: We have been  
17 debating this issue since the early part of April,  
18 and we were led to believe that there would be an  
19 extension for the applications.

20 I just have one simple question, and  
21 then, Councilman, you can have all the time you  
22 want.

23 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I yield to you, Madam  
24 President.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Whose decision

1  
2 is it to make certain that the parochial school  
3 children and the private school children do have an  
4 opportunity for this program?

5 MR. VALLAS: That is the City Council.  
6 I mean us. Right now we have federal Geroff money,  
7 and we have to use the federal Geroff money as  
8 provided by state -- by federal appropriation. We  
9 have to it use it for public school kids, but if the  
10 City decides to, say, split the money that was in  
11 the original budget proposal and provide half for  
12 nonpublic school children, we can certainly extend  
13 the date and --

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: What was the  
15 purpose of extending the deadline date?

16 MR. VALLAS: Obviously to get more  
17 students signed up.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: From the  
19 public school system?

20 MR. VALLAS: Yes. Look, the earned  
21 income credit. We go crazy trying to get people to  
22 sign up for the earned income credit. Sometimes  
23 even when the money is out there, you are not going  
24 to get that level of participation, so we have had  
25 to do a lot of outreach. Right now we think we can

1  
2 do this program with no more than 2 million from the  
3 City. If the City elected to allocate the balance  
4 of what was put in the original budget -- I believe  
5 it was 4 million -- we could extend the application  
6 date a little longer and wait for the Archdiocese to  
7 submit their prescreened list of qualified students,  
8 and we could have a nice first year of the program.

9           We can then sit back and assess who  
10 participated and what the actual costs were and then  
11 we can go back and see whether or not there is ways  
12 to improve the program next year, for that matter to  
13 secure additional funding for what is truly a very  
14 worthy program.

15           So if the Council elected to allocate a  
16 portion of the money to nonpublic schools, we could  
17 extend the application deadline to accommodate the  
18 Catholic and parochial schools and private schools.  
19 We could do that for --

20           COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Time is of the  
21 essence right now, Madam President, because it is  
22 obvious that there is a willingness by the  
23 superintendent of our School District to move on  
24 ahead and make this happen for nonpublic school  
25 students. There has to be a will from the

1  
2 administration, and they have publicly stated here  
3 and I have been told that this will be worked out.  
4 It is just that now time is of the essence. We are  
5 running out of time, and the numbers that Mr. Vallas  
6 has given us and Mr. -- I'm sorry.

7 MR. WILLIAMS: Williams, Craig Williams.

8 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: -- Williams indicates  
9 that even if 2000 of our children from public school  
10 system got the maximum of \$3000, it would be a \$6  
11 million program, so it is obvious, and the research  
12 that I have done again coincides with the comments  
13 of Mr. Vallas in the first year. There is not an  
14 overabundance of kids that would be applying. It  
15 will be a sad day in Philadelphia if we limit this  
16 and not enough children applied for the scholarships  
17 when we have so many of them that need the money,  
18 that can use the money to further their education.

19 So I am glad to hear from the  
20 superintendent that he is with us on this and that  
21 we are going to have to act on this and act on this  
22 very, very soon.

23 Thank you, Madam President.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

25 Councilman Blackwell.

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2

MR. VALLAS: Madam President, just a point of information for purposes of clarifying.

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We project the average grant to be about \$1,500. So it is really -- when we look at our 2200 students, we are multiplying 15,000 times 2200 students, and that is how we get to that figure that I have talked about. That's why we think it is affordable.

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The program allows for the grants to be as high as 3,000, but many of our kids are going to go to state schools, which means 85 percent of our children are eligible for either full or at least substantial aid, college aid. So we feel that the average grant will be about \$1,500. If there is more children who sign up, we can always prorate the scholarship. We can always prorate the subsidy for the first year. So that certainly gives us an option should we have a rush of applicants before the end, before the deadline date is over.

21

22

23

24

25

But I think the principal is -- it's a good program and I think it should be extended to everybody, and we certainly have no problems sharing resources with the parochial and private schools on this issue.

1

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you, Mr.  
3 Vallas.

4 The Chair recognizes Councilwoman  
5 Blackwell.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you very  
7 much.

8 Mr. Vallas, I mentioned yesterday that I  
9 was the guest speaker for the mathematics, civics  
10 and science charter school annual scholarship  
11 program. I assume -- at that affair they had some  
12 of the students who were graduating. They must have  
13 had 20 there, who all came up and named the college  
14 they would be attending in the fall, so I assume  
15 then for that charter school they have already made  
16 application. They are trying to stay on top of  
17 things.

18 MR. VALLAS: I am sure they have,  
19 absolutely. We do aggressively promote this program  
20 in the charter schools. Knowing Veronica Joiner the  
21 way I do, she probably submitted every single  
22 application.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I'm sure.

24 Thank you very much.

25 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I just wanted to get

1  
2 in one last question with regard to the scholarship  
3 issue.

4                   You mentioned that the Archdiocese  
5 apparently already has prescreened some students.  
6 Do they have a list, the Archdiocese?

7                   MR. WILLIAMS: We don't know what the  
8 Archdiocese does in particular as they prepare their  
9 children to prepare for their FASB, but it is a  
10 normal process.

11                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: For their what?

12                   MR. WILLIAMS: FASB, which is the total  
13 financial aid package that a young person has to  
14 fill out to apply and to be awarded financial  
15 dollars to go to college.

16                   Literally every school district, every  
17 high school, has some kind of mechanism in place  
18 where there is a counselor or some other body that  
19 helps young people get prepared.

20                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me understand  
21 this.

22                   If there is going to be a resolution to  
23 this issue, if -- you talk about deadlines being  
24 extended, coordinated efforts. Who is going to do  
25 that and how will the nonpublic school parents

1  
2 access the program? Put the timing issue aside.  
3 You can extend the deadline as long as you want. At  
4 what point do the parents and the students get  
5 information that says, one, you can apply, your name  
6 gets on some list somewhere, and then when the  
7 adults get finished playing around, trying to figure  
8 out what the adults should be doing on behalf of the  
9 kids, how does it get resolved?

10 MR. WILLIAMS: I believe once it is  
11 approved that a portion of the allocation can be  
12 awarded to the private and parochial schools, we  
13 will immediately with the Core Philly group meet  
14 with the parochial schools and get information out  
15 to them immediately.

16 The general application is already  
17 formatted, which simply means it could be adopted  
18 within a day's time and sent out to the schools.

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, today is May  
20 17. School is over in what, a month?

21 MR. VALLAS: Mid-June.

22 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So every day that  
23 goes by is another day lost, is another piece of  
24 information that somebody doesn't get and everyone  
25 is waiting for some answer to drop down from the

1  
2 sky. I mean, what about a more proactive approach  
3 that at least works towards the belief that  
4 something different is going to happen, that a  
5 resolution is going to take place, that people will  
6 have an application, go through a process. They  
7 understand upfront that there's still some details  
8 that need to be worked out, but you capture all of  
9 the information in the current environment because  
10 they are all going to disappear at some point in  
11 time.

12 I mean this is an exercise that would  
13 lead the cynical to believe that all that is going  
14 on here is an effort to run the time off the clock  
15 and that somewhere in the course of the summer they  
16 will say, oh, you know, we resolved it, but now they  
17 have gone to the four winds of the universe.

18 Why don't you get resolution on all of  
19 the details, and if we ever figure out, because it  
20 is real simple how to figure it out, that the money  
21 is going to be available, then you have established  
22 a contact and you have an application, you know who  
23 the kid is, and you can track him down. We only  
24 have a month to do this, and from your perspective  
25 you will say you are not in control of the process,

1  
2 right?

3 MR. VALLAS: Look, we have no problem  
4 with that. We will contact the Archdiocese this  
5 week and ask them to prescreen their people. If the  
6 Council does decide to allocate a portion of what  
7 has been budgeted, then the prescreen will be done.

8 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm just asking you  
9 to do the part you can do.

10 MR. VALLAS: I think it's an excellent  
11 idea.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do the part you can  
13 do. We'll do, hopefully, what we're supposed to do,  
14 but I don't want to get caught in a situation where  
15 we proclaim at some point in time we have resolved  
16 all of the issues, agreements have been made,  
17 funding is available, and then we say, "Where are  
18 the kids? Oh, they are gone.

19 MR. VALLAS: I think it is an excellent  
20 idea, and there is plenty of time to get all of the  
21 eligible students who are interested in the program  
22 signed up. We will call the parochial school  
23 superintendent's office and we will notify some of  
24 the other private schools and ask them to do some  
25 prescreening so we can move expeditiously should the

1

2 Council do that.

3

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm only going to  
ask you to do one other thing.

5

6 As you take those steps, if you could  
keep us informed through the President's office as  
7 to what is going on --

8

MR. VALLAS: Absolutely.

9

10 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: If anything is going  
to happen, it is all going to happen in the course  
11 of the next month literally. We are out of session  
12 on June 17. Today is May 17. There are a lot of  
13 things that have to happen in the course of the next  
14 30 days. This is one of them.

15

16 MR. VALLAS: We will give you an update  
on Friday. We will update the Archdiocese and the  
17 private schools within the next couple of days, so  
18 we can reach out to all the private schools.

19

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Would you  
notify them today, Mr. Vallas?

21

22 MR. VALLAS: What I'm saying is there is  
not going to be -- I'm not going to have a problem  
23 notifying all of the parochial schools, but there  
24 are many independent little private schools out  
25 there, so what I'm saying is give me two days to get

1  
2 everybody notified, but the Archdiocese will be the  
3 first to know.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Appreciate it.

5 MR. VALLAS: And the process will be  
6 this: We will ask them to put together a  
7 prequalification list in anticipation of this  
8 program being put together and we will ask them to  
9 give us a date on when they can get the prequalified  
10 list to us and we will inform the Council of that,  
11 and then we will give you a status report on Friday  
12 or before the end of the week.

13 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you.

14 Thank you, Madam President.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

16 Are there any other questions for  
17 members of the committee?

18 Councilman Ramos.

19 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I just want to make  
20 myself available to you because I have gone back and  
21 forth with the Archdiocese on this issue, and if I  
22 can be of any help to speed this up, and I'm sure  
23 Councilman Kenney and those of us here on City  
24 Council, Madam President, all of us have been  
25 involved to make sure that this is a fair program

1  
2 across the board. I don't want to speak on behalf  
3 of my colleagues, but I will say we want to get this  
4 done and I'll be available to you.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair  
6 recognizes Councilman Nutter.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam  
8 Chair.

9 It sounded like the School District was  
10 going to be finished in a second, or was it my  
11 understanding that we have other people from -- we  
12 have representatives from the PFT who are going to  
13 testify and then the School District is coming back?

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: No, no. It's  
15 my understanding that Mr. Ted Kirsch is here. He  
16 would like to testify now, and at 4:30 we are going  
17 to have public testimony. And as far as I know,  
18 today is the last of it for the school district.

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand, Madam  
20 Chair. I guess I was under the previous impression  
21 that we were basically taking a break for Mr. Kirsch  
22 and possibly Mr. Jordan, and that the District was  
23 going to come back.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: They can.

25 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I have other

1  
2 questions for the School District.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: That's fine.  
4 If that is your desire, we can do that.

5 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam  
6 Chair.

7 MR. VALLAS: We will be more than happy  
8 to come back. In fact, we won't go far.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: No, please  
10 don't.

11 Good morning. Please identify yourself  
12 for the record and proceed with your testimony.

13 MR. KIRSCH: Good morning, Council  
14 President Verna, Councilwoman Blackwell and City  
15 Council members. I am Ted Kirsch, president of the  
16 Philadelphia Federation of Teachers. By my side is  
17 Mr. Jerry Jordan, who is vice president of the PFT.

18 I wanted to thank you for the  
19 opportunity to speak on behalf of the 21,000 members  
20 of the PFT this morning. It is a particular honor  
21 to be with today on the 50th anniversary of the U.S.  
22 Supreme Court's Brown versus the Board of Education  
23 ruling, which ended legal segregation in the  
24 nation's public schools.

25 In Philadelphia we have seen a rapid

1  
2 succession of changes in the past two years  
3 including the institution of a standardized  
4 curriculum, new after school and summer programs,  
5 expansion of alternative schools for disruptive  
6 students, intensified professional development, and  
7 a capital improvement program to modernize  
8 Philadelphia's aging schools.

9           During the many years that the PFT has  
10 been engaged in a dialogue about education with the  
11 District and the City Council, we have advocated for  
12 these and other important educational reforms to  
13 help raise student achievement.

14           While Philadelphia's children have begun  
15 to make academic progress, there are several  
16 education reforms that have yet to be completed. We  
17 believe these are essential to transforming every  
18 school in Philadelphia into an excellent  
19 high-achieving school. Our number one item:  
20 Safety, order and discipline.

21           In spite of the District's efforts to  
22 address student misconduct, the daily barrage of  
23 verbal and physical abuse of staff, students, and  
24 the property by some students continues to be the  
25 number one concern voiced by PFT members. Simply

1  
2 stated, PFT members say that administrators often  
3 fail to provide consistent and effective support for  
4 discipline. PFT members report increasing numbers  
5 of children who present serious discipline  
6 challenges from elementary through high schools.  
7 Disruptive, threatening and sometimes violent  
8 student behavior is a persistent problem.

9 We applaud the expansion of alternative  
10 schools like the three community education schools  
11 which have provided some relief. However, in high  
12 schools, new teachers, some only a few years older  
13 than their students, are often overwhelmed by the  
14 disrespectful, uncivil, and at times threatening  
15 behavior they encounter.

16 I believe we can improve the learning  
17 environment by holding students to strict standards  
18 of behavior and enforcing those standards fairly and  
19 consistently.

20 Further, I urge the Council to work with  
21 the District to put uniformed, on-duty Philadelphia  
22 Police Department officers in troubled high schools.  
23 And I might add that when I began my career in the  
24 Philadelphia public school system at Overbrook High  
25 School we had a full-time officer on duty, and that

1  
2 officer was not just maintaining the security of the  
3 building but was a community liaison, someone that  
4 knew what was happening in the community, and many  
5 times there were difficulties with youngsters in the  
6 community that did not spill over into our schools.  
7 It was a program that worked.

8           In New York City recently they have  
9 added 16 police officers to the most unruly schools,  
10 and we have found that since January, when these  
11 officers were put into the schools, that there was a  
12 steady decline of approximately 9 percent where the  
13 difficulties and reports of incidents took place.

14           Last week The Public Agenda, a  
15 nonpartisan education research group, published a  
16 report entitled "Teaching Interrupted" which  
17 concluded that student conduct is derailing learning  
18 particularly in urban schools across the country.  
19 At a time when we are desperate to recruit and keep  
20 qualified teachers, one in three teachers said they  
21 have seriously considered quitting the profession or  
22 know a colleague who has left because student  
23 behavior problems have become unmanageable.

24           85 percent of veteran teachers agree  
25 that new teachers in particular are not equipped to

1  
2 tackle serious behavior problems and are more likely  
3 to leave teaching because of out-of-control student  
4 behavior.

5                   Discipline is not a problem that any one  
6 group can tackle alone. It must be a community  
7 effort that draws support from the District, City  
8 Council, the police, school employees, community  
9 groups and, most important, parents. We urge the  
10 Council to help the District develop a program that  
11 does place uniformed, on-duty police in troubled  
12 schools.

13                   In addition, I would like to add my  
14 support to those who have asked City Council and the  
15 District to find money in this budget to install  
16 appropriate traffic signals, flashers and signs  
17 around every school in the City beginning with  
18 elementary schools. One child injured by a vehicle  
19 on the way to school is too many, and I hope you  
20 will do everything in your power to prevent another  
21 senseless injury or death of a child walking to or  
22 from school.

23                   Our second item of concern is having  
24 real class size reduction. Again this year we urge  
25 our friends in City Council to continue to fight for

1  
2 real class size reduction in Philadelphia public  
3 schools.

4           Philadelphia has been creative in its  
5 use of federal money to develop the literacy intern  
6 program to increase the ratio of adults to children  
7 in the lower grades. That program, however, will  
8 only take us partway to closing the achievement gap.

9           Class size research, which began in  
10 Tennessee 20 years ago, showed significant and  
11 long-lasting gains in reading, math and science  
12 scores for children who are in classes with 15 to 17  
13 students and one certified teacher from kindergarten  
14 through third grade. By the eighth grade those  
15 children are one grade level ahead of their peers in  
16 regular classes of 25 students for classes of 25  
17 students and a classroom assistant. The gains made  
18 in small K to 3 classes are sustained through high  
19 school where students are more likely to take  
20 advanced placement classes, college entrance exams,  
21 and graduate on time.

