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COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

March 3, 2020

Start: 10:10 a.m.

Recess: 12:52 p.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: INEZ D. BARRON
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

LAURIE A. CUMBO
ALAN N. MAISEL
YDANIS A. RODRIGUEZ
ERIC A. ULRICH

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Matthew Sapienza

Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial
Officer at CUNY

Allen Lew

Senior Vice Chancellor for Facilities Planning,
Construction and Management at CUNY

Bruce Jacobs

Coalition of the Rockaways and Southeast Queens,
US Navy Veteran, 9/11 First Responder

Sakia Fletcher

SGA President of Medgar Evers College

Timothy Hunter

Chairperson of the CUNY University Senate, USS
And Student Trustee on the City University's
Board of Trustees

Melanie Kruvelis

Senior Manager of Policy and Advocacy at Young
Invincibles

Samer Hassan

Senior at Columbia University

Marcia Collier

Senior at City College

Duwayne Wright

Senior at Borough of Manhattan Community College

Lisa Nishimura

Senior at John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Annelies DeSong

Freshman at City College of New York

Santana Alvarado

Chairperson of the New York Public Interest
Research Group, NYPIRG Student Board of Directors
CUNY Hunter College Student

Deborah Bell

Executive Director of Professional Staff Congress

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good morning. I'm

Inez Barron and I am the Chair of the Committee on

Higher Education and we're gathered here today. I

want to welcome you to this hearing on the fiscal

2021 preliminary budget. The fiscal 2020 preliminary

Mayor's management report and the fiscal 2024

preliminary capital commitment plan for the City

University of New York. We are joined by Matthew

Sapienza, CUNY's Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief

Financial Officer and Allen Lew, who's the Senior

Vice Chancellor for Facilities, Planning and

Management and thank you for joining us today. And

just before we get started with the topic for today,

you know we are in women's herstory month so I just

wanted to share a brief bio about one of the people

whom I admire greatly and that is none other than

Mary McLeod Bethune, she was born in 1875, passed

away in 1955 and her parents had been formally

enslaved and she was the last... or one of the last of

17 children. Her mother worked to buy the land that

they had formally worked on and Mary McLeod Bethune

was able to pick 250 pounds of cotton each day by the

age of nine. She did leave North Carolina where she

had attended school and moved to Florida, if the... if you could try to fix this system, it's a little bit too much feedback, thank you. She moved to Florida and she took \$2.50 and established a school, it was the Daytona Beach Literary and Industrial School for training negro girls, and she started with five young ladies and her own son and that did evolve into Bethune Cookman College when it merged with Cookman College and it issued it's first degree in 1943. Mary McLeod Bethune was the founding President of the National Council of Negro Women, she was a member of the so-called black cabinet which advised President Roosevelt, she was the Vice President of the NAACP and she fought strenuously against the discrimination and the lynching that was prominent at that time and she fought for women's rights as well and she was the only woman of color at the founding conference of the United Nations in 1945. So I just wanted to highlight some of what she did, she was an educator, she was a humanitarian, she was an author, she was a statesman and she was an entrepreneur and just wanted to make mention of her accomplishments during this month of celebrating the great accomplishments of women. It has been my honor to sit as Chair of this Committee

1 since fiscal 19... 2015 and in those ten years and the
2 11 separate budget hearings I have made clear just
3 how important it is to me that we have an increase in
4 the attain... the retention and elevation of black
5 faculty, that we freeze tuitions hopefully being able
6 to roll it back to the point where there is no
7 tuition and that we have the... study the impacts, the
8 affordability and accessibility for students that we
9 provide more child care supports and that we increase
10 the base aid formula from the state. These issues are
11 still pertinent to me and to this Committee as we
12 wait to see what will come down from the state in its
13 enacted budget. CUNY is planning to increase
14 community college tuition; CUNY is planning to
15 increase community college tuition by two... by 320
16 dollars and that's including a new 120-dollar fee in
17 health and wellness fee this fall. This matter is
18 most distressing as the tuition increase will have a
19 compounding impact on our students who have limited
20 financial means and I want to know what conversations
21 CUNY has had with the administration to mitigate this
22 increase but before I get to those questions I want
23 to continue to discuss the budget from a broader
24 vantage point. Specifically, CUNY's fiscal 2021

preliminary budget of 1.2 billion dollars does not change much from its fiscal 2020 adopted budget. As mentioned, there are items in the state's 2021 executive budget that remain in question at this point of time such as the state share of support for early childcare services and the ASAP programming. The fiscal 2021 preliminary budget also does not include the council initiative support such as funding for the Peter Vallone scholarship or the University's development of programs. We will of course want to discuss all of these things today. The Council's approach to its preliminary budget hearing is to ensure that the city budget is fair, transparent and accountable to all New Yorkers. While efficiency which often times means cuts... while efficiency and performance have always... had been priorities of this body, today we plan to scrutinize the organization of the city budget more closely. For CUNY this will mean we want to have a conversation again about the limited number of units of appropriation used to describe vast areas of the university's spending particularly around the community colleges. We'll be taking a closer look at how CUNY organizes its 616 million capital commitment