22           In Philadelphia, classes in kindergarten  
23 to third grade contain 30 students, and with  
24 literacy interns there can be as many as 34 children  
25 in a classroom. That is too many for effective

1  
2 teaching and learning.

3           If we truly want children to leave the  
4 third grade performing on grade level, we can no  
5 longer ignore 20 years of solid educational research  
6 that proves that classes with no more than 17  
7 children are the springboard of a lifelong learning  
8 success.

9           Our third issue is the issue of  
10 retention of qualified teachers. No one disagrees  
11 that students do better when taught by certified  
12 teachers who have mastered their subject area and  
13 know how to convey the material to children.  
14 Research shows that college-educated, certified  
15 teachers improve student achievement. Without  
16 certified teachers students lose out.

17           There are several steps we must take to  
18 improve the chances that qualified teachers hired by  
19 the District will stay and help us develop the core  
20 of experienced, qualified teachers that every school  
21 needs.

22           Research shows that teachers leave  
23 Philadelphia public schools for a variety of  
24 factors. Among those are low pay and a lack of  
25 tuition reimbursement, which is standard in many of

1  
2 our surrounding districts, as well as overcrowded  
3 classes, lack of professional support, persistent  
4 discipline problems and shortages of critical  
5 resources such as books, supplies and technology.

6           The District's new teacher coach program  
7 is helping new teachers develop important skills and  
8 learn effective teaching strategies, and the new  
9 districtwide curriculum is providing a roadmap for  
10 new teachers to follow. But at a time when  
11 competition for good certified teachers is fierce,  
12 we will have to do more to help retain our talented  
13 staff across the City.

14           Qualified teachers are more likely to  
15 remain in the District if their schools have strong  
16 leadership, small classes, good working conditions,  
17 competitive salaries, good benefits, support for  
18 discipline, and incentives such as the  
19 aforementioned tuition reimbursement. College loan  
20 forgiveness and housing incentives will also help  
21 recruit teachers. These initiatives can and should  
22 be pursued.

23           And, finally, our fourth major objective  
24 is to have equitable and adequate resources. On May  
25 17, 1954 a unanimous U.S. Supreme Court decision was

1  
2 handed down, and I quote, In the field of public  
3 education the doctrine of separate but equal has no  
4 place. Separate educational facilities are  
5 inherently unequal, end quote.

6           The promise of Brown and the civil  
7 rights movement has been achieved in one respect:  
8 Access. People are no longer segregated or excluded  
9 from public facilities based on race, ethnicity,  
10 gender or sexual orientation. This is a significant  
11 achievement that should be celebrated.

12           Unfortunately, a new system of  
13 segregation is emerging in cities across the nation.  
14 According to a January 2004 study by the Civil  
15 Rights Project of Harvard University, resegregation  
16 is a major concern in urban areas where there is  
17 less and less racial and ethnic diversity.

18           More important, in the years since the  
19 Brown versus Board decision was handed down, we have  
20 learned that access does not guarantee equality, and  
21 in this Commonwealth there is much work ahead to  
22 guarantee that all children have equal access to  
23 high-quality education programs and services.

24           The future of the children who attend  
25 the public schools in Philadelphia can only be

1  
2 assured if we renew our commitment to providing  
3 children equal educational opportunities.

4           One year ago Congressman Chaka Fattah  
5 introduced a student bill of rights that would hold  
6 each state accountable for providing equal and  
7 adequate educational resources to all its students.  
8 It would require all children to have qualified  
9 teachers, a challenging curriculum, modern textbooks  
10 and materials, small classes, guidance counselors,  
11 librarians, technology, and appropriate facilities.  
12 This kind of educational equality is long overdue.

13           In too many Philadelphia schools today  
14 budget cuts are robbing our children of educational  
15 opportunities that students in other neighboring  
16 districts take for granted. School libraries are  
17 closed. Music and art programs have been  
18 dismantled, and sports programs are decimated. In  
19 short, the programs that motivate students and  
20 enrich education are gone. School budgets may well  
21 be balanced, but they have been balanced on the  
22 backs of our children.

23           Those of us in leadership positions must  
24 not let another 50 years go by before we change  
25 government funding formulas to provide what is

1  
2 needed to make our schools work for all students. I  
3 urge you to join us in this goal because the  
4 children of today cannot afford to wait 50 years for  
5 educational equality. Thank you.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you very  
7 much.

8 Are there any questions of our  
9 witnesses?

10 Seeing none, I thank you. Thank you  
11 very much.

12 MR. KIRSCH: Thank you.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Mr. Vallas, if  
14 you would come back to the witness table, please.

15 Councilman Nutter, did you want to be  
16 recognized at this time?

17 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you.

18 Last week when we were together we  
19 talked a little bit about issues like art and music  
20 and sports and library services at the various  
21 schools and some of the concerns that have been  
22 raised, at least with regard to a couple schools in  
23 my district; other conversations that we have had,  
24 Mr. Vallas, as regarding some other schools.

25 Is there any update on issues

1  
2 surrounding the standards for art and music and  
3 library services and physical education and those  
4 kinds of issues, the kinds of choices and decisions  
5 that some of the principals have to make?

6           You did put on the record that there are  
7 changes in a variety of formulas, whether it's  
8 special education, Title 1, and desegregation money.  
9 Any additional information in that regard?

10           MR. VALLAS: No. Well, first of all,  
11 the schools in question, the schools that I was  
12 directed to look at predictably lost money because  
13 of two things: Number one, they lost enrollment  
14 and, number two, they were affected by the change in  
15 the minimum funding provision concerning Title 1.

16           Just to summarize, two years ago school  
17 districts -- every school district was guaranteed a  
18 minimum of \$75,000 in Title 1 money, and last year  
19 we raised that to \$250,000, in part because we felt  
20 we were giving schools so much additional money,  
21 close to 80, \$90 million in textbooks and class size  
22 reduction and a number of other things, that we felt  
23 that this was a time that we could change the Title  
24 1 formula and provide a higher minimum funding  
25 level.

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It also reflected the fact that we were getting an additional, I think it was, 7 or \$8 million -- I'm sorry -- \$15 million in Title 1 money. So, in other words, the federal government actually increased Title 1 funding for two consecutive years by a substantial amount, and so we felt that this was the time to raise the hold harmless.

We were challenged -- or we were threatened with a lawsuit, and we were challenged by a coalition of groups who felt that we didn't have the right to do that, so as a compromise we decided to lower the hold harmless and we worked out an agreement whereby the hold harmless dropped from 250,000 to, I believe, \$175,000 minimum.

The effect of this was schools that had seen a big bump in their Title 1 because of this minimum hold harmless formula suddenly saw a decline in their Title 1, not -- you know, they still have close to a hundred thousand dollars more than they have gotten in the past because of the minimum funding guaranty, but, nevertheless, obviously if you budget from year to year and you get \$175,000 increase one year and a \$75,000 decline the next

1  
2 rear, obviously the next year is the year that is  
3 going to impact you.

4           And there may have been a number of  
5 schools that went out and budgeted -- they funded  
6 certain things or they expanded certain things, but  
7 the bottom line is those schools are still a big  
8 winner because that minimum funding guaranty is  
9 higher than it has been in the past.

10           I also want to make one final comment.  
11 Every year when we change the funding formulas --  
12 the funding formulas change because population  
13 changes and the number of poverty children change,  
14 or, in the case of the special education formulas,  
15 those formulas are being revamped so that money  
16 follows the kids, but we provided all of the schools  
17 with a hold harmless so we would minimize their  
18 aggregate losses from any of these categories.

19           So, indeed, at least a couple of the  
20 schools that you cited, that you made reference to,  
21 not publicly but privately were schools that lost  
22 because the hold harmless was adjusted and because  
23 they lost population. That's simple. The money  
24 follows the kids, believe it or not.

25           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that.

1

2 There may have been one where the population  
3 increased, but we can talk about that later.

4 The other schools in question, a couple  
5 of them are Daroff and Blueford, and then I have got  
6 apparently a resurgence of what seems to be an  
7 annual or every-couple-of-year issue with regard to  
8 Shawmont and their music program, which appears to  
9 be under distress or possible attack.

10 I would like to get an update from you  
11 on those issues, not at this moment, but at least I  
12 want to have them recognized.

13 MR. VALLAS: I was going to mention,  
14 only because the comment has been made about music  
15 and art and athletics, indeed over the past decade  
16 or so, those programs have been cut. Last year when  
17 we presented our first budget we stemmed those cuts.  
18 We just stopped eliminating those positions, and we  
19 have actually begun to do some limited add-backs in  
20 terms of creating new positions.

21 But what we have also done beyond that  
22 is we have invested a considerable amount of new  
23 money in athletic equipment, gym and athletic field  
24 renovations, and last year, and now including this  
25 year, a considerable amount of money for the purchase of

1  
2 new musical instruments and things of this nature,  
3 last year \$400,000, this year over a million  
4 dollars, so we are working our way back. It's not  
5 anywhere near where it should be, but we are  
6 beginning to inch our way back.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But, for instance,  
8 why would there be a cut in a music program?

9 MR. VALLAS: Well, not during -- well,  
10 schools decide to expand their own programs. For  
11 example, we don't fund elementary school librarians.  
12 That is something that has to be taken out of the  
13 local school district's Title 1 budget. I don't  
14 remember when the board eliminated funding for  
15 librarians. We restored central office high school  
16 librarians to the budget, but we couldn't afford to  
17 pick up the cost of all the elementary school  
18 librarians, and that was left up to the local  
19 schools.

20 Many schools have elected to have a  
21 librarian or hire a LIMA, which is a less expensive  
22 librarian where other schools have decided to reduce  
23 class size even further and not hire that librarian.

24 Same thing with music. We provide --  
25 and Wayne Harris is here. He could probably explain

1  
2 to you how we fund our music and our teachers, but  
3 there are schools that decide to support larger art  
4 and music programs, and if they lose their Title 1  
5 money, they may elect to cut those programs.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Therein lies the  
7 issue in what I have tried to get back to both today  
8 and last week. If we have certain standards for  
9 what kinds of programs and activities we believe  
10 should be in a school, then I think some of these  
11 issues just -- they are not options. I mean, you  
12 can have music, but maybe you don't have a  
13 librarian. You can have art, but you don't have  
14 music. I mean, I think you know me well enough to  
15 know and certainly in my many go-rounds with Mike  
16 Harris, you know, I'm not either naive or  
17 Pollyannaish about any of these issues, but it's not  
18 like the principal has the option to say, "Well, we  
19 are going to have math but not English." I mean,  
20 you have to have both. That is part of the standard  
21 operation of the school.

22 And what I'm suggesting to you is unless  
23 there were some community outcry or every parent in  
24 the school said, "I don't want my kid to even be  
25 exposed to music or art or library," short of that,

1  
2 which would be a rather insane situation, these  
3 choices that are being made -- I know you are saying  
4 they are at the local level. Principals can get  
5 what they want. They can take it from the shelf or  
6 have it or not have it, and what I'm suggesting to  
7 you is English, math, science, geography, somewhere  
8 in the midst of all the other things that are a  
9 standard part of the curriculum, art and music and  
10 library should be on a list of things that you just  
11 don't really get to touch at some level. Now, if  
12 you want to have an orchestra, that may be a  
13 different story.

14 MR. VALLAS: I think what I'm saying is  
15 I will get you the specific requirements, what  
16 specific minimum requirements, we impose on the  
17 schools for art and music both at the elementary and  
18 high school level. Right off the top of my head I  
19 can't tell you what that is, but I will get you the  
20 background, or I will get you an explanation of  
21 that.

22 I think what I'm saying is a couple  
23 things: First of all, on the issue of librarians, I  
24 feel every classroom should be a library, and rather  
25 than have a 50 or \$60,000 librarian, if you can

1  
2 reduce class sizes and put a classroom library in  
3 the every classroom and hire a LIMA, which is a --

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Hire a what?

5 MR. VALLAS: It's called a LIMA, which  
6 is a library technician. It is not a full-blown  
7 degreed librarian. They can do a very effective job  
8 at elementary schools.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do they go classroom  
10 to classroom?

11 MR. VALLAS: No; they still operate  
12 under the library, but they are not the traditional  
13 union title librarian with the pay and the status  
14 and all the things that librarians are --

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I don't want to have  
16 a management/labor discussion.

17 MR. VALLAS: I need to get you an  
18 explanation of what the requirements are. Right off  
19 of top of my head, it's --

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand.

21 MR. VALLAS: I think what I'm saying  
22 right now, though, is at the elementary school level  
23 some choices are made. There's supposed to be music  
24 and art instruction at every level, but it is  
25 certainly not at the degree we would like to get it

1  
2 to. So school districts take it upon themselves to  
3 use their discretionary money to enhance their  
4 programs.

5                   Now, how are we going to get at the  
6 issue of art, music enrichment? In the following  
7 ways: First thing we are going to do is -- first  
8 thing we are doing is we haven't cut our art and  
9 music teachers, number one.

10                   Number two, we are beginning to hire  
11 back. We are beginning to supplement. We are  
12 working with the various universities and art  
13 institutes so we can get part-time music teachers  
14 and music majors and music teacher student majors  
15 working in the schools so we can supplement our  
16 staff.

17                   The next thing we are doing is replacing  
18 all of the hardware. In the area of sports we are  
19 spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in new  
20 sports equipment. In the area of music we are  
21 purchasing more musical instruments. I have  
22 problems in schools where I have a music teacher and  
23 I don't have any musical instruments in that school.  
24 So we are beginning to replace the materials that  
25 were lost to us over the past few years.

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And now the third thing that we are doing is one of the five core curriculum areas that we are standardizing is the music and arts curriculum. Our goal here is to provide all of the teachers, particularly the elementary school teachers, particularly those primary grade teachers who obviously have to be multidisciplinary, with basically a music and art curriculum that can be incorporated into the general curriculum. The arts curriculum, the arts standardized curriculum, is probably about a year away from completion. For obvious reasons we focused on language, art, math, and this coming year on social studies and sciences.

So I think through those three things, not cutting what is there and beginning incrementally to add back, tapping into the university system and into the art community so that we can get part-time musicians and artists -- our partnership with Joan Golden, for example, that we are negotiating is to enhance art in the schools by bringing Joan and her considerable leadership and resources into the schools so we can have programs -- purchasing new equipment, new materials, replenishing our supplies, upgrading our athletic

1  
2 fields -- I mean in the capital plan we have  
3 literally five supersites in the planning stage, and  
4 we are going to, within the next five years, revamp  
5 at least 13 of our athletic fields -- and then  
6 fourth is to basically provide a standardized  
7 curriculum for every elementary school teacher  
8 because most of the music and art that is taught at  
9 the elementary schools is not only taught by the  
10 music and art teacher. A lot of times that art  
11 teacher is doing more coordinating than teaching. A  
12 lot of times at kindergarten, first grade, second  
13 grade, third great level, at those younger grade  
14 levels, it is those teachers that have those  
15 interdisciplinary skills teaching in more than one  
16 area.

17 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Why don't we do  
18 this: Can you provide to us through the Chair a  
19 listing for each school, whether they have art,  
20 music, physical education, library services, and  
21 whatever level of sports that school has available?

22 MR. VALLAS: Absolutely.

23 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Just go school by  
24 school.

25 Let's go back to the capital program.

1  
2 When you were last up, I was asking you but this  
3 company URS, who is your program manager for the  
4 capital plan, and you said they are out of San  
5 Francisco and they operate nationally or  
6 internationally. They have a \$24 million  
7 over-three-year contract. Who else is involved in  
8 this project?

9 MS. BURKE: Yes, sir, they have -- they  
10 have subcontractors that are also under their  
11 contract. There are five subs that they use. Among  
12 all of the subs and the prime, they would have 37  
13 employees. And you has asked before --

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Hold on one second.  
15 So you have URS and five subs. Is that  
16 correct?

17 MS. BURKE: That's correct.

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Total of six  
19 companies involved.

20 MS. BURKE: Correct.

21 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what is the  
22 total amount of all of those contracts?

23 MS. BURKE: The total dollar or the  
24 employees?

25 MS. BURKE: That's inclusive.

1

2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The 24 --

3 MS. BURKE: 25.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: 25. And what are  
5 the individual contracts for the other five subs?6 MS. BURKE: Did you want the contract  
7 breakdown? I can get that for you later. What I  
8 have is the employee breakdown.9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I will take that,  
10 but I would like the contract breakdown as well.11 MS. BURKE: We were going to send you  
12 that as well.

13 URS, 13 people; Polotnik 3; Gingly, 7.

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Hold it. I was  
15 never a quick notetaker.16 MS. BURKE: I'm also planning on sending  
17 it to you as well.18 Polotnik, 3; Gingly, 7; McKissock, 9;  
19 Contract Compliance, 3.

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That's a company?

21 MS. BURKE: Yes, it is, sir.

22 S &amp; G, 2; URS itself, 13.

23 The other thing that I wanted to mention  
24 is proportionality. The contract itself over three  
25 years has a work base of 1.1 billion in

1  
2 construction. The value of the contract is  
3 approximately 2.5 percent of construction.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The overall work is  
5 1.1 billion, the contract is 2.5 percent, which is  
6 the 25 million?

7 MS. BURKE: Yes, sir.

8 Mr. Vallas had also mentioned that we  
9 used construction managers as well. Construction  
10 managers per our SRC in aggregate are to come in on  
11 projects at 3.75 percent.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Say that again.

13 MS. BURKE: Construction managers, the  
14 SRC --

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many do you  
16 have?

17 MR. VALLAS: We have preapproved 14. We  
18 are negotiating with the 14. It will probably be  
19 fewer than 14, but what we have done is, per the  
20 SRC, we have capped the number of aggregate  
21 administrative fees to 3.75 percent of the total  
22 construction package.

23 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So that is 3.75 out  
24 of the 1.1?

25 MS. BURKE: That is on top of the 1.1.

1

2 1.1 billion is the construction base.

3

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand. So is  
3.75 out of 1.1 is the amount.

5

6 MS. BURKE: Yes, that's what it would  
be.

7

8 MR. VALLAS: Let me point out in picking  
these percentages, we are really using national and  
9 regional bench marks, so that the percentage  
allocations are not only consistent with those bench  
10 marks, but historically they are low.

11

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So we are talking  
13 about 35 to \$40 million?

14

15 MR. VALLAS: In a \$1.1 billion school  
construction program or any sort of construction  
16 program, you are going to spend --

17

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I am not making any  
commentary. I'm quickly trying to just do the math.

19

20 MR. VALLAS: For the total CM fees it is  
probably going to come to \$25 million also. It  
21 depends on what we finally negotiate, but to say we  
22 will spend \$25 million on construction manager  
23 fees -- wouldn't you say, Karen?

24

25 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: 3.75 and 1.1 billion  
-- it is close to 4 percent of a billion. Sounds

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2 like -- sounds like 40?

3

4 MR. VALLAS: I think the authorization  
is to negotiate up to 25.

5

6 MS. BURKE: Councilman, the District has  
always used construction managers on its projects  
7 even in the past before this new program, and the  
8 fee range for your CM at that point was easily 6 to  
9 7 percent rather than a smaller amount.

10

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Yeah. To be honest  
with you, having no real base of comparison, I don't  
12 know whether it's a low number or high number. So  
13 for the moment you don't have to justify the number.  
14 I just want to make sure I understand the math. At  
15 a later point when I actually learn something about  
16 this, then we will have a different discussion.

17

18 MR. VALLAS: I think just as a  
correction, when I say 25 million, that is the  
19 authorization. The authorization is 3.75, and the  
20 CM contracts will be for no more than 25 million.  
21 That doesn't mean it is on the total 1.1. The  
22 bottom line is our objective was to bring in a lot  
23 of construction managers because there's a lot of  
24 companies in the area that are very good and they  
25 were all competing, and what we would do is over the

1  
2 next year or two is we would weed out those that  
3 were least effective and continue those that were  
4 most effective.

5 So, you know, when I say once the CM  
6 contracts are completed, it will probably translate  
7 into another \$25 million commitment, that's where  
8 that is coming from.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand. And  
10 you can provide us with a list?

11 MR. VALLAS: Absolutely.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You don't have to go  
13 through the 14 preapproved, okay.

14 Let's go back to the construction side.

15 You have URS, who has the overall  
16 responsibility. You can get us information with  
17 regard to the five subcontracting firms --

18 MS. BURKE: Yes, sir.

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- and what their  
20 responsibilities are?

21 MR. VALLAS: That will be in your packet  
22 on Wednesday along with a financial allocation on  
23 how that contract -- how the subs will be  
24 contracted -- how the subs will be compensated  
25 within the 25 million.

1

2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me jump back to  
3 an earlier topic very briefly.

4 Can you tell me what are the eligible  
5 uses for Title 1 money?

6 MR. VALLAS: Wayne, come over here.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What can it be used  
8 for?

9 MR. VALLAS: It will probably be easier  
10 to tell you what it can't be used for.

11 MR. HARRIS: Title 1 is a very nice --  
12 I'm Wayne Harris, budget director.

13 Title 1 is a very nice, flexible grant.  
14 The key is that the vast majority of it needs to be  
15 distributed to the schools and the schools are  
16 empowered to decide how to spend the money with just  
17 a few restrictions. The money needs to be  
18 distributed in such a way that the schools with the  
19 highest concentration of poverty receive the largest  
20 amount down to the schools with the lowest  
21 concentration of poverty -- the largest amount per  
22 student down to the schools with the lowest  
23 concentration of poverty getting less.

24 The schools are required to spend either  
25 5 percent or 10 percent depending on whether or not

1  
2 they are in corrective action, which is part of the  
3 No Child Left Behind Law, more if they are in  
4 correction action, on professional development for  
5 their teachers. They are also required to spend 1  
6 percent for parent involvement.

7           Outside of that, there are very few  
8 restrictions on what they are allowed to do with  
9 Title 1.

10           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So upwards of 11  
11 percent may actually be specifically designated for  
12 some use, but the other 89 percent at least you can  
13 pretty much do whatever you want?

14           MR. HARRIS: You are encouraged to use  
15 it instructionally.

16           MR. VALLAS: Also, we are required under  
17 the No Child Left Behind to earmark I think it is  
18 roughly about 5 percent of the Title 1 money for  
19 supplemental education services. This is the after  
20 school extended day tutoring that is part of the  
21 subject, but other than that --

22           MR. HARRIS: Essentially we are required  
23 to have three 5 percent set-asides, one for after  
24 school tutoring, 5 percent for after school  
25 tutoring, 5 percent for improvement of teaching, to

1  
2 get teachers fully qualified, and 5 percent for  
3 school choice.

4 MR. VALLAS: We can get you an aggregate  
5 breakdown on just how the schools use most of their  
6 money, but from experience and from personal  
7 knowledge, most of the money goes to hire teachers  
8 so that is always priority number one. The  
9 overwhelming majority of the Title 1 money goes to  
10 hire either classroom teachers or some of these  
11 supplemental teachers or instructors like librarians  
12 or art teachers or music teachers.

13 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me talk about  
14 the older students. I'm going to shift. Last week  
15 I made a note to myself based on something you said,  
16 Mr. Vallas.

17 Can you tell me a little bit about what  
18 kind of contact we have with the business community  
19 regarding curriculum issues, how well our students  
20 are prepared to enter the work force, and any  
21 discussions or emphasis with our business leadership  
22 about how they carry a message hopefully on behalf  
23 of the district to their employees, which may get  
24 into a slightly touchy area, on making sure that  
25 they pick up report cards, work with their child on

1  
2 their education issues, the issue of taking off  
3 time, if they have to, for parent/teacher  
4 conference, any of those kinds of things that help  
5 to carry a message from the District to the  
6 employers and ultimately to parents who may be  
7 employees of these companies that education is  
8 really important to the business community, that  
9 business leaders want parents to be actively  
10 involved and actively engaged in their child's  
11 education, that if they need time off, you know,  
12 other than contractual obligations and the like,  
13 they really are sending a message down through the  
14 ranks that education is important, and if you need  
15 time, that it is going to be given, and it's  
16 emphasized by the companies.

17 Do we ever have those conversations?

18 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes. One of the things  
19 that we did as a result of a task force that was  
20 established a year and a half ago in partnership  
21 with the Chamber of Commerce, one of the  
22 recommendations as a result of that task force was  
23 to establish business community councils. To date  
24 we have established eight of those councils, one  
25 representing each of the following state recognized

1  
2 career areas or areas of occupation such as  
3 business, health, industry, construction and so  
4 forth.

5           Those individuals meet on a monthly  
6 basis to talk about work readiness and what they  
7 could do in terms of recommendation to curriculum,  
8 what they could do in terms of helping prepare  
9 internships, and overall what they could do to help  
10 with the soft skills or provide recommendations to  
11 the School District as it relates to soft skills.

12           As a result, this relationship has  
13 afforded us the opportunity to meet with industry  
14 leaders representing those fields on a monthly basis  
15 to make sure that we are making them aware of the  
16 changes that we are making in curriculum, all of the  
17 upgrades we are doing as it relates to education and  
18 to the programs.

19           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: This is being done  
20 through the task force or through someone's office  
21 or --

22           MR. WILLIAMS: The recommendation was  
23 the task force. Now we are fulfilling the  
24 recommendation through our office of secondary  
25 education.

1

2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So your office is  
3 responsible for all the high schools?

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, sir.

5 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And I'm going to  
6 assume that this is an office or a division of the  
7 district that has always existed.

8 MR. WILLIAMS: Actually, no; this is a  
9 division of the District that literally started with  
10 Mr. Vallas' administration.

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who was in charge of  
12 high schools before?

13 MR. WILLIAMS: Before Mr. Vallas  
14 arrived, we had one person in the School District  
15 who basically assisted high schools in whatever her  
16 limited capacity could be. Once we came in, we  
17 started an entire division, which meant we added  
18 offices to deal with particular areas as it related  
19 to high schools.

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many people are  
21 in the office now?

22 MR. WILLIAMS: We have seven major  
23 divisions, perhaps maybe about 30 people in our  
24 downtown office, and obviously we have a field  
25 representative such as educational coaches that go

1  
2 to high schools to work along with teachers and  
3 students in implementing the new core curriculum.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Seven divisions, 30  
5 people. Some are at the District and the rest are  
6 where?

7 MR. WILLIAMS: In schools.

8 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many at the  
9 District?

10 MR. WILLIAMS: Maybe about 30 in the  
11 district, a little over 30 in the District.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: 30 in the District?

13 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes. And we have  
14 representatives inside of schools.

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many in the  
16 schools?

17 MR. WILLIAMS: Close to about 50.

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: 50?

19 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes.

20 And those are school-based  
21 representatives. They don't come out. They stay in  
22 the school.

23 MR. VALLAS: All of the schools from the  
24 K to 8 schools to the 9 to 12 schools have coaches.  
25 With the move towards the standardized curriculum,

1  
2 we have standardized professional development and we  
3 put coaches in all of the schools, literacy coaches,  
4 math coaches.

5 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who do they work  
6 with?

7 MR. VALLAS: At the elementary school  
8 level they work with the principals and the  
9 teachers. They are there to provide at the local  
10 level local professional development because in the  
11 new curriculum instructional models it is important  
12 to have -- a premium has been placed on the training  
13 of the teachers on how to match to the models. It  
14 is the same thing at the high school level. We have  
15 coaches. We have language, arts, and mathematics  
16 coaches. Eventually we will probably have science  
17 coaches.

18 The objective here is to have  
19 professional trainers at the local school level who  
20 are basically ensuring the implementation of the  
21 curriculum.

22 Let me point out that these are not like  
23 new positions added to existing positions. One of  
24 the things that we did in the high schools was we  
25 jettisoned a lot of the what we felt were

1  
2 ineffective and wasteful positions. For example,  
3 when we added well over a hundred new AP, honors,  
4 and advanced placement courses this past year, we  
5 did it by eliminating well over 300 totally  
6 irrelevant courses that the high schools had been  
7 offering students that had no relevancy to what was  
8 required to graduate or had no relevancy for  
9 students who were college bound or, for that matter,  
10 even on a career track.

11           It is the same thing on the local school  
12 side. You go to the high schools and they would  
13 have department heads. They would have small school  
14 coordinators. There were like four or five -- it is  
15 not uncommon to go to a high school and find 16 or  
16 17 teachers in nonteaching positions in that school.

17           So when we -- as part of the high school  
18 reorganization we created a number of -- we  
19 eliminated a number of positions to free up money in  
20 the high schools for the other reforms, but we also  
21 created a number of new positions that replaced  
22 eliminated positions and put them under the direct  
23 control over the high school division so that we  
24 could focus on such things as curriculum instruction  
25 and professional development.

1

2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm sorry. This  
3 division -- the department is called what, Office of  
4 Secondary --

5 MR. WILLIAMS: Education.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What is the budget  
7 for this office?

8 MR. WILLIAMS: The entire high school  
9 budget, roughly it's about 16 to \$20 million. Wayne  
10 is going to get some exact figures for you.

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: This is your office?

12 MR. WILLIAMS: That is the programmatic  
13 money, grants and everything, yes, sir.

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What do the 30  
15 people who are at the District do?

16 MR. WILLIAMS: The offices are divided  
17 into seven different departments, and roughly I will  
18 tell you about each of them.

19 The first department is our physical  
20 education and sports division, actually which  
21 handles physical education and sports for the entire  
22 district, K through 12. So there is an extension of  
23 more than just high school for that particular  
24 office. That office oversees all of the sports  
25 programs, all of the physical education, all of the

1  
2 health programs, and the newly implemented drivers  
3 education program.

4           The second office is the music office,  
5 which you talked about, performing arts office, and  
6 this particular office, the performing arts office,  
7 strictly focuses on performing arts, music, as it  
8 relates to ninth through twelfth grade.

9           We have another office that focuses on  
10 instructional delivery. That is the office that the  
11 coaches report to. That is the office where we make  
12 sure that the new curriculum is being implemented.

13           We have another office of curriculum  
14 development. They are responsible for developing  
15 the entire new high school curriculum that we have  
16 in place.

17           We have another office of career and  
18 technical education, which are our vocational  
19 programs that are spread throughout the entire  
20 School District.

21           What did I forget?

22           We have an office of ROTC, which is the  
23 junior office of reserve training program in our  
24 high schools as well.

25           We have the college and career awareness

1  
2 office that deals with scholarships and readiness  
3 for college, all of the SAT and PSAT test taking and  
4 all of those things.

5 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Did you say earlier  
6 there was a career in technology, education  
7 division? What did you say about that?

8 MR. WILLIAMS: Career and technical  
9 education, which is a form of vocational education.

10 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So it is career and  
11 technical education, and then there is a college and  
12 career awareness?

13 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes.

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me point out so  
15 that there is no confusion, these offices and  
16 divisions have always existed, but they were  
17 scattered within the bureaucracy. So, in other  
18 words, technology would be somewhere, vocational ed  
19 would be somewhere. There was no focus on  
20 curriculum instruction, at least from a central  
21 office standpoint. So one of the things that we did  
22 was we took all of high school's functions and we  
23 pulled them out of individual departments and we  
24 consolidated them into a single office, obviously  
25 not only for purposes of articulating the division

1  
2 and implementing the program but also for  
3 accountability purposes.

4           And, for example, we have now begun to  
5 do something similar in this year's budget for our  
6 middle grades initiatives because in the past no one  
7 has been responsible for middle grades. The middle  
8 grade functions are scattered among multiple  
9 departments. So the objective here was to take all  
10 of the high school programs from technology to  
11 career ed to honors to advanced placement to magnet  
12 programs to professional development, the academy  
13 programs, which were out there by themselves, almost  
14 a quasi-independent entity, and to consolidate them  
15 into a division of high school programs with a  
16 director of high school programs. I just wanted to  
17 point that out.

18           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I think my initial  
19 reaction to some of this is to just at least raise  
20 the issue of whether or not the central office is --  
21 I mean, is it flattening out, or is it starting to  
22 rise again in terms of we seem to have a lot of  
23 people doing a lot of things that at least directly  
24 don't seem to have a whole lot to do with children  
25 and their direct education, and I'm just raising the

1  
2 question that it seems that we have a lot of -- a  
3 significant number of people checking on what other  
4 people are doing.

5 MR. VALLAS: No, not at all. If you are  
6 going to have vocational ed, you need somebody to  
7 monitor and maintain the quality of those vocational  
8 ed programs. The School District had wiped out its  
9 AP honors and advanced placement courses in all of  
10 its high schools. Now we have honors and advanced  
11 placement. Somebody needs to be responsible for  
12 that. Most of these functions have always been in  
13 the school districts. They have been scattered  
14 among the individual departments.

15 Let me point out that at least every  
16 year in the least three years the central office has  
17 been downsized. This year is no exception. We are  
18 now down to 1100. I think the central office had  
19 how many positions three years ago? I will give you  
20 the number. But the central office continues to  
21 decline and it will also continue to decline. But  
22 as part of that declining, we are not just cutting  
23 for cutting's sake; there also needs to be some  
24 radical organizational structure -- there needs to  
25 be some rational organizational structure, how the

1  
2 office is set up.

3           So having all of your high school  
4 functions decentralized among multiple agencies and  
5 among multiple departments is just not logical.  
6 There is no efficiency.

7           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So you are bringing  
8 them into one location and they are all under one  
9 roof?