plan and many city agencies, CUNY among them develop plans that commit only a fraction of that amount. CUNY has been planning more carefully with OMB and I'm pleased to state that their commitment rates have increased since fiscal 20... 2019's 75 percent. In years prior CUNY's commitment rate was as low as 11 percent or as high as 36 percent. I look forward to learning more about how the university prioritizes its capital budget... projects and expect that CUNY will continue on this upward trend. This hearing presents us with an opportunity to yet again review another... to review other programs and activities at CUNY as well. The state's requirement that all SUNY and CUNY campuses have food pantries raised important questions about cost and funding sources and I'd like to see where we are presently and how CUNY students who are struggling to meet other needs are base... are meeting this challenge. I'm also happy that the new Council funded a food initiative in fiscal 2020 and perhaps the administration will turn and pick up this funding of one million dollars in fiscal 2021 and baseline the program so CUNY can expand these critical services. And turning to academics, CUNY has developed a number of programs and services to better

1 meet the needs of its 21st century learners over the
2 past few years and I would like for us to discuss
3 these as well. As always, I look forward to
4 discussing hiring practices and the need for
5 increased diversity both at CUNY's campuses and
6 within its central administration. Before we begin
7 I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge we've been
8 joined by Council Member Brad Lander and I would like
9 to acknowledge others who've worked to prepare for
10 this hearing; Joy Simmons my Chief of Staff, Ndigo
11 Washington my Director of Legislation and CUNY
12 liaison, Michelle Peregrin, the Finance Analyst for
13 this Committee, Eisha Wright, the Unit Head, Paul
14 Sinegal, the Counsel to the Committee and Chloe,
15 Chloe Rivera, the Senior Policy Analyst for the
16 Committee. And with that I will ask the Counsel to
17 administer the oath.
18

19 COMMITTEE CLERK: Good morning, please
20 raise your right hands? Do you affirm to tell the
21 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in
22 your testimony today before this Committee and to
23 respond honestly to Council Member's questions?

24 [panel affirms]
25

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Please state your names
for the record.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Matthew Sapienza.

ALLEN LEW: Allen Lew.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, you may
begin.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Thank you. Good
morning Chairperson Barron and, and members of the
Committee. I am Matthew Sapienza, CUNY's Senior Vice
Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer. I'm very
pleased to be joined this morning by Allen Lew,
Senior Vice Chancellor for Facilities, Planning,
Construction and Management. Senior Vice Chancellor
Lew was appointed in December 2019 after a successful
career in Washington D.C. as the City Administrator,
and in addition to being an alumnus of City College,
is the first Asian American Vice Chancellor in CUNY's
history. Allen and I are also joined by several of
our colleagues from the University who will assist in
responding to questions and concerns from the
Committee. We appreciate the opportunity to speak
with you about the Mayor's fiscal year 21 preliminary
budget and its effect on the City University of New
York. Chairperson Barron and members of the

Committee, we very much appreciate your strong and continuing advocacy for our students. At a time of growing inequality, CUNY has become a national leader in promoting upward social and economic mobility. In 2019, six CUNY colleges placed in the top 25 nationally on College NET's 2019 Social Mobility Index, with Baruch College ranking number one for a fifth straight year. CUNY also dominated both the Forbes and Wall Street Journal's Best Value college rankings. We are proud of our affordable, affordable value; two out of three CUNY undergraduate students do not pay for tuition and fees out of pocket, and three out of four of our graduates leave debt free. CUNY tuition remains of high value and continues to be much lower than other university systems throughout the country. Likewise, CUNY's average cost of fees of 475 dollars are substantially lower than those of other... of other public university systems of comparable size throughout the country. Our history, and reputation of delivering high quality, affordable education and promoting social mobility help explain why freshman enrollment rose three percent this past fall, countering the national trend. It was part of a 17 percent increase in 2010, a decade in which

freshman enrollment for universities nationwide remained largely flat. We are also proud of our recent historic agreement with our faculty union, the Professional Staff Congress, which provided well earned increases for our full time and adjunct faculty. Chair Barron we very much appreciated the opportunity to discuss this topic at your recent hearing on January 30th. As I testified at that hearing, the University is grateful that the fiscal year 2021 city preliminary budget included funding to fully cover the costs of this collective bargaining agreement. In our fiscal year 21 budget request, we have a renewed drive to expand our sources of revenue for CUNY. This approach is aligned with our belief that CUNY, the state and the city share an obligation to the future of all New Yorkers. To that end, we are proposing partnerships with the state and the city along with the private sector and philanthropic community to tackle the daunting economic, environmental and social challenges ahead. Now let me speak to the city's preliminary budget. We are pleased that the city's financial plan provides assistance for our community colleges with funding for mandatory costs related to fringe benefits,

building rentals and contractual salary increases.

The preliminary budget also includes a six million-

dollar efficiencies target in fiscal 2021, for which

we will work with our community colleges to develop

strategic savings initiatives. We are grateful to the

City Council, particularly to the Higher Education

Committee for securing resources in the current

year's budget for the Vallone Merit Scholarships. We

will ask for your advocacy again, as funding for this

critical student support program was not included in

the fiscal year 21 preliminary budget. This

initiative provides financial aid to students who

graduated with an 80 average from New York City high

schools and who maintained a B average at the

University. These merit-based awards are available to

deserving students both the senior colleges and

community colleges and are a significant contribution

to our efforts to speed time to degree. They

demonstrate to our students, in a tangible way, that

their city makes it possible to pursue an excellent

postsecondary education right here at home. We look

forward to working with you to... in ensuring that

these financial aid awards are protected. We also

need your help in restoring two million dollars that

was provided for remediation in the current fiscal year. CUNY has developed a plan to better tailor remedial instruction to the needs of its students and to accelerate their degree progress. The university is also appreciative of the Council's current year allocation of one million dollars for a food insecurity initiative as you mentioned Chair Barron. We have allocated those funds to our community colleges and the results have been encouraging. As of December 31st, 2019, 42 percent of the eligible students accepted our offer to participate in the food program. We anticipate that the enrolled students will receive a total of 800 dollars for the fall 2019 and spring 2020 semesters. It is critical that this allocation is restored in the fiscal year 2021 budget. Our success with this initial cohort leads us to believe that an increased allocation can have a profound impact on a much greater number of students. We are also seeking restorations for our community college childcare centers and adult literacy programs in the FY 21 city budget. Additional needs to support CUNY's ongoing efforts to increase completion rates are highlighted in our fiscal 21 budget requests. We are seeking city

investment in several significant endeavors, one of which is increased support for associate degree programs at our comprehensive colleges. The amount provided for these programs has remained constant at 32.3 million dollars since 1995. Simply applying the higher education price index over that time period would result in an additional 34.2 million dollars in annual, recurring support. The first category of strategic investments in our budget request focuses upon, upon proven approaches that expand access, enhance learning and accelerates success towards degree completion. We propose to expand the Accelerate, Complete and Engage program, the ACE program, which is the sister companion of our ASAP program at our senior colleges and support other academic momentum initiatives. We are also seeking to expand the support... and support the growth of a diverse body of full-time faculty through the addition of 500 new full-time faculty lines over the next four years. Second, we need to embrace the future of work and improve our students' quality of life in a rapidly changing, globally competitive economy. Our third area of investment recognizes that the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our

students are integral components of student success.

The fourth and final area for investment included in

our budget request covers strengthening the

university's infrastructure through increased

allocations to campus maintenance and information

technology. I would also like to take a moment to

address the federal budget. The recent budget

proposal released by the White House would eliminate

the federal supplemental educational opportunity

grants program, the SEOG program, and would reduce

the federal work study program by half. Tens of

thousands of CUNY students rely on S... SEOG and work

study for financial aid as well as valuable work

experience. We are grateful that the House and Senate

has rejected previous calls for reductions in these

critical financial aid programs and ask for their

assistance again in, in the upcoming budget cycle.

Chairperson Barron and members of the committee,

please be assured that the university community

deeply appreciates your continued commitment to a

high-quality CUNY education, which is the vehicle

that so many New Yorkers rely on for the path of

upward mobility. I would now like to ask Senior Vice

Chancellor Lew to talk about CUNY's capital program.

ALLEN LEW: Good morning Chairperson

Barron and committee members. I am Allen Lew, the, the new Senior Vice Chancellor for Facilities, Planning and Construction and Management at CUNY. It is my pleasure to be here today. I'm happy to have this opportunity to discuss with you our capital budget. I'm glad to be back at CUNY where I attended architecture school at the City College and in New York... in New York City where I was born and raised. The City Council has been an outstanding partner to CUNY, especially to our community colleges by providing support for critical maintenance work and major new buildings. In recent years, your support has been instrumental in helping CUNY to complete the purchase of the former Jewish, Jewish Center across from Queensborough Community College which will be used for the expanded ASAP program; also to complete North Hall's new quad at, at Bronx Community College; a major expansion of libraries at Medgar Evers and LaGuardia Community College; creation of a new dining facility at Queensborough Community College and the renovation of 500 Grand Concourse building 4th floor at Hostos Community College. All these projects added or upgraded space that have enriched those campuses