10           MR. VALLAS: First of all, they were  
11 scattered, but Let me give you an example. The high  
12 school reforms have been funded through a  
13 combination of \$15 million in new monies we  
14 programmed for the high school budget and \$15  
15 million in savings. The high school reforms are  
16 costing the District \$30 million. What are those  
17 reforms? The revamping of vocational ed, the  
18 restoration of honors and advanced placement  
19 programs, the curriculum instructional forms, the  
20 capital instructional models themselves, putting  
21 professional development coaches at the local school  
22 level, but the bottom line is we had to reprogram 15  
23 million in existing budget resources and then cut 15  
24 million in order for the high school office and the  
25 division of high schools and the high school

1  
2 programs to be effectively funded.

3           So it has been a combination of budget  
4 cuts and budget reprogramming, but these functions  
5 the District already did. They simply were  
6 scattered among multiple departments and agencies.

7           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Why don't we do  
8 this: Maybe you can give me on a spreadsheet or  
9 whatever works, as long as you don't get Mike Harris  
10 and company to do it the same way as the budget book  
11 was put together.

12           Why don't you show us over the past  
13 three years what the administrative costs have been,  
14 what the positions have been, and where these  
15 savings are?

16           Now, do we have a set number on the  
17 Office of Secondary Education in terms of the budget  
18 of that office?

19           MR. VALLAS: His office is 6 million,  
20 okay, in the budget, but that is not exclusively  
21 positions. But I will ask Wayne Harris to break  
22 that out for you, but when you add the reforms like  
23 the AP honors, advanced placement, professional  
24 development, the capital, obviously the number gets  
25 a lot larger, but in terms of his immediate office I

1  
2 think it is \$6 million. I will get Wayne to break  
3 those out into personal services, contractual  
4 services, and things like that, and I will get you  
5 that.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. If you can  
7 just get it to me.

8 Let me try to focus on two of the areas  
9 here. You have career and technical education and  
10 college and career awareness. What are we doing in  
11 the career and technical education area, and who is  
12 responsible now for what I guess used to be  
13 vocational education, and what programs are we  
14 actually offering to students?

15 MR. WILLIAMS: Currently we have had an  
16 opportunity to come in and to restructure career and  
17 technical education based on the Perkins guidelines,  
18 which are established by the State.

19 The programs that have been established  
20 in career and technical education include  
21 construction, business, health, transportation,  
22 communications and technology as well. We have  
23 approximately 179 of those programs spread  
24 throughout our high school district. In the 42  
25 schools I guess that will give you an average of

1  
2 maybe two or three programs per school. Obviously  
3 we have a number of schools that focus solely on  
4 career and technical education. We have four of  
5 those schools where the vast majority of the  
6 programs within those schools are career and  
7 technical education.

8           Part of our philosophy of what we have  
9 attempted to do is to establish quality career and  
10 technical education within neighborhood schools.  
11 The current four to five career and technical  
12 education high schools simply cannot accommodate the  
13 number of kids who would like that training and/or  
14 who need and want that training. So within each of  
15 the high schools they have an opportunity to open  
16 career and technical education programs based on the  
17 guidelines that are established by career and  
18 technical education. And the umbrella of those  
19 programs are the ones that are included -- that I  
20 indicated to you.

21           Under each one of those umbrellas -- for  
22 example, on the transportation --

23           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Are the umbrellas  
24 the six programs that you laid out?

25           MR. WILLIAMS: Yes. Let me repeat them

1  
2 and make sure you have them.

3 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Construction,  
4 business, health, transportation, communication and  
5 technology.

6 MR. WILLIAMS: And hospitality.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So it's seven.

8 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes.

9 So under each of those areas there are a  
10 certain number of programs. As an example, under  
11 transportation obviously there is auto body,  
12 automotive mechanics, and in some cases there could  
13 be diesel. We are trying to establish a diesel. So  
14 under each one of the broader categories there are a  
15 number of programs and the school elects those  
16 programs.

17 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So who is in charge  
18 of this office, the seven areas? Who decides what  
19 the curriculum is and how it is spread out whether  
20 it is 179 programs, 42 schools? Who is in charge of  
21 that?

22 MR. WILLIAMS: Generally it involves, as  
23 we indicated, the division of career and technical  
24 education is headed by Roosevelt Brown. In that  
25 office we have established a policy, a program

1  
2 approval policy. Any school desiring a career and  
3 technical education program makes application to the  
4 office to establish the program. In order to  
5 establish the program, the school has to meet  
6 certain criteria. Number one, they have to have  
7 certified staff. Number two, they have to have a  
8 dedicated room or laboratory for the respective  
9 program that they are inquiring about and, number  
10 three, they have to have established an advisory  
11 council, an advisory council which is made up of  
12 neighborhood businesses or businesses that may not  
13 be in the neighborhood but however are reflective to  
14 that individual career area.

15           Once they meet those three criteria, we  
16 then will make sure that the program is up to speed,  
17 the program is up to date, that the equipment is  
18 ordered and the supplies are there, and that all of  
19 the components for it to meet state certification  
20 are in place.

21           We have had an opportunity to come in  
22 and restructure that program over the last year and  
23 with that we had to obviously close out some  
24 programs that were obsolete but, on the flip side,  
25 to open some programs that are a little more up to

1  
2 date.

3 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So you are saying  
4 all of the teachers involved in these programs are  
5 certified in their area?

6 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes; they have to be  
7 industry certified in their particular area.

8 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: If you could share  
9 with us through the Chair who the leaders of the  
10 various programs are and what their certification  
11 is, I would appreciate it.

12 You said Mr. Brown is in charge of the  
13 seven areas?

14 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, sir.

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: In which is he  
16 certified?

17 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Brown is actually a  
18 construction person, but that certification isn't  
19 needed for that particular position.

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I'm sorry. Say that  
21 again.

22 MR. WILLIAMS: The person who oversees  
23 the project is an administrator in my office. The  
24 areas of careers, the seven areas, the certification  
25 is needed for the classroom teachers.

1

2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Not for the person  
3 in charge?

4 MR. WILLIAMS: That's correct.

5 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, how would he  
6 know if they are doing what they were supposed to?

7 MR. WILLIAMS; how would he know that  
8 the teachers are doing what they are supposed to?

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Or the people who  
10 are in charge of the various programs.

11 MR. WILLIAMS: The people who are in  
12 charge of the various programs are from those seven  
13 areas of certification, so the seven areas I have  
14 indicated, the people who oversee those programs  
15 have expertise in that particular area.

16 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what is  
17 Mr. Brown's expertise?

18 MR. WILLIAMS: Business as well as  
19 construction.

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is that from the  
21 industry or from academia or what?

22 MR. WILLIAMS: That is from the industry  
23 and academia.

24 MR. VALLAS: Mr. Brown is an exceptional  
25 administrator. The same things that have -- the

1  
2 same rationale in creating that position or  
3 appointing him is the same rationale that school  
4 districts have used to bring CEOs in rather than  
5 traditional superintendents.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Talking about  
7 college and career, where is that?

8 MR. VALLAS: I do want to add one  
9 footnote. One thing that was not included in  
10 Dr. Williams' remarks is in addition to these  
11 reforms, we have embarked upon a program of  
12 enrolling students -- I don't know if you mentioned  
13 this, Craig -- in vocational ed courses in community  
14 colleges, in programs like Devry, universities who  
15 do a credit as part of our Project Excel program.

16 We are doing something similar with  
17 honors and advanced placement where we are enrolling  
18 our seniors in university courses for dual credit.

19 This program, I don't know how many we  
20 have this year, but we hope that this program will  
21 rise into the -- in the coming years will exceed a  
22 thousand, but the objective here is to allow our  
23 students to go beyond just the modest vocational  
24 educational program that may currently exist in the  
25 high schools, although obviously we are looking at

1  
2 improving those, but to where we can actually enroll  
3 them in bona fide certified vocational ed.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let's talk about  
5 college and career awareness. Who is in charge of  
6 that office?

7 MR. WILLIAMS: That is headed by  
8 Mr. Roger Jackson.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Roger Jackson?

10 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, sir.

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And how many people  
12 are in that office?

13 MR. WILLIAMS: I believe five.

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what exactly do  
15 they do?

16 MR. WILLIAMS: Their function is to  
17 provide all of the -- the Geroff function is to do a  
18 functioning office. It oversees the federally  
19 funded hero grant, that we previously talked a  
20 little bit about today. That is number one.

21 Number two, it also oversees the state  
22 Geroff function.

23 Number three, it oversees the college  
24 and career awareness of functions that we have in  
25 each of our high schools. When I say "college and

1  
2 career awareness," I'm focusing on or talking about  
3 all of the programs that we have in place to begin  
4 to make sure that young people are applying for  
5 financial education, that they are taking the field  
6 trips to colleges, that they are doing the college  
7 fairs, bringing in the speakers, all of the series  
8 of activities that are necessary to expose them to  
9 colleges and make them aware of them.

10 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And from a previous  
11 hearing, is this also the office that is involved  
12 with the college scholarship issue?

13 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, it is.

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do you recall  
15 whether the statistics on college counselors, are  
16 they supervised by this office as well.

17 MR. WILLIAMS: No, they work with this  
18 office. They are not supervised directly by them.

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Who is in charge of  
20 the college counselors?

21 MR. WILLIAMS: The high school  
22 counselors -- all of our counselors are supervised  
23 by the Office of Specialized Services.

24 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is that within your  
25 office?

1

2 MR. WILLIAMS: No, sir.

3 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many counselors  
4 are there for high school?

5 MR. WILLIAMS: I believe about 114.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Some schools  
7 obviously have more than one?8 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes. We generally have  
9 a ration of about 1 to 500.10 MR. VALLAS: Last year it was 1 to a  
11 thousand. And let me point out that the counselors  
12 are --13 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You are moving in  
14 the right direction.15 MR. VALLAS: Yes, I know, but there are  
16 still far too many.17 Let me also point out that the dollar  
18 amounts that we gave you for the high school office,  
19 those counselors would be funded out of the high  
20 school office numbers, so I want to reiterate that  
21 the budget that we laid out includes programs.22 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You will show it,  
23 and again in that regard, what I would like to see  
24 over the past couple years is salaries and fringe  
25 benefits for the office. I would like to know any

1  
2 new positions that have been hired in the past  
3 couple years as well as the cost. What will  
4 probably cover a significant portion of this is why  
5 don't you just give me the whole office for the past  
6 few years, all the people that work there, title,  
7 position, start date, salary.

8 I'm trying to stay focused on the high  
9 school portion of this. The high school counselors  
10 now with a ratio of about 1 to 500, how often do  
11 they see a student?

12 MR. WILLIAMS: We don't have an official  
13 number. We have created a survey with a student  
14 group. We do not have an official number.

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is a student  
16 required to see a counselor any set number of times  
17 a year?

18 MR. WILLIAMS: No, they are not.

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Could you go a whole  
20 year and not see your counselor?

21 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, you could.

22 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Why?

23 MR. WILLIAMS: In the past, students,  
24 once they enter high schools, obviously to be  
25 programmed for high schools, they would talk to a

1  
2 counselor, make selections and so forth. Once the  
3 student has made a selection in terms of what  
4 academic programs and/or occupational programs they  
5 want, because of the ratio that was exhibited in the  
6 past, it just made it feasibly impossible for them  
7 to have an opportunity to see their counselor on a  
8 regular and on an ongoing basis.

9           What was established to assist with that  
10 is what we call in high school advisories, which  
11 means there is a period in the day, perhaps about 25  
12 to 30 minutes a day, where high school students  
13 would be with their adviser and have an opportunity  
14 to talk about all of the preparations and all of the  
15 things that were necessary.

16           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That's as a group,  
17 isn't it?

18           MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, that is as a group.

19           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And what would be  
20 your sense of what goes on during the average  
21 advisory period in the classroom everyday? How  
22 often is the advisory?

23           MR. WILLIAMS: The advisory in most  
24 schools is every day. It is a scripted approach to  
25 doing group counseling and group awareness and that

1  
2 kind of thing.

3 MR. VALLAS: Just as we have moved to  
4 standardize the curriculum in the five subject areas  
5 including the arts, we are also moving to  
6 standardize the advisory. So what is done, what is  
7 taken up in the advisory, is descriptive. It is  
8 described. It is laid out, so that the advisories  
9 are covering areas of concentration that we want  
10 them to cover. We want them to be focusing on kind  
11 of our broad agenda.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So if a student is  
13 not required to see a counselor at least once a  
14 year, and you are saying in the course of the school  
15 year could actually, if they wanted to, could avoid  
16 for whatever reason seeing a counselor, how many  
17 students does a counselor see? Is a counselor  
18 required to see any number or percentage of students  
19 on an annual basis?

20 MR. WILLIAMS: Counselors right now --  
21 and, again, I will check with our Office of  
22 Specialized Services to see what sort of anecdotal  
23 records they keep in terms of the number of times  
24 they see a student, which I know that they do keep  
25 some form of record.

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It is possible -- and unfortunately it has been in the past and probably throughout school districts throughout the country -- that as a student you may or may not see your counselor one to three times a year. Unfortunately, because of the ratio and the numbers of students that we have in school that is very, very likely. That is why we have to create other programs that make sure that we expose children to the kinds of things that they need so that since the individual counseling is not as readily available as we would like, we can cover some things that you can do as a group and then make sure that young people are exposed to them.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I hear what you are saying, but you have a position called school counselor, and what I'm hearing you say is neither the student has any requirement to see a counselor any number of times if they could, nor does the counselor have any requirement to see any number of students or any percentage of students. So how do you know what the counselors are doing or whether they are doing their job?

MR. VALLAS: First of all, they are evaluated just like teachers. We would love to set

1  
2 a minimum number of students that the counselors  
3 would see, but given the fact that the counselors  
4 are overwhelmed with the number of students and  
5 probably, if they had the time, they would have to  
6 see three, four, five students a day specifically  
7 focusing on those individual problems, I mean the  
8 bottom line is counselors are evaluated. They are  
9 supposed to document the number of students they  
10 see. They are supposed to have records of when they  
11 see those students, and that becomes part of their  
12 evaluation process. But I don't think we set a  
13 minimum of --

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: But if there is no  
15 standard for the number of kids I have to see and I  
16 am a counselor and I said, "I saw who I could see"  
17 and "I sat in my office" -- I'm not saying anyone  
18 who do this hopefully -- but I sat in my office, put  
19 up a schedule, people knew that I was there and no  
20 one ever showed up, how do you judge?

21 MR. VALLAS: Brenda Taylor, who manages  
22 the counseling program, she will come in. No, it is  
23 important for her to respond --

24 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that.

25 MR. VALLAS: -- because you have raised

1  
2 the question. Brenda will come out here and  
3 articulate all of the functions and all of the  
4 responsibilities that counselors have to perform,  
5 and I think you will see that they have very  
6 specific prescribed responsibilities, but the bottom  
7 line is -- Brenda? Let me ask Brenda if she can  
8 come forward.

9 Brenda, the question that has been  
10 posed --

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Wait a minute. You  
12 can wait until she gets over here and give her a  
13 proper greeting.

14 When you communicate the message  
15 slightly more quietly to her, I'm not making any  
16 allegation or charge as to whether people are  
17 working or earning their money. What I'm trying to  
18 understand is how do we enhance the students'  
19 contact or relationship. What additional grounding  
20 or foundation are we giving them as they try to  
21 figure out a whole host of things that are going on  
22 with them including what are they going to do with  
23 the rest of their lives.

24 I'm trying to understand what do the  
25 folks do and what are the standards on either side.

1  
2 There has to be a mutual obligation it would seem to  
3 me between the student and the counselor.

4 Please identify yourself for the record.

5 MS. TAYLOR: Good afternoon. My name is  
6 Brenda Taylor. I'm the officer of specialized  
7 services and in my office is the responsibility of  
8 counselors. With the decrease of counselor/student  
9 ratio with having counselors responsible for less  
10 students in the high schools and having these  
11 comprehensive student support liaisons working in  
12 the high schools with counselors, we really tried to  
13 decrease their responsibility in responding to  
14 crisis and being in a crisis mode and freed them up  
15 to really respond to children in career orientation  
16 and those kinds of areas.

17 So this year we are really working on  
18 freeing them up for the crisis and the crisis  
19 response mode, but it continues to be a big issue in  
20 our high schools.

21 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Earlier -- and I  
22 think you were out of the room -- I was asking the  
23 question: It sounded like if you were -- you may  
24 not even have to be particularly creative. Students  
25 apparently can avoid seeing their -- I'm talking

1  
2 about high school students -- apparently have no  
3 requirement to see a high school counselor at any  
4 time and, similarly, the counselors don't have a  
5 particular responsibility --

6 MS. TAYLOR: Counselors have  
7 assignments. Some high school assign counselors by  
8 grade; others by career academies. So counselors  
9 have assignments and they have a population. They  
10 have the information on the population that is  
11 assigned to them and they have the charge and the  
12 responsibility to connect with that population  
13 throughout the school year, be it in groups or  
14 meeting with the grade groups to look at the records  
15 and the concerns of those students.