with modern, well designed facilities that inspire students. Several of these projects have additional phases that are active which you will... you will... you have also supported. Also, with your support, we have been able to start design on the new Allied Health and Science Building for Hostos Community College. This major facility will provide modern classrooms and science labs for the college's allied health programs, which provide essential workforce development. In addition, it, it will house a dental clinic that will provide students with practical experience and furnish the community with expanded services. In recent years, the Council has provided over 270 million dollars to CUNY and funded hundreds of projects, in particular at the community colleges where the need is greatest. Because of your generous support of critical maintenance funding, CUNY has been able to address some of the most challenging infrastructure issues at these campuses. In particular, your allocation of lump sum funds that allow CUNY to add to projects that are in process has helped CUNY move several important critical maintenance projects along. Last year the Council provided CUNY ten million dollars which CUNY has

requested the state match that would take... that would then make it 20 million dollars. As you know from previous discussions, achieving a good... a state of good repair within the system is CUNY's priority. Without the city funding we cannot access any state funds. By some accounts, since FY 2012 the state has provided 3.1 billion dollars in funding for CUNY capital projects, both senior colleges and community colleges and it proposes another 685 million in CUNY capital appropriations for FY 21. One of the largest ongoing critical maintenance projects is the replacement of the façade of LaGuardia Community College's Center three building. This enormous building with 882,000 square feet is 100 years old, its façade had to be replaced to preserve the building. I'm happy to report that we expect to complete the construction of this 125-million-dollar project by the end, end of this year. I hope you will all take pride in real... in the realization of what will be a community treasure. Other critical maintenance projects that have benefited from the Council funding are the ongoing campus wide utility upgrades at, at Bronx Community College roughly totaling 100... 161 million dollars. Currently, we have

completed phase four and are starting phase five and there's still another phase which will start, start design next year. The phased renovation of Hostos Community College's 500 Grand Concourse Building continues; we are currently bidding the renovation of the third floor and basement and the cooling tower replacement at, at, at the Borough of Manhattan Community College and roof replacements and fire alarm and bathroom upgrades across the university on, on many campuses. We're pleased to report all this activity, activity must emphasize that critical maintenance continues to be a major capital priority at our community college campuses, and we are still in need of your support for the long-term effort. We have over seven million square feet of community college facilities, three quarters of which is over 40 years old. The most serious need is still infrastructure systems that support facility operations. Continuing deterioration of these systems could lead to costly emergency repairs and in some cases, major system failures. 750 million dollars is needed to keep the backlog, backlog of deferred maintenance from growing, so you will continue to see requests for critical maintenance funding from our

colleges. This year approximately 200 million dollars in identified projects need funding to cover critical facility items such as fire alarms, roofs, boilers, heating ventilation, air condition, facades and windows. We're also pleased to inform you that we are starting construction on our expansion of space in Inwood for the... for the... for the CUNY in the Heights program associated with Borough of Manhattan Community College. The expansion will allow us to continue to increase vital higher education services to the community, including substantially increasing credit bearing classes at the center, providing many career ladders to educational attainment and careers. We anticipate work will be complete for the fall semester. We continue to seek additional city and state funding for the... for the Hostos Allied Health and Sciences building that I mentioned. And we very much need funding for another important initiative, which is 50 million dollars for a new, permanent facility for Guttman Community College. We're investigating different options for their expansion. I think it is worth reminding you that for every dollar of city funding we receive for community colleges, the state matches it doubling our buying

power. The work on our facilities continues and is integral to realizing those important goals. CUNY is a community treasure. Thank you for your support and for all that you do for the... for CUNY and, and New Yorkers. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you both for your testimony and now we have a series of questions on matters that are of critical importance and... which we want to make sure get on the record so that we can proceed in examining these issues. So, CUNY has a total proposed budget of 1.2 billion dollars for fiscal 2021 all of which is still organized into three broad categories or paired units of appropriation but more than 95 percent of all that money falls into one of these pairs; supporting the community colleges. The question is that Council has brought this to CUNY's attention several times already, how is the conversation proceeding with the Office of Management and Budget about restructuring funding for the community colleges into more units of appropriation?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Thank you Chair Barron. As you stated the, the... we have a total of five units of appropriation; a... personal services

unit of appropriation for community colleges and an other than personal service appropriation for the community colleges, same for the Hunter campus schools which are funded through the city budget, a PS and an OTPS unit of appropriation and then a unit of appropriation for the senior colleges...

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And then what'd you say the last one was?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I'm sorry, there's a unit of appropriation for the senior college funding that is provided by the city. So, there's five in total. For the community colleges however within those two units of appropriation there are unique budget codes for each of the seven community colleges so that budget and expenditures can be tracked for each of those seven. Having said that though we are definitely open in having discussion with both the Council Finance Committee and the Council Members and the Office of Management and Budget about providing more transparency and clarity about the budget and we're open to creating new units of appropriation and we're happy to have those discussions with the administration and the Council to provide as much transparency as needed.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, since we last asked about this which I guess would be about a year ago, what meetings have taken place?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: We've, we've had no further discussions with the administration about this.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, that's disturbing for there not to have been any pursuit to address an issue which was brought to your attention... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...a year ago so we need to make sure that we can sit with you and schedule some dates to make sure that they go forward and any way that the Council can help facilitate that, I think that that would be critical otherwise... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Happy to have that... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...we'll come back next... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...conversation... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...year... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...without having had any discussion on that as well.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Understood.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: The Council's oversight roll requires greater transparency, and this is the route to achieve this clarity required for... to perform smoother operations. So, when can we expect to hear that this change has been transpired, do you expect that prior to next year's budget we will have had some changes because as you look at... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...as you look at the graphic that's there you can see the greatest percentage is in the community central administration and other, that's the greatest percentage... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...so all of those units of appropriation we would like to be able to break that down and to see exactly how those funds are distributed.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah and we can provide a breakdown and that... and let me... and, and thank you for, for providing that chart because it does provide some further explanation. The central administration and other amount of 413 million the majority of that are for expenses that are incurred on behalf of the colleges, the largest of which... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Give me an example?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, the largest of which is for fringe benefits costs and that's a, a... slightly less than 200 million dollars, it's about 196 million dollars of that 413 are for fringe benefits costs. So, that's for health insurance, social security expenses, welfare fund payments and for our employees at the community colleges so the big chunk of that is for fringe benefits. There's about 23 million of that that's for energy costs at our campuses as well, at our community college campuses I should say and then a large chunk of that are for individual programs that are funded in the central administration other category at the beginning of the year and then are allocated out to the campuses. So, for instance... an example of that

1 would be for the ASAP program, there's I think 86
2 million dollars funded for ASAP by the city that's
3 funded in that category and then at the beginning of
4 every year the university determines how much each of
5 the seven community colleges will receive and then
6 those funds are, are transferred to the community
7 colleges. So, of that 413 million only 12 million is
8 actually for the central administration the rest of
9 it are costs that are incurred on behalf of the
10 colleges or that are allocated to the colleges
11 throughout the fiscal year and we could provide back
12 up to that and give you as much detail as you'd like
13 regarding that category.
14

15 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. So, you'll
16 give us a breakdown of how it's allocated to the
17 seven community colleges?

18 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay... [cross-talk]

20 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh.

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And how is it that
22 each community college is determined to receive a
23 particular amount, what formula do you use to
24 determine how much each community college will
25

receive, is it based on the number of students or what other factors... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...are a part of that?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Its, its mostly... the main factor is the number of students, there are some other factors that are included in the model so for, for instance facilities, we do... part of the allocation model includes costs for running facilities and we'll include things like square footage of the campuses, we have a density factor for the schools that maybe have less square footage but, but more usage in terms of the, the schedule and the calendar but the main factor that drives the allocation for the community colleges is the number of students and we use it... a three year weighted average to try to offset any significant spikes whether they're increases or decreases in any one year so we use a three year weighted average.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: The PMMR tells us that the average cost to instruct a community college student is 15,620 dollars in fiscal 2019... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Is that the same cost across each community college and if not, can we be provided with the cost per community college to instruct a student?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, Chair Barron it's not the same across the, the... all seven colleges and I don't have each of the individual college numbers, but we'll certainly provide that to you. Some of our smaller community colleges like Guttman Community College and Hostos because of their size because they're so small the cost per student will be larger, a college like BMCC which has 20... over 25,000 students their costs will be smaller but we'll provide you with the breakdown of all seven.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And what is the average cost to instruct a Hunter College campus student in the high school and in the elementary school?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: That I do not have but again we will... we will get you that information.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Talking about the Hunter College campus students and that, that program... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...there are some concerns that I have regarding student selection... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...the population of students at Hunter College elementary and Hunter College high school is very, very, very low, extremely low and it gets to the question again about the criteria that's used in selecting the students so can you talk briefly about that process and what's being done to look at other kinds of criteria so that we can have a better reflection of the population because we certainly know that there are black and Latino students that qualify and... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...why they're not selected. As we look at those students who are black and Latino who are level four that percentage is not reflected in the population at the Hunter College campus schools.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, I can't speak too much to the selection process, I know there is an exam that is given and based on some of... similar to the other selective high schools in New York City

there is an exam given but other than that I don't have too much more information but we will speak to the folks at Hunter about that and get some more... and in addition we will provide you with data on the demographics of the student body as well.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And what is... can you describe for me the funding that does go to the Hunter College campus, what are the funding streams, which... the city, the state, how is that... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: For Hunter campus schools it's funded solely by the city... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So... for... oh... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, it is... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...considered a, a New York City public school though its run by CUNY, by Hunter College and... which I know you're a proud alum of, but the funding is provided through the city of New York. Some of the... some of the supports that are in place for, for instance, the administration of Hunter College that provides support to the Hunter campus schools that's funded by the state but those