16 It may not be one to one, but they have  
17 the responsibility of overseeing the progress of the  
18 students that they are charged with.

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Are you anticipating  
20 any further reductions in the student/counselor  
21 ratio? And how do you get to a point of even if it  
22 were that you knew as a student you would have an  
23 opportunity to see your counselor, even if it was 20  
24 hard minutes two or three times in the course of the  
25 year, again especially for seniors, even for

1  
2 juniors, trying to figure out am I going to school  
3 beyond my senior year, where am I going, what are my  
4 choices? I mean, who else are they going to talk to  
5 about this? Obviously their parents, but the school  
6 counselor has a lot more information.

7 MR. VALLAS: Our approach towards  
8 dealing with the counselor deficiency -- and I'm  
9 speaking as a high schooler who saw his counselor  
10 once in four years and obviously was not better off  
11 because of it.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You seem like you've  
13 done none too bad.

14 MR. VALLAS: Three years in community  
15 college can correct a lot of damage.

16 So your point on counselors is well  
17 taken. There is certainly a deficiency in the  
18 number of counselors. In the ideal world we should  
19 have a 1 to 100 ratio because even 1 to 500 is -- I  
20 mean with -- but our approach is threefold. It is  
21 actually fourfold.

22 Number one, let's take crisis  
23 intervention out of the hands of the counselors. As  
24 you know, we have done a lot of work in crisis  
25 intervention. We have crisis intervention teams in

1  
2 the regions who go into the schools when they have  
3 hot spots.

4 The whole objective is to free up the  
5 counselors from noncounseling activities and to have  
6 them focus on counseling. Because in the past  
7 counselors were NTAs, safety and security, you name  
8 it. They were a jack of all trades.

9 So the first thing is to free up their  
10 time, and Brenda, I think, has touched on that.

11 The second thing we have done is we have  
12 begun to reduce the counselor/student ratio, this  
13 year, this past year, from 1 to 1000 to 1 to 500.  
14 Whether we reduce it again will depend on what the  
15 final outcome from Harrisburg is, but we want to  
16 continue to gradually get those numbers down.

17 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Are there standards,  
18 I don't know, state or national standards in this  
19 particular area?

20 MR. VALLAS: There are. I'm not aware  
21 of what they are right off the top of my head, but I  
22 will get you the counselor on City schools ratio,  
23 counselor ration.

24 The third thing that we are doing is  
25 cleaning up the advisories. Instead of the

1  
2 advisories being a babysitting service, we want the  
3 advisories to be group counseling. That's why the  
4 advisories have very specific prescribed agendas.

5           You know, this day it might cover  
6 testing. This day they might cover STD testing,  
7 sexually transmitted diseases testing. This month  
8 the advisories might be focusing on college  
9 applications or, for that matter, applying for a  
10 scholarship, things of this nature. So the whole  
11 idea is to script them.

12           And, finally, the fourth thing worth  
13 citing, because, again, it is in the budget, has  
14 been to create in each of our high schools what we  
15 call student support centers, student support  
16 centers which are overseen by counselors but are not  
17 run or staffed by counselors, are staffed by what we  
18 call counseling interns. They are staffed by what  
19 we call the version of student teacher counselors.  
20 But they are staffed by social workers, staffed by  
21 university interns, and they are also staffed by  
22 City Corp, which incidentally has programs I believe  
23 in eight to ten of our schools and we have plans to  
24 put them in as many as two dozen of our high schools  
25 next year.

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So the objective is you have your one-on-one counseling if you need it, number one. And, number two, you have your day-to-day contact with your advisories. Number three, you have your student support centers where you can go for help on tutoring for help, filling out applications to colleges, to get information about colleges, for help about how to apply for scholarships, things of this nature.

So what we are trying to do is we are trying within a limited budget, within limited resources, to bring more counseling and social service support resources to bear in the schools. Again, it's not a complete substitute for a 1 to 100 counselor to student ratio, but, again, these are little incremental ways that we are getting our students more individualized support.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me ask one last question in this general area. Whether it's college and career awareness or career and technical education, tell me a little bit about the partnerships, their relationships that have been developed over time or anything that's new with community-based or nonprofit organizations that help

1  
2 put the reform agenda forward.

3 MR. WILLIAMS: Councilman, what we had  
4 an opportunity to do about a year and a half ago was  
5 to put together a task force to deal with the entire  
6 reform high school package. We had about a hundred  
7 individuals to work with us very succinctly to  
8 develop what's become known now as the secondary  
9 education movement.

10 As a result of that, those individuals,  
11 which consist of the parents, teachers, union  
12 members, universities including our own community  
13 colleges, businesses and other entities, they came  
14 together to work with us to identify what we believe  
15 were the urgent needs of high schools in terms of  
16 reforming them. We created as a result a strategic  
17 plan that we are implementing now. The groups who  
18 helped us prepare were instrumental in terms of  
19 giving us advice, in terms of giving us from their  
20 perspective what they felt the needs of high school  
21 students were. You get a different perspective from  
22 universities obviously. You get a different  
23 perspective from community groups.

24 So we have a number from all of those  
25 individual areas that work along with us in the

1  
2 capacity of community organizations. Communities in  
3 schools, Philadelphia academies, OIC, I didn't bring  
4 a list with me, but there are a number of  
5 organizations --

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You can get us a  
7 list?

8 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And tell us what the  
10 services are.

11 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes.

12 MR. VALLAS: I would also like to cite  
13 three examples of expanded responsibilities.  
14 Wherever we can, if there are quality legitimate  
15 community-based organizations and not-for-profits  
16 out there that are already in this field or already  
17 have a relationship with the School District, rather  
18 than creating a new bureaucracy, we operate within  
19 that bureaucracy.

20 Now let me point out that we have worked  
21 with community schools in the public education fund,  
22 Philadelphia Public Education Fund, and the  
23 Philadelphia academies, to, in effect, jettison the  
24 programs that they run in the schools that are  
25 inefficient and to introduce programs that are more

1  
2 efficient.

3           But just to give you three examples, for  
4 example, with the community in schools, our cradle  
5 to the classroom program. This is our program where  
6 we identify pregnant teens and we assign them with  
7 parent advocates and parent trainers, and the goal  
8 here is to make sure the babies are born healthy and  
9 put in daycare and preschool and that the pregnant  
10 teens don't drop out. Rather than to create an  
11 infrastructure we are working with community schools  
12 infrastructure, the Philadelphia Public Education  
13 Fund.

14           Our whole middle grades initiative in  
15 the conversions of K to A5 schools and K to 8  
16 schools, that transition is being heavily --  
17 community schools or Public Education Fund has taken  
18 the lead in making sure that the middle grades that  
19 are being added to those K to 5 schools and the  
20 middle schools themselves, that additional  
21 professional development is being provided. They  
22 are managing what we call our middle grade literacy  
23 interns. These are prospective teachers that are  
24 being brought in, and they are going to spend a year  
25 or two in the schools and then convert the classroom

1

2 teachers so we can reduce class size.

3

4 The professional development that is  
5 occurring in the schools, the restructuring of the  
6 rosters, the preparation that the K to 5 schools  
7 need to make both on the capital and professional  
8 development side and the scheduling side, so that  
9 they can add sixth, seventh and eighth grade, we are  
10 not managing that inhouse. We are managing that  
11 through the Public Education Fund.

11

12 So these are just a couple of examples  
13 of where we are working with existing  
14 community-based organizations or not-for-profit  
15 groups to come in and manage major programs for us.

15

16 The academies, for example, are managing  
17 many of our new what we call neighborhood-based  
18 career education programs. Again, so where we have  
19 not been able to -- we don't want to reinvent the  
20 wheel, but these are some examples, and I could go  
21 into our partnership with the Red Cross and the  
22 creation of Red Cross clubs in our high schools, the  
23 Salvation Army, and our relationship with them. So  
24 we are partnering with anybody who has an  
25 infrastructure out there.

25

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Why don't you get us

1

2 a full package on that.

3 I just have a few last questions.

4 A representative from the District was  
5 here a couple weeks ago. We were involved in a big  
6 discussion about the scholarship program. We had a  
7 lot of that discussion earlier so I don't need to go  
8 back into that territory. I do want to thank you  
9 again for the black binder, again in contrast to the  
10 big white one. It see my good friend Michael Harris  
11 over there. I'm still trying to figure out how to  
12 work on this book. And I only mention him because I  
13 care about him so much.

14 But it is very helpful to have this  
15 at-a-glance sheet, which gives some very pertinent  
16 information regarding the District. I would like to  
17 encourage you to make sure that as you update that  
18 you get a copy to the City's secretary of education.  
19 We went through a rather painful experience just a  
20 couple weeks ago trying to figure out how many  
21 students actually went to public school, and so in  
22 that regard what I wanted to ask you is: Do you  
23 have up-to-date information on statistics for  
24 graduation of twelfth grade students and college  
25 attendance, average SAT scores, that kind of

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information? Who keeps track of that?

MR. WILLIAMS: We do have some information. Obviously we can retrieve the PSAT and SAT scores for the past three to four school years. We can definitely get that information. The District did not have --

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That would be helpful. And could you chart them out year by year so we can see what the trends are?

MR. WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

MR. VALLAS: The District prior to two years ago was not tracking its college graduates.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How come?

MR. VALLAS: We have begun to track, but I can't go back three, four, five years and really give you with any degree of accuracy the percentage of students who enrolled in college or, for that matter, remain in college for four years.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: At this point -- and I'm glad that you are going to be doing that -- as almost a separate publication, as Councilwoman Blackwell mentioned at the graduations that she attended and many of us will be going to different ceremonies over the next month or so, it seems to

1  
2 me, again, because there are a lot of people who  
3 like to talk about public education who may not  
4 actually know a great deal about public education,  
5 but that has never stopped them, this kind of  
6 information, which, unless you go to every  
7 graduation, you would never be able to figure out  
8 what is going on, and the students go and then the  
9 information actually dissipates into the air, it  
10 might be actually helpful for people who care about  
11 a public education to get -- almost if the District  
12 would put out some kind of -- I don't want to call  
13 it a report card. That's about the last thing that  
14 a high school senior wants to see, but how many  
15 people graduated, how many went to college, the  
16 breadth and wealth of the various schools that they  
17 go to, the kind of information that you hear at a  
18 graduation where we had 400 graduates, their total  
19 amount of financial aid was \$8 billion or whatever  
20 the real number is.

21                   And if you did it across the system --  
22 and I think it has really been a challenge. You  
23 obviously are able to articulate at about 78 RPM  
24 anything that anyone would want to know about the  
25 District, but for those who probably listen a little

1  
2 slower, I think that the District's ability to  
3 really communicate a message of what is going on in  
4 the schools, the progress that kids are making, that  
5 many kids actually do graduate, many do go on to  
6 college, some go to the finest colleges and  
7 universities in the United States, if not in other  
8 parts of the world, and, again, unless you are at  
9 that particular graduation to hear about Jane or Joe  
10 or whomever, you would never know it.

11           And so whether it is during the summer  
12 or at least by the fall when people are thinking  
13 about schools again, some kind of report as to what  
14 our students have done and what they have  
15 accomplished in an aggregate, I think tells a very  
16 different story than what most people would know.

17           MR. VALLAS: Full agreement. I agree  
18 with you a hundred percent. It should have been  
19 done many, many years ago.

20           Let me point out that the SRC, and not  
21 to get ahead of the SRC, has laid out a number of  
22 categories that -- they have set out a number of  
23 goals for the District and they want the data  
24 reported in a manner that is consistent with those  
25 goals and objectives, and they focus on literacy,

1  
2 academic achievement, number of students in honors  
3 and events placement courses, percentage of students  
4 graduating going on to college. The categories  
5 include equity because early on you asked a question  
6 about music teachers and art teachers. In other  
7 words, they directed us to develop an equity  
8 template that looks at class sizes, counseling  
9 ratios, et cetera, so literally every school will  
10 have an equity report card and you would be able to  
11 go to that school and say, "Do they have a gym  
12 teacher or music teacher? Do they have an honors  
13 and advanced placement course?"

14                   These measures that matter, to refer to  
15 the list, also include safety and capital. So our  
16 mandate this year is to present an  
17 end-of-the-school-year report that lays out baseline  
18 data according to those measures. So I think when  
19 you see it, I think you will be pleased because it  
20 really does in principal what you have been  
21 requesting, and it is long overdue.

22                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Great.

23                   Two last issues: Safety in the  
24 buildings. There was a -- we went through a process  
25 a couple of years ago. We eventually figured out, I

1  
2 think, what we wanted to do and ended up on the same  
3 side of the issue with significant leadership by my  
4 colleague Councilman Mariano, chair of the L & I  
5 committee. We passed legislation in this Council  
6 with regard to an annual inspection of school  
7 buildings which some thought was an incredibly  
8 onerous and burdensome process or procedure. Many  
9 of us felt that it was something that went to the  
10 heart of ensuring to parents that our buildings were  
11 safe for their children.

12                   Can you give us an update on what's  
13 happened in the, I think, two years since we passed  
14 that bill?

15                   MR. VALLAS: Since the bill passed, we  
16 have completed 65 percent of the identified  
17 violations. An additional 25 percent are in the  
18 process of being corrected and there is a remaining  
19 10 percent that have not been completed.

20                   You know, all told, while we would like  
21 to have gotten them done faster, I think the fact  
22 that in such a short period of time we are close to  
23 90 percent of the way complete on fulfilling that  
24 mandate, I think is a testimony to Karen Burke and  
25 her very capable, very able staff.

1

2                   We anticipate by the end of the summer  
3 every single violation will have been corrected and  
4 then, like its investment in our new curriculum  
5 models, you make that heavy investment up front, but  
6 then just a modest amount of money will allow us to  
7 maintain.

8                   So, hopefully, once we have corrected  
9 everything -- and, once again, I think we are months  
10 away from completing everything -- we will have --  
11 then it will just be a matter of us never allowing  
12 us to get into that serious situation again.

13                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is there a full  
14 report that could be made available to the members  
15 with an explanation of the kind of information that  
16 you just shared?

17                   MR. VALLAS: Yes, there is. In fact, it  
18 is by category and it is by building. So we will be  
19 able to identify what we did in each of the  
20 individual buildings.

21                   COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That would be  
22 helpful.

23                   Lastly, I know there has been some  
24 concern that when either the preliminary report or  
25 it could have been the final report from a couple

1  
2 months ago came out, there were some attachments or  
3 a transmittal letter that seemed to indicate that  
4 some portions of the legislation were not  
5 necessarily going to be implemented, that someone  
6 else had other ideas about how things were going to  
7 be communicated or how things were going to be done.  
8 Have those issues be resolved?

9 MR. VALLAS: Yeah, I think so. My  
10 mandate and Karen's mandate has been get everything  
11 fixed and not debate whether or not this thing falls  
12 into the category. We will fix everything because I  
13 think -- first of all, I want to compliment the  
14 Council because I think the mandate was long overdue  
15 and we can now safely say it was like the drinking  
16 water mandate. A lot of people were debating  
17 whether or not, you know, the EPA had overstepped  
18 its bounds and whether or not these were really  
19 serious problems. Now we can say in all of our  
20 schools there is fresh drinking water. We have to  
21 get all of the fountains in all of the schools to  
22 that level.

23 It is the same thing with these repairs.  
24 So we do not take an issue with the repairs, and, if  
25 you recall, when the ordinance was going through, we

1  
2 did not oppose the ordinance. Now we are 90 percent  
3 of the way complete, and I think the public will  
4 have a lot more confidence in the quality of the  
5 buildings once we are a hundred percent of the way  
6 there.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many school  
8 buildings do we have?

9 MR. VALLAS: 330 buildings, 264 schools  
10 excluding the charters, which bring us to about 300  
11 schools, but we have 330 public school buildings.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: About how many of  
13 them are actual school buildings where students are  
14 every day? Is it 264?

15 MR. VALLAS: We occupy about -- there  
16 are 264 schools. Some have more than one building.  
17 So there are 264 schools.

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many charter  
19 schools?

20 MR. VALLAS: I think there are 48 now.  
21 With the three additions, up to 48.

22 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

23 So 264 and 48 is 312, and you are saying  
24 that there are 330. So there are 18 other school  
25 buildings that may be connected to some other

1  
2 buildings; is that what it is?

3 MR. VALLAS: Yes, and in the 330  
4 buildings I wasn't counting the charter schools.  
5 Those were 264 schools, 330 school buildings. Those  
6 would include gyms, annexes, additions, little red  
7 schoolhouses, Bartram branches. Like Bartram is one  
8 school and it has four branches, so that would  
9 include the Lankenaus that are part of Germantown  
10 and the Randolphs that are part of Dobbins.