are really indirect costs that are funded by the state for the Hunter campus schools so... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, the indirect costs are funded by state?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Who decides how many presidents, vice presidents, deans, associate deans, assistant deans, provost and so on are at each community college?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, those, those are all local decisions made by the... by the campus president, every college is unique in terms of what their administrative structure is but for the most part when you look at the executive leadership of the... of a community college in addition to the president obviously most of them will have a provost, which will be in charge of the academic programming at the... at the college, most of them have a vice president for finance and administration which will be involved for the fiscal management and the administrative operations of the campus usually those VP's for finance and admin have facilities, HR, IT all under them as well and so those are usually the, the, the two main areas of the campus that are led by

the provost and the vice president of finance for administration and those will report to the president but there's not a... something that CUNY prescribes to each campus that you must have, these titles or people in these specific roles that's really up to the college president to decide how to best run his or her campus.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, there's no prescribed tilling in terms of the personnel... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay...

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: That's correct.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Each president will decide.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: That's correct, yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: We would like to request the senior management organization tree for each community college with their salary and tenure in that position.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Sure, we will work with our colleges to get that information and give it to you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: In... the fiscal 2021 financial plan includes that there are no new needs for CUNY, so I thought that was a typo.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes, it is. We do have new needs and I just... I want to tout our budget request for school 21 budget request which was approved by our board of trustees back in December and so this budget request totals 292 million in total of that request we have committed that we will find 15 million in efficiencies next year which brings the request down to 277 million in total and from that we are requesting 126 million from the state, 77 million from the city...

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Can you give me that again, I want to make sure I get a full understanding here.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, I'm sorry Chair Barron it's... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: No... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: The total is 292 million... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...in our budget request on, on the operating budget, 15 million of which we

will self-fund through efficiencies, that brings the total request that we're seeking down to 277 million and of that we're seeking 126 million from the state, 77 million from the city and the rest would come from tuition and fee increases some of which will be paid out of pocket by the students and some of which will be covered by increased financial aid through both the state and the federal government.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, I'm very disturbed that CUNY continues to burden students with increasing tuition for public education, it's my belief that all of CUNY should be free which it was when I was able to attend and that was why I was able to attend college because it was free based on anyone graduating from a city... a high school with at least a B average and we've moved away from that and the trend that I've seen is that students are bearing more and more of the burden of the cost of education and so what are we looking at in terms of trying to flip that back to what it was, you know putting a stop, freezing these tuition increases hopefully looking back, we're hearing very much now conversations about at least extending post high school education to students free of cost so that

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1 this year for resident students is 6,930 dollars per
2 year so it's still incredibly affordable when you
3 compare our tuition to other public university
4 systems throughout the country and certainly compared
5 to the private universities here in New York but what
6 I would say about tuition is we're very fortunate
7 that we do have financial aid programs in place both
8 at the state and city levels and the federal level as
9 well to help offset those costs so as I mentioned in
10 my testimony two thirds of our undergraduate resident
11 students because of financial aid attend tuition free
12 so two thirds of our students at the undergraduate
13 level are attending for free and at the community
14 colleges that increases to about 70 percent so we do
15 have a, a majority of our students attending for free
16 and only about 17 percent of our undergraduate
17 students pay the full price that 6,930 that I
18 mentioned for the senior colleges... [cross-talk]

19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But we know that
20 the... there are other related educational costs beyond
21 tuition and they sometimes far outweigh what the
22 tuition is and there is little provision for that,
23 there's no consideration of that with the Governor's
24 Excelsior Scholarship so the, the burden and the
25

inequity is born by those who have the greatest need and we also know about the TAP Gap but as we're talking about the fees and, and costs that the students are bearing in December 18th, 2019 this committee held an oversight hearing on the child care centers... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...and learned that while the campus child care center at City College has been closed for four years for a project that was designed to take one year with student fees of two dollars per student have remained in effect so why are you collecting the student fee for child care centers at an institution that does not have a child care center and where does that money go?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh, the, the fees that are collected for the childcare center are through what's called the student activity fee... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...and those fees are not set by the university, they... they're set by the college working with each individual student government at the campus and so the... they, they