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So if we take -- I  
12 don't want to have an argument about the numbers.  
13 330 buildings plus 48 charters; 378 school  
14 buildings.

15 MR. VALLAS: Yes.

16 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, who is  
17 responsible at the building for general safety  
18 issues, maintenance, many of these schools naturally  
19 have heating and air-conditioning systems.

20 MR. VALLAS: The engineer.

21 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do any of the  
22 schools have air-conditioning?

23 MR. VALLAS: About a hundred are  
24 air-conditioned. We are making progress there.

25 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand. I

1  
2 understand.

3 MR. VALLAS: But the engineer has  
4 principal responsibility. Obviously the principal  
5 is in charge of everything, but the engineer has  
6 that on-the-job responsibility.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How many engineers  
8 do we have?

9 MS. BURKE: We are budgeted for  
10 approximately 514; however, we have 47 vacancies.  
11 Part of the vacancies are made up by an apprentice  
12 class.

13 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So you have 467  
14 filled?

15 MS. BURKE: That would be correct.

16 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Where do the  
17 apprentices come from?

18 MS. BURKE: For the most part, the  
19 apprentices have been drawn from the cleaning ranks  
20 out there. We have a cleaning classification called  
21 a cleaning leader. Those positions several years  
22 ago were red circled; that is, their wages were not  
23 allowed to increase because the District was  
24 reconfiguring its cleaning staff. However, they  
25 made available to people in the cleaning leader

1  
2 title the ability to go into the apprentice classes.  
3 So, in essence, we have been creating our own  
4 building engineers through, I think, great training  
5 inhouse of people who already worked for the  
6 District.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Hold on for a  
8 second.

9 Is there a license or certification you  
10 have to have to be a building engineer?

11 MS. BURKE: Yes, sir, you are required  
12 to have a license. It is a City license.

13 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: A City license? You  
14 don't have to be like a certified engineer or have  
15 a --

16 MS. BURKE: Class A engineer's license.

17 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Class A engineer's  
18 license. This is based on a test that the City  
19 gives?

20 MS. BURKE: Yes, sir.

21 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Are all 467 of your  
22 filled positions -- do they all have a license,  
23 engineer's license.

24 MS. BURKE: Yes, excluding, of course,  
25 apprentices who have not sat for that license.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And these

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individuals are responsible for major systems in the

4

buildings.

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MS. BURKE: Yes, they are. Well,

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they're responsible to the extent of the monitoring

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and preventive maintenance that they can do within

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their purview, so they are overseeing the heating

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system, if you will, but when repairs are needed of

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a major way, that goes to a centralized maintenance

11

mechanics system.

12

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Are there any

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buildings that don't have an engineer?

14

MS. BURKE: No, I think they are all

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covered and some with multiple engineers if they are

16

a high school.

17

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You have 514

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positions, 47 vacancies, 467 that are filled and

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with your vacancies some are being covered by

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cleaning leaders who are going to apprentice class;

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is that it?

22

MS. BURKE: No. By training an

23

apprentice has to be accompanied by a licensed

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engineer, so it isn't as if you take an apprentice

25

and say, "Here. The school is yours."

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2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So you are saying  
3 there are no apprentices that work by themselves?

4 MS. BURKE: I'm assuming there are not.  
5 There could be.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: This is not an area  
7 that I think you want to assume.

8 MS. BURKE: I'm just jumping in here,  
9 but I will have to check for you. They should not  
10 be working for themselves.

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Do these folks work  
12 for you?

13 MS. BURKE: Yes, sir.

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You said they should  
15 not be working by themselves. How do we know that  
16 they are not working by themselves?

17 MS. BURKE: I'm going to ask that for  
18 you. They are apprentices until they have passed  
19 their exam.

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How long do you act  
21 in an apprentice capacity?

22 MS. BURKE: I think it is three years.  
23 Yes, three years.

24 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And tell me the  
25 difference between high-pressure and low-pressure

1  
2 systems in buildings?

3 MS. BURKE: We don't have any  
4 high-pressure systems. Those were converted some  
5 time ago.

6 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Does ever building  
7 have to have a licensed engineer?

8 MS. BURKE: They do not, sir. They do  
9 not have to have a licensed engineer. I asked the  
10 law department on that. You will need engineering  
11 services on some of these buildings, but the  
12 requirement that someone sit in the building as a  
13 licensed engineer eight hours a day and so forth is  
14 not a requirement.

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Has it ever been?

16 MS. BURKE: Not to my knowledge.

17 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So you are saying  
18 the engineers are not at the building all day?

19 MS. BURKE: I'm saying -- I am saying  
20 that they would not have to be. For example, you  
21 could have --

22 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, are they  
23 presently?

24 MS. BURKE: Yes, presently we have an  
25 assignment that way, but you could have a rotating

1

2 assignment on engineering.

3

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What happens if  
4 something happens at the building and the engineer  
5 is not there?

6

MS. BURKE: We have relief engineers  
7 throughout the system. We have a central number.  
8 We have other engineers, and actually we have an  
9 adequate number of engineers.

10

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I hear what you are  
11 saying, but I'm also hearing something that you are  
12 not exactly saying because it sounds like you are  
13 going to a new phase at some point in time. You  
14 have been very careful to say they don't have to be  
15 there.

16

MS. BURKE: First of all, I don't want  
17 anybody taking this that we are hedging some kind of  
18 new assignment system on there. What I'm saying is  
19 if the question is legally must they be within the  
20 building, the answer is no.

21

MR. VALLAS: Let me point out that as we  
22 move forward and we build little branch high schools  
23 with 250, 300, 400 kids, you might have an engineer  
24 that could serve both of those buildings. The  
25 bottom line is you work within an existing budget,

1  
2 you have to spend your money efficiently. You don't  
3 need a full-time engineer in a building with 250  
4 kids every day of the school year. That does not  
5 mean that we are planning on doing something, but  
6 the bottom line is we certainly retain the option,  
7 particularly as schools get smaller.

8           Also, I will tell you nationally, if you  
9 look at some of the big cities, you know, if you go  
10 to San Diego and you look at Chicago and you look  
11 at, for that matter, Pittsburgh and some of these  
12 others, you don't always have one engineer in that  
13 building all day. So, again, we are not planning a  
14 change in policy, but we certainly retain the option  
15 of having an engineer serve more than one building,  
16 particularly in cases where we have two or three or  
17 four of these very little, tiny schools where we  
18 have maybe 250 to 300 to 350 kids, and an engineer  
19 can easily cover both buildings, particularly since  
20 we no longer have these high-pressure boilers.

21           So it is just a question of using our  
22 resources in the most cost-efficient manner.

23           COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand the use  
24 of the resources. You know, I'm trying to keep  
25 track of the money. I guess my concern is it is

1  
2 really back to the safety issue. I mean if I -- I  
3 don't -- obviously anything could happen in a  
4 school, and I understand on the one hand you said  
5 you don't have the high-pressure systems, but I mean  
6 there is at least, put the air-conditioning aside, I  
7 mean, most of the schools have boilers for heating?

8 MS. BURKE: Yes, sir.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And they have to be  
10 set or adjusted or something has to happen to them?

11 MS. BURKE: Yes.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is that on a daily  
13 basis?

14 MS. BURKE: Could be.

15 There are also systems out there -- if  
16 you were going to build, you would build as smart as  
17 you could to put in boiler and heating systems that  
18 could have remote reads on them where you could set  
19 them remotely.

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that,  
21 but unless you are really going to borrow about \$20  
22 billion you probably won't be remaking all of the  
23 schools, so, I mean, when a parent sends their kid  
24 to school, if it's one of the smaller schools, now  
25 you are telling me that there is not necessarily

1  
2 going to be someone at that building to make sure  
3 that everything is in place correctly?

4 MR. VALLAS: First of all, you don't  
5 need somebody in that small building every day of  
6 the school year or, for that matter, every hour of  
7 every day of the school year because when you have  
8 engineers -- if you have an engineer that is going  
9 to serve more than one or two of these small  
10 buildings, you would expect them to visit the  
11 building, but just wouldn't camp out most of the  
12 time because there is just not a lot of  
13 responsibilities for them to do.

14 The question is, is the lack of an  
15 engineer in a small building every hour of the  
16 school day every day of the school year putting the  
17 kids at risk. The answer is absolutely no. This is  
18 not something that is unique. I think this School  
19 District has been slow to come to the realization  
20 that you don't have to have a fixed, full-time  
21 person in every site, particularly as we move  
22 towards a much -- a school district with much  
23 smaller schools. The sharing of engineers may be  
24 something that we may want to retain the option of.  
25 And, again, it wouldn't affect a lot of schools.

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COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Is there some minimum number of engineers that the system will always need?

MR. VALLAS: Yeah.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Just for safety purposes?

MR. VALLAS: Yeah.

MS. BURKE: Well, for safety and even more so for the maintenance of some of the equipment that you have in there and seeing that it runs appropriately because it is a utility issue as well.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right.

MR. VALLAS: I will tell you this though: We will probably spend upwards of \$20 million on new boilers. Every major renovation or most of them will also include obviously renovations that impact the engineering responsibilities and obviously any new school built, whether it is an elementary or high school, will be state of the art.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Understand my sensitivity here. I understand from a management standpoint you may not necessarily want or need a person of that high expertise to sit in the building every day for every hour that it is open. On the

1  
2 other hand, you can cut back so much that between  
3 the things that need to be done daily and management  
4 of the utilities and the like, you could hurt  
5 yourself.

6 Third, you know, we presently have --  
7 and we don't have to go into all the details and  
8 there is no assignment of any issue here, but I have  
9 had the experience that at the Barry schools I think  
10 the boiler either flared up or blew up, something  
11 happened to it, and as a result we had no more  
12 school at that location.

13 I will put aside any of my parental  
14 concerns with regard to the schools and just stay at  
15 a safety issue.

16 Are there engineers at the charter  
17 schools?

18 MR. VALLAS: You know, I'm not sure. I  
19 don't think all the charter schools have a  
20 full-time, fully deployed engineer. I think the  
21 mandate is -- Jimmy, do you know? I don't know  
22 right off the top of my head.

23 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Why would a charter  
24 school be dealt with differently in this particular  
25 instance than a regular public school?

1

2 MR. LEWIS: Councilman, I don't know if  
3 you go to the Archdioceses schools, charter schools  
4 or public schools. You don't necessarily need a  
5 licensed engineer there. Some of your heating  
6 systems are, frankly, just like you have at home  
7 with a hot air furnace. A lot of our little  
8 schoolhouses are hot air ventilation and  
9 air-conditioning.

10 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that,  
11 and if we had the Archdiocese in, I might be asking  
12 them. But for the moment I don't have them here; I  
13 have you here.

14 MR. VALLAS: I don't think the charters  
15 are subject to the same mandate -- I can get you an  
16 answer on that -- that the public schools are. For  
17 example, the charter schools --

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Charter schools are  
19 public schools.

20 MR. VALLAS: The charter law exempts  
21 them from a lot of the mandates that public schools  
22 are subjected to.

23 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that.

24 MR. VALLAS: For example, teacher  
25 certification. They only have to have 75 percent of

1  
2 their teachers certified.

3 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I understand that,  
4 but this is a building safety issue that should be  
5 across the District.

6 MR. VALLAS: I will get you an answer on  
7 that.

8 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Lastly, have there  
9 been layoffs with regard to maintenance staff at the  
10 buildings, school buildings?

11 MS. BURKE: There have not. What we  
12 did, sir, is we converted our positions to  
13 eight-hour positions. In the past the District had  
14 been staffed with a number of five-hour daily  
15 positions, and we believe that we want full-time  
16 cleaners in our buildings, so there has been a  
17 conversion to that.

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Have any people lost  
19 employment as a result of the conversion?

20 MS. BURKE: There has been no loss of  
21 employment now; however, we do have some five-hour  
22 employees, if you will, that have not converted to  
23 those positions, and they may be an excess.

24 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That was the most  
25 excellent explanation of what I think -- first they

1  
2 didn't convert to the thing and then they -- I mean,  
3 are they working or are they not working?

4 MR. VALLAS: Through attrition we will  
5 trade out certain positions, but we have not laid  
6 anybody off. And one of the reasons that the School  
7 District has been managed so inefficiently is  
8 because it was staffed with five-hour positions as  
9 opposed to eight-hour positions because we were  
10 paying more for maintenance and custodial work, and  
11 the bottom line is that these budgets are not  
12 balanced magically. They are balanced because we  
13 have to make tough decisions.

14 So we have not laid off any maintenance  
15 staff, but we have through attrition converted from  
16 five-hour positions to eight-hour positions, and  
17 that means the net number of individuals working in  
18 the schools has declined through attrition, not  
19 through layoffs, but now at least we have a work  
20 force and we have people working eight hours as  
21 opposed to five hours.

22 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Are they covering  
23 the same amount of area or job responsibility, the  
24 converted eight-hour people as compared to the  
25 five-hour?

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MS. BURKE: The square footage?

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: The whole building inside/outside, do they have the same responsibility?

MS. BURKE: Of course we are under discussion with 1201 on some job change parameters, but I would point out too that every step that we take is compared to national statistics on cleaning and the square footage cleaned in the district per worker is somewhat lower than it is nationally, meaning nationally you would go and find per worker something like 25,700 square feet and we are below at 24,000 in aggregate numbers.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. But you are going through a process on that?

MS. BURKE: Yes.

COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I would like to leave that where it is.

This is my last question: About 10 or 12 years ago the City through its financial situation and with the assistance of the state created, at least for us, this new thing called a five-year financial plan, and I think the District in its documents usually gives us about a five-year

1  
2 layout on the finances. What I would like to ask  
3 you, and I'm sure you have probably done this,  
4 although I have not seen it publicly, is there a  
5 five-year educational improvement or educational  
6 achievement plan that lays out in terms of your  
7 vision and the SRC the kinds of outcomes and  
8 progress and bench marks that we want to see  
9 children achieve?

10 Let me take that back. That we want  
11 to -- because that will take us into old language  
12 that will make people's faces red.

13 Just outcomes educationally,  
14 managementwise as well as the financials of  
15 the District. Is there a five-year education plan?

16 MR. VALLAS: Yes, there is, and the SRC  
17 will be making that public shortly.

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That was just a  
19 straight-up question I just made up at my desk.

20 MR. VALLAS: The answer is yes, there is  
21 a five-year plan with specific goals as set by the  
22 SRC.

23 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I would like to have  
24 Lee Whitaker and Hugh Allen up to the table, please.

25 (Laughter.)

1

2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I would like to ask  
3 them about the office -- that's fine. You know, it  
4 is like that commercial on television. Ask Paul  
5 Vallas a question and ask Lee and Hugh. It is just  
6 priceless. So I will leave it at that.

7 I am finished, Mr. Chairman.

8 MR. MCPHERSON: Councilman Mariano.

9 MR. MARIANO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

10 Back to the boiler questions, I might  
11 have missed some of this, so forgive me. How many  
12 high-pressure boilers are left, Karen?

13 MS. BURKE: None.

14 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: So you don't need  
15 an engineer at any of these buildings?

16 MS. BURKE: Not for that purpose.

17 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: So there is none of  
18 those left.

19 The Councilman was asking you questions  
20 about apprentices. Let's bring this thing to a  
21 simple term. We have a school somewhere, a small  
22 school, and it is not a high-pressure boiler, so  
23 someone could be there maybe in the morning to check  
24 it out, go somewhere, and come back, go to another  
25 school. He or she gets in her car and rides to

1  
2 another school close to there, or they go from North  
3 Philly to Southwest Philly?

4 MS. BURKE: I have seen it work --  
5 certainly it hasn't been tried in Philadelphia, but,  
6 for example, you could group buildings under a  
7 certain square footage. Let's just say it is under  
8 50,000 square feet, 30,000 square street. Nobody is  
9 quibbling with the larger size building and the  
10 presence of a building engineer being there.  
11 Incidentally, they are some of our finest workers  
12 out there, so we're not implying anything on that,  
13 but we have seen systems where you have gone to the  
14 smaller square footage buildings.

15 I start in the morning very early. I go  
16 to the first building and it is fine. I go on to  
17 the second building, yada, yada, stay the day at the  
18 final building.

19 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: For instance, the  
20 oldest public school that I'm familiar with is  
21 Francis Hopperson School. I don't know. That is  
22 near my house and it has been there forever, and I  
23 didn't go there, but I felt like I did because I was  
24 in the school yard most of my life, but there was a  
25 guy there all the time growing up and into my teens

1  
2 and into my twenties, thirties, forties, all the way  
3 through. And now there is probably -- that's not a  
4 high-pressure boiler anymore, right? And is that a  
5 big school or a small school?