range, there's... the... every campus has a different student activity fee. So, we will speak with the folks at City College and find out if they are still charging a fee for the child care center as part of the student activity fee and if so find out what those revenues have been used for since the centers been closed so we'll, we'll do more investigation on that, more research and find out and get back to you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Part of what students indicated when we met at City College was that they are ill prepared to fully understand these agreements that are presented to them, many of them are new, they haven't been given these budgets prior to seeing them and they're pretty much intimidated and they go along and sign and as the year goes on then they understand what it is that they've actually signed an agreement to without having full understanding... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...so perhaps we can find a way to be more proactive in getting that information to them so that they can... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...really have an effective voice in saying what it is that is happening with those fees and we want to find out what happened to that two dollars per student for the last four years, is it in a separate dedicated bank account and were students given an opportunity to say... oh I... we want to recognize Council member Alan Maisel who is a member of the committee, thank you, want to call attention that he was here. So, we want to make sure that the students who are paying the fee have an opportunity to benefit from that payment during the time that they're in school... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Understood... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...if students left within four years they didn't get the benefit of that and yes it sounds like oh it's only two dollars but when you multiply that by whatever the student enrollment is and multiply that by four years it becomes a significant amount of money.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: We will... we will work with President Boudreau and, and his administration to get more information and get that to you quickly.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And continuing there are six contracts within the budget for childcare centers, what are these contracts for specifically?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I'm not certain what specific contracts that you might be referring to within the child care centers but as you know we, we do have 16 child care centers at our campuses, they provide a very valuable resource to our student parents, we... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: What's the model that's used in these childcare centers, is it different across, across each of the community colleges?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, I think most of them are, are similar but I think there, there are some different programming at each individual college and... but the one thing that I like to always point out when I talk to folks about the child care centers is they also provide not only a valuable service to our student parents but also to the child that is in the center because they're providing educational... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...programming to those children... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...so it's, it's a great benefit as well. So, most of them are similar, I mean some of them have greater capacity than others, we are concerned about and, and we're, you know seeking the Council's help in restoring 600,000 dollars for our child care centers in the 21 budget... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...and on the state budget we're... we have been talking to the folks in the Senate Assembly, we have a 900,000 dollar restoration that we need for our community college child care centers on the state side so we're... you know we are lobbying the Senate and Assembly for those restorations but most of the colleges... community... most of the college child care centers I should say do operate the same but like I say some have a greater capacity than others, I know some are open to staff as well as students because they have that capacity but for the most part they operate in a similar fashion.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, I have a few more questions before I break and ask my colleague to share questions and then I'll come back again but sticking on this topic of fees, the budget includes 17.6 million dollars from technology fees from all seven community colleges but these fees aren't all of the fees that are collected... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Right... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, how many fees are there at all of the community colleges and what's the total sum that's collected from these fees alone from all of the community colleges?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: So, there are three what we call mandatory fees at, at all of our colleges both senior colleges and community colleges, the mandatory that all students must pay them. So, the first one is what you mentioned Chair Barron the student technology fee, 125 dollars a semester and it was implemented in 2002 so that, that was the last mandatory fee that we've added at the university was 2002 and it pays for technology enhancements at the campuses and one of the great things about the technology fee is that students have a voice in how the technology fee is used so every campus has a

committee that students participate in that make recommendations to the college president as to how those fee resources can be used and I know Chair Barron I know you, you visited a lot of our campuses throughout the years and many times you'll see a, a computer lab or, or new PCs in the library and most of the time those are funded with the resources from the fee. So, the student technology fee is the first mandatory fee. The second fee is what we call the consolidated fee and that's 15 dollars a semester and that's been 15 dollars for at least 15 years, it has not changed in a very long time and that's to pay... cover the expenses of costs that the university pays for on behalf of students so that could be financial aid processing, that could be the cost for, for doing testing, it's to help offset the costs that we have in those areas and then the third is what we mentioned earlier which is the student activity fee, those are mandatory also but those aren't set by the university those are set by the individual campuses in working with the student... local student governments and so those range as... there are some campuses that are as low as 60 dollars a semester and there's some that are as high as 180 dollars a

semester so it varies amongst the campuses but on average our fees total about 475 dollars per year which is incredibly low throughout the country. When you look at comparisons, I mean even our wonderful colleagues at SUNY who do a great job and, and they are terrific colleagues but SUNY's average fee per year is 1,700 dollars, ours is 475 and when... again when you look throughout the country most public university systems are well over a thousand dollars and most are close to 2,000 dollars so our fee structure is still very low and as I said we haven't had... created a new mandatory fee since 2002 when we implemented the technology fee.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: In the approaching academic year 2020/2021 a 120-dollar health and wellness fee, 60 dollars per semester has been add... will be added to the community colleges per student... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...how much from this fee alone does CUNY anticipate receiving and what exactly will this fee be used for?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh. So, the, the, the health and wellness fee that we have proposed to

1 implement for, for the fall semester and again it's
2 our first new mandatory fee since 2002, we project
3 that university wide for both the senior colleges and
4 the community colleges it'll generate a little less
5 than 30 million dollars but I believe... 30, 30 million
6 dollars, I believe the number was 29.8 million
7 dollars and we, we anticipate that this will be used
8 in a very similar fashion to what I just described as
9 the student technology fee that there will be
10 committees set up on each campus which students will
11 participate in that will determine how that fee will
12 be used at each campus, now each of our campuses are
13 unique, some of them have currently at greater
14 capacity for mental and physical health and wellness
15 programs and so they might want to use the funds in a
16 different way than colleges who haven't had that
17 capacity and so we want each college to create their
18 own unique use of those funds. There will be a
19 portion of the funds that we will set aside that will
20 be determined by the university how much each campus
21 will receive and again that will be based on creating
22 some minimum standards at each campus. For example,
23 there will be minimum standards allocated for how
24 many mental health counselors each campus must, must
25