6 MS. BURKE: Medium.

7 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: So he could be  
8 there three or four hours and maybe go to  
9 Feltonville for a while and hopefully not stop at  
10 the bar on the way?

11 (Laughter.)

12 MS. BURKE: Yes. I would say too that  
13 you have to kind of look at the talents of an  
14 engineer and what we expect beyond the heating  
15 systems. These are big schools, a number of them  
16 with grounds, lighting systems, some ceiling tiles  
17 out there, so a school is a big job out there, and I  
18 think it is more kind of case by case. The bigger  
19 the school, the obvious the presence helps.

20 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: When you say a  
21 lighting system and ceiling tiles, I mean what is  
22 the worst that could happen that an engineer  
23 couldn't handle? The electricity goes off and he  
24 finds out what is happening and it is either inside  
25 or outside the building. He is not an electrician,

1  
2 so he just calls someone and the District has an  
3 electrician has an electrician that would go up  
4 there?

5 MS. BURKE: Yes.

6 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: And say the main  
7 blew or whatever?

8 MS. BURKE: I should point out too that  
9 we also have a contingent of relief engineers out  
10 there, and then we have a manager, facility area  
11 coordinators who all hold licenses.

12 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: What does Jimmy  
13 Lewis do? I'm trying to figure that out.

14 (Laughter.)

15 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: Can I call him at  
16 2:00 in the morning?

17 MR. VALLAS: Nothing until today.

18 (Laughter.)

19 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: I have his cell  
20 phone number.

21 MS. BURKE: Actually he works night and  
22 day.

23 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: One of my main  
24 concerns -- and this is the last thing I will ask  
25 you -- because I was really intrigued with what the

1  
2 Councilman was asking you because right away you  
3 want to think that we probably can't handle whatever  
4 is going to happen, and it is probably the opposite;  
5 you probably can handle everything within an hour or  
6 so.

7                   But the apprentice thing really concerns  
8 me. Is there a case where someone -- you know, I  
9 was an apprentice, but I wasn't an apprentice  
10 engineer, so I don't know. I have an idea what they  
11 do. I'm not quite sure. But I wouldn't want to  
12 have an apprentice, being a journeyman electrician,  
13 and seeing an apprentice electrician come with the  
14 responsibility for life, safety issues. That  
15 doesn't happen, right?

16                   MR. LEWIS: Councilman, I don't think if  
17 you go anywhere in our buildings between the months  
18 of October and April that these schools are not  
19 manned with licensed engineers. These schools are  
20 65 years or older, and we keep them safe and we keep  
21 them running. I think our guys from Local 1201 do a  
22 great job.

23                   COUNCILMAN MARIANO: When you do these  
24 new buildings, they will probably be where you can  
25 monitor them from a central location as far as all

1  
2 of the air-conditioning, heating?

3 MR. LEWIS: Right.

4 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: They will be  
5 air-conditioned, right?

6 MR. VALLAS: Yes, all of them, and in  
7 the rehabs, the major rehabs, they will be  
8 air-conditioned.

9 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: So you will be able  
10 to monitor that from a central location.

11 MS. BURKE: You could.

12 COUNCILMAN MARIANO: I don't know where  
13 that is, but you will do that maybe.

14 And I suppose by then you will have the  
15 whole School District in a little office up the  
16 street there. But that's what is going to happen.

17 MR. VALLAS: They will be modern  
18 buildings and efficient, and the whole objective is  
19 to build a building that is very environmentally and  
20 financially efficient.

21 MS. BURKE: That is not to say too that  
22 your engineers don't need the opportunity of more  
23 class work on these certainly computerized, more  
24 sophisticated tools, and we sense that that is the  
25 future.

1

2                   COUNCILMAN MARIANO: Again, this is my  
3 last, last question. Is there anyone that would  
4 graduate, say, from a public high school in  
5 Philadelphia, go to maybe one of the technical  
6 schools here and out-of-school work program and  
7 comes back to work in the School District? Is there  
8 anything as far as the engineers go? We did have  
9 that in the past. Is that still going?

10                   MS. BURKE: It is funny you should  
11 mention that. That is not still going with the  
12 engineers. What is with the engineers, as I  
13 mentioned, is that we had cleaning leaders out there  
14 of sufficient numbers that wanted to be building  
15 engineers, and we were delighted.

16                   We are looking into -- actually, you  
17 asked if he does anything, the guy over here. We  
18 are looking into this summer at our apprenticeship  
19 programs for our students. We are looking at it in  
20 two trains of thought. One is your maintenance  
21 mechanic line of getting kids in young enough to see  
22 if they would like to go into the trades and then  
23 getting experience. Oddly enough, we are having  
24 trouble recruiting on the mechanic side. So kids  
25 are great for us.

1

2                   Down the pike as the cleaning leader  
3 ranks withdraw or the apprentice class goes down, we  
4 will once again be thinking about in that category  
5 kids working their way into apprentice jobs.

6                   The last job I had, that is how they  
7 attracted and trained all of their engineers, was  
8 out of their schools, and they all went into a  
9 three-year program.

10                   COUNCILMAN MARIANO: Thank you very  
11 much.

12                   No further questions, Mr. Chairman.

13                   MR. MCPHERSON: Does anybody else have  
14 any questions for this witness?

15                   Thank you.

16                   The next witness is Mr. Jordan from  
17 PCCY.

18                   MR. JORDAN: Good afternoon, City  
19 Council Members. My name is Aldustus Jordan,  
20 testifying on behalf of PCCY about the School  
21 District of Philadelphia's proposed budget for  
22 Fiscal Year 2005.

23                   In general, PCCY supports many of the  
24 District's proposed initiatives for the upcoming  
25 school year; however, we would like to voice a huge

1  
2 concern for the Council to consider before approving  
3 their budget.

4           In regards to the District's academic  
5 proposals, PCCY supports the proposed continuation  
6 of the extended day, summer school and beacon School  
7 programs. We have advocated for years for the  
8 expansion of programs that provide students with  
9 important academic and social supports.

10           We also strongly support the proposed  
11 expansion of advanced placement and honors courses  
12 to high school studies especially in neighborhood  
13 high schools. For far too long the District has  
14 institutionalized low expectations for some students  
15 by not offering to all children challenging courses  
16 and programs which are essential to preparing  
17 students for post-secondary education.

18           We are also pleased to note that the  
19 District has not proposed any additional changes in  
20 its early childhood programs and support the  
21 District's planned expansion of its Head Start  
22 offerings.

23           We continue to believe that all the  
24 early childhood programs make an important  
25 contribution towards improving children's school

1  
2 readiness. Over the long-term these programs will  
3 assist the District in achieving its goals for  
4 student achievement and compliance with the No Child  
5 Left Behind Act.

6           In regards to the proposed  
7 reorganization plans, PCCY supports the District's  
8 commitment to renovating decades-old school  
9 buildings, the building of new high schools and  
10 reducing the size of existing high schools.  
11 However, we strongly advocate for students, parents,  
12 and communities to have a meaningful role in the  
13 development of curriculum and programs at these  
14 schools.

15           In the area of safety and security, we  
16 support the District's plans to maintain the SMART  
17 program, the District's partnership with the  
18 Department of Human Services to expand the number of  
19 behavioral supports in schools and other initiatives  
20 aimed at reducing truancy. However, we have a  
21 number of concerns related to the expansion of  
22 alternative schools.

23           Number one, there has been no formal  
24 evaluation of the effectiveness of the existing  
25 alternative schools. Before the District expands a

1  
2 number of alternative school slots, it needs to make  
3 sure that students already assigned to these  
4 alternative locations are showing academic and  
5 behavioral improvements.

6           Number two, the District has done an  
7 inadequate job of monitoring and supporting students  
8 after they leave alternative settings and transition  
9 back into regular public schools. The School  
10 District must provide appropriate after-care and  
11 transition supports for these students as they  
12 navigate the reentry process into schools.

13           Finally, we support the District's  
14 commitment to achieving equity in every school so  
15 that all children have a fair chance to learn and  
16 excel. We support a number of the proposed  
17 initiatives to narrow the achievement gap including  
18 class size reduction in the early grades, new  
19 textbooks and materials, the creation of programs to  
20 encourage more parental involvement, increased  
21 professional development for teachers, and expansion  
22 of music and art programs.

23           However, we have grave concerns about  
24 the inequitable distribution of certified and  
25 experienced teachers across District schools.

1  
2 Despite the District's best effort to attract and  
3 retain high quality teachers for all children, the  
4 fact remains the schools with the highest  
5 concentration of poor minority students continue to  
6 be taught by the highest number of inexperienced and  
7 uncertified teachers.

8 PCCY strongly recommends that the  
9 District rectify this problem by providing  
10 significantly more supports and incentives to the  
11 teachers in the hardest-to-staff schools. This is a  
12 strategy that has worked in other big-city school  
13 districts such as New York, Charlotte-Mecklenburg  
14 and Baltimore. Those cities succeeded in boosting  
15 student achievement and increasing the number of  
16 certified and experienced teachers at the most  
17 challenging schools. These strategies they used  
18 should be adopted here in Philadelphia.

19 By creating an equitable learning  
20 environment, the District would demonstrate its  
21 commitment to the ideals of fairness and equal  
22 access embodied in the landmark Brown versus Board  
23 of Education decision of 1954.

24 Today, as we observe the 50th  
25 anniversary of the Brown decision, PCCY urges the

1

2 District to implement the often costly but essential  
3 initiatives that will give all students access to  
4 certified and well-supported teachers and the best  
5 possible opportunity to achieve success in school  
6 and in life. Thank you.

7

MR. MCPHERSON: Thank you.

8

This committee will stand in recess  
9 until 4:30 today.

10

(The hearing recessed at 2:10 p.m.)

11

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: This is  
3 the continued public hearing on the School  
4 District Bill.

5 MR. McPHERSON: 040259, 040260,  
6 040262.

7  
8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Our first  
9 witness.

10 MR. McPHERSON: William Mackey.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Mr.  
12 Mackey, please approach the witness table,  
13 identify yourself for the record, and  
14 proceed with your testimony.

15 Mr. Mackey, please identify yourself  
16 for the record and proceed with your  
17 testimony.

18 MR. MACKEY: Hi. I'm William  
19 Mackey, M-a-c-k-e-y, Executive Director,  
20 City-Wide Youth Agency. Good afternoon.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good  
22 afternoon.

23 MR. MACKEY: Okay. We'll be brief.  
24 I'm going to ask these three young people  
25 to say a few words, please. Thank you.

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2 MS. HARRIS: Hello. My name is  
3 Natalie Harris, and I'm a senior at  
4 Multicultural Academy Charter School.

5 And I have been involved with  
6 City-Wide for four years. And City-Wide is  
7 a great program. We do many different  
8 community service activities.

9 We are in different divisions, such  
10 as computers, arts and culture, arts;  
11 taking all the stuff like that. And we do  
12 community service activities such as walks  
13 like the A.I.D.S. walk; and we do, like,  
14 cleaning up and stuff.

15 Is anybody listening? Okay.

16 And City-Wide is a great program  
17 because my sisters... I have two sisters  
18 who went to City-Wide. And one graduated  
19 from Millersville, like, two weeks ago; and  
20 one is attending Albright College. And  
21 she's a sophomore there. And they really  
22 helped -- City-Wide really helped them get  
23 through college. They gave them the right  
24 tools to get there.

25 And I'm going to attend Arcadia

1 Whole - 5/17/04 - Bills 040259, 040260, 040262  
2 University in the fall. And they helped  
3 me, like, giving me scholarships; and just,  
4 like, giving me schools -- talking to me,  
5 giving me counsel on what I should do.

6 And anybody that closed City-Wide  
7 down is crazy, because City-Wide is a great  
8 program. So, you should just continue to  
9 give us funds to let it go on, to help  
10 other youth in the City.

11 Thank you.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

13 Our next witness, please.

14 MR. HARDY: Hi. Yes. My name is  
15 Kashif Hardy. And I'm currently the  
16 Community Service Coordinator of City-Wide  
17 Youth Agency.

18 I came up through the program. Been  
19 in the program for nine years. And it  
20 helped keep me off the street. Taught me  
21 great people skills, business skills.

22 And I currently help youth go out  
23 into the City to do cleanups, lots --  
24 lots -- fix up lots, architectural designs.

25 And it's just the funding for

1 Whole - 5/17/04 - Bills 040259, 040260, 040262  
2 City-Wide is not like it used to be. So,  
3 we just need more funds for us and other  
4 after-school programs throughout the City.  
5 We really need funds.

6 And we would like for City Council  
7 to put us under their budget, if it's  
8 possible, because we just need more funds  
9 so we can expand our program.

10 We have a miniature golf course. We  
11 currently need funds for that. We just  
12 need funds for various things that we're  
13 doing, so we can continue on and just grow  
14 bigger.

15 Thank you.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

17 Next witness.

18 MR. ROGERS: My name is Anthony  
19 Rogers. I'm currently a student at  
20 City-Wide Youth Agency. I attend William  
21 Penn High School. I'm in freshman year.

22 And if it wasn't for City-Wide, I  
23 don't know what I'd be doing right now.  
24 I'd probably be running the streets or  
25 something.

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2 City-Wide taught me a lot, such as  
3 leadership, and business, stuff like that.  
4 And City-Wide just needs funds for events  
5 and everything, because without events  
6 City-Wide would not be as fun as it is.

7 MR. MACKEY: Hi. Good evening.

8 Yes, ma'am.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Go ahead.

10 MR. MACKEY: In our close, I just  
11 want to say that, you know, for the last 12  
12 years we have had the pleasure of coming  
13 before City Council and bringing some of  
14 our young people.

15 This is some of our young people  
16 from City-Wide who attend today. Will you  
17 please stand up.

18 (A number of youth complied with  
19 request.)

20 MR. MACKEY: And we're really proud  
21 of these young people because there's many  
22 other things they could be doing in the  
23 evening and/or Saturdays than coming.

24 So I really want to tell Council,  
25 thanks for giving us the time to present.

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2 But in the package, we have a fact sheet in  
3 here on a proposed plan that we have  
4 started talking to the City of Philadelphia  
5 School District about.

6 And that's about developing our  
7 charter school for many kinds of young  
8 people.

9 And I just want to say to the School  
10 District, this is a different School  
11 District today than we have seen in the  
12 presence... It's more accessible, they  
13 responsive. And I just want to say it's  
14 inclusion with them.

15 And I know times is hard around --  
16 in the City of Philadelphia and budget  
17 wise. But City-Wide Youth Agency never  
18 ever, ever been written into the City  
19 Council budget.

20 And I think, as times get hard, that  
21 groups that really produce the work need to  
22 be -- need to be included in the Council  
23 budget.

24 We doing the work. And many people  
25 have -- Many Council folks have come out to

1 Whole - 5/17/04 - Bills 040259, 040260, 040262  
2 witness our work. We have a full developed  
3 proposal to take out our miniature golf  
4 course at 10th and Cecil B. Moore and build  
5 our charter school with many other  
6 partners.

7 We just -- We just don't understand  
8 how we are not now --

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Mr.  
10 Mackey, I don't mean to interrupt you.

11 MR. MACKEY: Yes.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: But where  
13 do you presently get your funding from?

14 MR. MACKEY: Right now... Right now  
15 we receive three small grants. One is from  
16 the Mayor's Children Investment Strategy.  
17 We receiving a small grant from the  
18 Philadelphia Activity Fund, and a small  
19 grant from the Philadelphia Youth Net.

20 A couple years ago we were receiving  
21 funds from the state as well. We haven't  
22 received state funding right now. And I  
23 don't know if it's because the tug of war  
24 that's going on between this place and that  
25 place. And really, that's none of my

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2 business, but it is a concern.

3 I mean, this is the all-time low for  
4 funding at City-Wide. It hasn't never been  
5 like this since we started.

6 We started our year-round program in  
7 1992. And I want to the late Congressman  
8 Blackwell office, and things started  
9 happening for us.

10 I'm telling you now, it's some scary  
11 times up at City-Wide. It is scary times  
12 for us right now.

13 These tokens that it took us to come  
14 down here, the staff had to reach in their  
15 pocket to buy these tokens today. We never  
16 had times like this.

17 And so... And we still doing the  
18 work. We have a lot of young people still  
19 involved in the program, and it's hard  
20 times for us.

21 And I am speaking to our Council  
22 person about it, Councilman Clarke. But I  
23 think... You know, we receive kids from  
24 all over the City. And we need help.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Very well.

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2 Are there any questions or comments from  
3 members of the Committee?

4 We hear what you're saying, Mr.  
5 Mackey.

6 MR. MACKEY: Thank you;

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: You're  
8 welcome.

9 MR. MACKEY: My last statement is, I  
10 would ask this Council to please sit down  
11 with the Executive Branch and figure out a  
12 way to help us help our program going and  
13 our young people to keep maturing.

14 This is a young lady here... This  
15 is a third generation student of ours right  
16 here. This is a third generation student,  
17 right?

18 This one been with me for nine  
19 years. Right?

20 Charlita Hardy who was a staff --  
21 Stand up, Charlita. Charlita been with me  
22 forever. She's a staff, right?

23 Nicole, please stand up. Please  
24 stand up. She's been with us.

25 I mean, if I go down the line -- and

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2 I don't want to take up time -- that all  
3 these young people been with us. And we  
4 produce. It's no... We don't camouflage  
5 anything at City-Wide.

6 So I just want to say, thank you for  
7 your time. We appreciate it. And I just  
8 need full consideration.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you  
10 very much, Mr. Mackey.

11 MR. MACKEY: Have a good day.

12 And this is a good School District  
13 that we have today.

14 Thank you.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Just a  
16 minute, please.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Mr. Mackey,  
18 I just wanted to say thank you. It was a  
19 great banquet you had approximately a month  
20 ago, well attended by all.

21 We appreciate the job you do with  
22 and for the youth of our City.

23 MR. MACKEY: Councilwoman, I just  
24 want to say to you that if our Godfather  
25 was here, he would reach deep and make it

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2 happen. So I'm going to ask you to dig  
3 deep and help make it happen.

4 Thank you. Have a good day.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

6 Our next witness.

7 MR. McPHERSON: Kevin MacAfee.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good

9 afternoon. Kindly identify yourself for  
10 the record and proceed with your testimony.

11 MR. MacAFEE: Good afternoon.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good

13 afternoon.

14 MR. MacAFEE: Need a higher chair  
15 here. My name is Kevin MacAfee, Kevin Mark  
16 MacAfee. I'm a building engineer for the  
17 School District of Philadelphia with 21  
18 years of service.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Please  
20 proceed.

21 MR. MacAFEE: First of all, I'd like  
22 to say, while attending a Local 1201 union  
23 meeting on March 11, 2004, I obtained a  
24 preliminary copy of the School District of  
25 Philadelphia Employee Code of Ethics.

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2 During my 21 years of service with  
3 the School District, this is the first time  
4 a Code of Ethics policy has been adopted  
5 and implemented into the District.

6 A few years ago I had the  
7 opportunity to participate on a diversity  
8 committee to try to establish policy  
9 regarding inequitable labor practice within  
10 the District. However, our attempts were  
11 short lived.

12 Upon complete reading of the Code of  
13 Ethics document, I do not believe that it  
14 will fully address the present complexity  
15 of problems that exist within the School  
16 District of Philadelphia.

17 It appears systemic practice,  
18 relating to hiring, promotion, retention,  
19 training, testing and job posting are not  
20 done in a manner that is consistent with  
21 transparency, integrity, impartiality,  
22 respect, and public confidence.

23 Present practice continually  
24 promotes social discrimination and racial  
25 bias, which is deeply ingrained within the

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2 system.

3 To make you aware of situations that  
4 I can personally verify and support are,  
5 unfair hiring practice. This is done  
6 through social promotion.

7 It is a known fact throughout  
8 facilities and operation, your  
9 participation involving certain Anglo-Saxon  
10 organizations increases your chances of  
11 being promoted to middle and upper  
12 management positions.

13 While these actions have created  
14 such disparity and the lack of  
15 opportunities for African Americans, women,  
16 and other minorities, it has also lowered  
17 the chances for qualified, competing,  
18 experienced personnel to apply for these  
19 positions.

20 To validate my statement are as  
21 such: Currently out of 75 management  
22 positions, 65 positions are held by  
23 Caucasian men, 7 by African American men, 2  
24 by Caucasian female, and 1 by an Hispanic  
25 male.

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2 Caucasians are given an advantage  
3 when placed in an acting management  
4 position. They are allowed experience and  
5 test prep help before they apply and test  
6 for the permanent position, in preference  
7 to others applying for the same job.

8 This move gives a distinct advantage  
9 when competing for competitive career  
10 advancement.

11 Over the last few years, only one  
12 African American was placed in an acting  
13 management position. This individual  
14 served 11 months in that position and  
15 reverted to his former position.

16 Another individual affiliated with  
17 an Anglo-Saxon organization took his place.

18 Also, there were two other African  
19 American men who worked in management but  
20 left the system prematurely because they  
21 did not feel they received the same amount  
22 of support as Caucasian co-workers to  
23 produce an efficient job.

24 These acts are not uncommon  
25 throughout the Facilities and Operations

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2 Department of the School District of  
3 Philadelphia.

4 Just taking a closer look, the  
5 evidence will be very clear.

6 My request to City Council today is  
7 to seek help in assuring of the following:  
8 Please look into and study the matter  
9 diligently.

10 Document your specific findings.  
11 Prescribe set standards and practices,  
12 follow and govern, monitor and ensure  
13 implementations of a performance criteria  
14 that can be verified, all within meeting  
15 the necessary standards of state and  
16 federal laws.

17 I am sure there's not a Council  
18 member present who would continue to  
19 allocate additional funding to an  
20 organization or government agency which  
21 festers in blatant discrimination, without  
22 assuring corrective measures and practices  
23 be put into place.

24 Thank you for this opportunity to  
25 appear before City Council with my

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2 concerns, and earnestly anticipate a  
3 favorable outcome in the near future.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you  
5 so much.

6 There are any questions or comments  
7 from members of the Committee?

8 The Chair recognizes Councilman  
9 Ramos.

10 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thank you, Madam  
11 chair. And thank you, Mr. Kevin MacAfee,  
12 right? Am I pronouncing your name right?

13 MR. MacAFEE: MacAfee.

14 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I've had the  
15 opportunity over the years to see you in  
16 community meetings and meetings of the  
17 School District. And you have always  
18 spoken your mind.

19 Are you saying here that  
20 particularly African Americans are  
21 purposely left out of upward mobility  
22 management decisions in the School  
23 District?

24 MR. MacAFEE: Yes, I am.

25 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: And what have --

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2 What have you -- And you're still employed  
3 by the School District; is that correct?

4 MR. MacAFEE: Yes, I am.

5 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Can you talk to  
6 us a little bit more about what measures  
7 you have taken to address this concern of  
8 yours?

9 MR. MacAFEE: Well, I don't believe  
10 it's my job to take measures to address  
11 these concerns.

12 I'm doing a community service to  
13 bring this to the forefront to Council.  
14 And I have also -- But if you want to get  
15 into what I have personally done, even  
16 though it's not my job, I have spoke before  
17 the School Reform Commission on this issue.

18 Yes, I do appreciate the -- the door  
19 opening of Mr. Vallas, and in setting up  
20 meetings to discuss these issues and trying  
21 to correct them.

22 But as I explained to Mr. Vallas and  
23 the School Reform Commission at that time,  
24 I am not planning on stopping at that  
25 level. I will continue to speak about this

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2 issue until -- until drastic changes are  
3 taken place.

4 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: What kind of  
5 response have you gotten? I mean, you  
6 spoke before the SRC. And did they say  
7 they would conduct an investigation to see  
8 if your allegations were founded? I mean,  
9 has anything like that happened?

10 You're union. I know that you've  
11 been a member of 1201 for a while. I mean,  
12 has the union looked into this on your  
13 behalf as a member that feels that you've  
14 been denied, you know, promotions, and so  
15 forth?

16 MR. MacAFEE: Well, first of all,  
17 let me make it clear. I personally haven't  
18 been denied for promotion. I personally  
19 haven't.

20 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Or your peers?

21 MR. MacAFEE: I haven't sought  
22 promotion in management because of how this  
23 system have ran over my 21 years in the  
24 system.

25 I do not believe it gives a fair

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2 opportunities or support for African  
3 American in such jobs, and because of the  
4 way the jobs are attained.

5 Most of the jobs are attained  
6 through social involvement of ethnic groups  
7 or ethnic organizations.

8 This is done through -- through your  
9 associations with different people. You  
10 are hand-picked and placed in managerial  
11 positions.

12 This why the opportunity doesn't  
13 exist for African Americans to move into  
14 these positions, because most of these --  
15 most of these ethnic organizations aren't  
16 organizations that have African Americans  
17 as numbers.

18 They may have African Americans as  
19 honorary members. But to me, it just  
20 doesn't open up the door.

21 I believe it is -- it is manipulated  
22 to the extent where it continues to add  
23 such a shadow over the School District of  
24 Philadelphia; not just the School District  
25 of Philadelphia but also over the City of

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2 Philadelphia.

3 It's -- It's -- It's -- It's very  
4 much in comparison to -- to the contracts  
5 that were given to 96 percent white male  
6 within the City of Philadelphia.

7 So, this -- these actions are  
8 systemic within the City of Philadelphia.  
9 And I'm doing my community service by  
10 speaking up on these issues, and trying to  
11 put forth an effort in creating change.

12 It -- It -- It -- It is definitely  
13 needed within the School District of  
14 Philadelphia. We cannot continue to hire  
15 people based on social promotion.

16 The School District starts off its  
17 web site by saying, we are affirmative  
18 action employee. They are affirmative --  
19 affirmative. They affirm the action of  
20 nepotism. They affirm the action of  
21 patronage. They affirm the action of  
22 discrimination. So they are affirmative  
23 action employee.

24 But they have not affirmed the  
25 actions to allow African Americans to move

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2 up into such jobs.

3 And this is beginning to be such an  
4 issue with myself. And it should be an  
5 issue with City Council. It should be an  
6 issue with the Reform Commission. And it  
7 should be an issue with the state  
8 legislators, who will be my next step.

9 Because this issue must be dealt  
10 with, and it must be dealt with, you know,  
11 in a time manner that shows that change is  
12 coming about.

13 We cannot continue to live in a  
14 society that does not offer the  
15 opportunities to African Americans to  
16 advance or promote in jobs, African  
17 American or any minority.

18 You know, not just to mention in a  
19 managerial position, but let me give you  
20 some numbers. With these individuals,  
21 Caucasians are placed in these managerial  
22 positions that oversees probably about 75  
23 to 80 percent African American work force,  
24 you know.

25 So -- So, where is the disparity --

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2 You know, where is the equality there? You  
3 have a managerial system that is 75 percent  
4 Caucasian, and then you have a work force  
5 that is 75 percent African American. You  
6 know, the opportunity doesn't exist.

7 Not only that. Right now you  
8 probably have one female in the Maintenance  
9 Department. Okay. Out of about 350...  
10 Between 350 to 400 maintenance mechanics,  
11 so it doesn't open up opportunities for  
12 female.

13 It doesn't open up opportunities for  
14 Hispanics. You have one Hispanic in a  
15 supervisory positions, and you are very  
16 limited in Hispanics within the work force.

17 It doesn't open opportunities for  
18 Asians. You know, Facilities and Operation  
19 is a -- is a cancer that have created such  
20 blatant discrimination. And it needs to be  
21 dealt with.

22 You know, so that's the issue I'm  
23 on. And this is not an attempt for me to  
24 be placed or to receive a job. I am not  
25 here for personal gratification.

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2 I do not see myself looking to go  
3 into a managerial position because of the  
4 way the system have ran and because the  
5 system continue to run because of the  
6 blatant discrimination, the blatant racism  
7 that goes on within the system. That is  
8 not my objective here.

9 My objective here is to see and to  
10 seek change, and to put -- to put out in  
11 the public and to let the public know that  
12 this is a humiliation, not only for the  
13 sort of School District of Philadelphia,  
14 but it is a humiliation to this City, to  
15 this Commonwealth, and to this country.

16 You know, we talk about affirmative  
17 action, but I think people have lost sight  
18 of what affirmative action was for.

19 Over the years we have continued,  
20 have preferential treatment. So when  
21 people talk about affirmative action, I  
22 don't like to say affirmative action.

23 I like to say fair treatment, okay,  
24 instead of affirmative action, because like  
25 I said, we have had affirmative action.

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2 We've affirmed nepotism. We've affirmed  
3 patronage. We have affirmed cronyism.  
4 We've affirmed discrimination. So I don't  
5 even like to use the word affirmative  
6 action.

7 I want to see fair action. I want  
8 to see equal action, equal opportunities  
9 for African Americans and Latinos, and  
10 other minorities, for women to be able to  
11 move over into another area, other than  
12 having to be cleaning the school.

13 Why can't they pick up a tool? This  
14 is the only organization I know that  
15 doesn't open up uncommon jobs for women.  
16 You know, it's pathetic.

17 Over the years in the system, one  
18 female in the maintenance operation,  
19 maintenance department? One? You know?

20 And some of the women -- Some of the  
21 women that are cleaning in buildings,  
22 they're cleaning at late hours. Okay. So,  
23 they don't have the opportunity because  
24 even though it is put out there for them to  
25 move over to positions, because of the

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2 systemic cancer that exists within the  
3 system, it doesn't really open a door for  
4 opportunity for them to move over there.

5 And that department itself is about  
6 80 percent Caucasian. So it -- Not only  
7 does it limit the opportunity for -- for --  
8 for -- for -- for other groups to move in  
9 or gender to move in, it also limits the  
10 opportunity for ethnic -- different ethnics  
11 to move in.

12 And this is done because that's the  
13 most allocated amount of money that is  
14 given for overtime. So -- So, it's -- it's  
15 a cancer that must be taken out, it must be  
16 changed, and it must be changed as  
17 expediently as it possibly can.

18 It just can not -- And I stress -- I  
19 can not stress more, it can not continue to  
20 go on like this any longer.

21 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Sir, you  
22 mentioned -- Just one last question. You  
23 mentioned or made reference to ethnic  
24 organizations that promote non minorities.  
25 What do you mean by that, an outside

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2 organization recommends a promotion? I  
3 mean, who are these ethnic organizations  
4 that you refer to?

5 MR. MacAFEE: Well, you know, I'm  
6 not trying to get personal on... Let me  
7 say this --

8 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Are you saying  
9 that there's outside organizations that  
10 have a say on the promotions of people that  
11 are not minorities, and particularly in the  
12 maintenance and the building care aspect of  
13 the work that goes on in the School  
14 District?

15 MR. MacAFEE: Well, in a sense, yes,  
16 I am. But let me say this first. I  
17 personally --

18 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: So outside  
19 organization are having a say; is that what  
20 you're saying?

21 MR. MacAFEE: Yes. Let me say this.  
22 I personally --

23 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Are they social  
24 organizations, political organizations?

25 MR. MacAFEE: Social. I believe --

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2 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: What was your  
3 answer?

4 MR. MacAFEE: I said ethnic --  
5 social, ethic organizations.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Who are  
7 they? Who are they?

8 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I mean, give  
9 us --

10 MR. MacAFEE: Let me finish, and  
11 I'll explain.

12 I believe different ethnic  
13 organizations -- ethnic people need to be  
14 able to express themselves and be proud of  
15 their ethnicity. And there's no problem in  
16 forming such organizations.

17 And I will name them, such as the  
18 Emerald Society, The Knights of Columbus,  
19 The Sons of Italy.

20 You know, I have no personal problem  
21 or vendetta against these such  
22 organizations. I think it's an  
23 encouragement for different organizations  
24 to come together as a group and to try to  
25 promote the uplifting of their individual

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2 or ethnicity.

3 But my problem is, when these such  
4 organizations manipulate the system, where  
5 it does not open up the doors to African  
6 American, that's where I have the problem  
7 at.

8 I have the problem because there's  
9 no -- There's nothing wrong with being  
10 proud of your heritage. And I'm a firm  
11 believer. I am African American, and I am  
12 proud of who I am.

13 You know, as James Brown said, I'm  
14 black and I'm proud, you know. And there's  
15 nothing wrong with being proud of who you  
16 are.

17 But when you manipulate a system to  
18 the form of creating such disparities,  
19 where African Americans and other  
20 minorities aren't allowed to promote in  
21 certain areas, that's a problem. I have a  
22 problem with that. I have a problem with  
23 that. And that's what I mean by ethnic  
24 organizations.

25 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thank you, Madam

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2 President.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

4 Are there any other questions or  
5 comments from members of the Committee?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you  
8 very much.

9 Do we have anyone else to testify?

10 Do we have any other witness that would  
11 like to testify?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Seeing  
14 none, this Committee will stand in recess  
15 until tomorrow at 1 o'clock.

16 Thank you very much.

17 (Hearing concluded at 5:10 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the stenographic notes taken by us upon the public hearing of The Philadelphia City Council, taken on May 17, 2004, and that this is a true and correct transcript of same.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CYNTHIA A. WHYTE, RPR  
Notary Public

\_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID A. DEIK, RPR and  
Commissioner of Deeds

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