1
2 have so some might meet that already, some might fall
3 short and so those colleges that are falling short
4 might get more of that allocation in order to, to get
5 up to that, that standard but this is in response to
6 what we've been hearing from, from our students in
7 terms of their concerns and investments that they'd
8 like to see made in our campuses for additional
9 health and wellness services and so, you know as you
10 mentioned Chair Barron we are planning to implement
11 that beginning with the fall of 21... the fall 20 I
12 should say semester.

13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Is there a standard
14 ratio that, that CUNY has for the number of mental
15 health counselors based on the number of students, is
16 there some formula that's being... that's trying to be
17 achieved?

18 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: There's not a current
19 one but as part of implementing the health and
20 wellness fee we will be setting a minimum standard
21 that each college must have in terms of mental health
22 counselors, I don't know what that number will be
23 just yet, we are working on that but there will be a
24 minimum standard that will be established.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And you indicated that it would be approximately... a little less than 30 million dollars?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: University wide, correct.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: University wide, can you give us the distinction for the community colleges what would that amount be?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: About nine million dollars for the community colleges of the 30.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Okay, thank you. I'm going to take a break and I'm going to ask my colleague Council, Council Member Brad Lander to pose his questions and then I'll be back and I did want to acknowledge we've been joined by Council Member Rodriguez as well, a member of the Committee.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you very much Chair Barron for this hearing and in general for your leadership on this Committee, thank you to the reps from CUNY. I'm, I'm not a member of the Committee but I wanted to come today because I really share and believe in the, the fact that CUNYs just an extraordinary vehicle of upward social mobility in New York City. The Chair is right to raise of course

all the concerns and questions that we need to but
big picture I think, you know we all agree in
principle that CUNY is just doing something
extraordinary as a vehicle for fulfilling our vision
of an inclusive genuinely equal multiracial democracy
in New York City in a way when so many other places
in our housing, in so many other of our education
outcomes, in our employment we don't... we don't come
close to, to delivering it. So... and I don't... you know
we don't reflect that enough in what we contribute
from the state or the city to make it possible for
CUNY to do it's work, this administration in
partnership with this Council and with pushing
through the Chair on this Committee have done better
than before but I still think we fall woefully short
and I've been trying to think about what's some ways
we could address that were. So, I was struck recently
when the New York City property tax commission that
the Council and Mayor set up as they started to dig
into various different kinds of property tax
inequities, they were looking at homeowners mostly
but they did kind of in one of their back tables bury
this question about private higher education tax
breaks and pilots which struck me as we are thinking

1 about tax inequities and how we could move toward
2 more equality as one we should interrogate. So, I
3 wanted to come today and just ask you a few questions
4 about it and I'll start by noticing... by noting with
5 congratulations that six of the top ten schools on
6 college NET social mobility index are CUNY campuses.
7 I wonder do you want to venture a guess at where NYU
8 or Columbia fall on the college NET social mobility
9 index?
10

11 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I'm, I'm not aware of
12 that but I... [cross-talk]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Do you think its
14 above or below 100? Above or below 500?

15 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, that... no, that...
16 [cross-talk]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I'll, I'll... I...
18 above or below 1,000, Matt just answer the... you think
19 they're above or below 1,000, you got six of the top
20 ten, what do you think NYU and Columbia are above,
21 above or below 1,000 on the social mobility index?

22 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: It, it could be around
23 there, I'm not real sure but I... Councilman Lander I,
24 I very much appreciate your, your, your kind words
25

about CUNY, I totally agree with you, it's an amazing place...

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Let me just go a little further and I'm, I'm going to ask you them as questions but obviously only on the CUNY answers am I going to expect you to have answers, I'll, I'll provide the Columbia and NYU... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Thank you I appreciate... I appreciate the... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: ...answers, NYU... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...expectation.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: ...NYU is 1,303...

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Okay...

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: ...and Columbia is 1,363, there are schools worse than that but... and you said the tuition at CUNY is how much on average?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: At the senior colleges its... for residents... New York State resident students its 6,930 dollars a year... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Alright, do you know what the NYU or Columbia tuitions are?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I do not but I would imagine our 6,930 dollars a year would get you through maybe Columbus Day.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: NYUs is 51,828 and Columbia's is 59,430. What's the median income of a CUNY student to the... to the best of your... do you know what the...

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I don't know that, but I can tell you that... I can tell you that a large portion of our students, I don't have the data with me, families come from incomes less than 30,000 dollars a year. A large... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: You know what I saw on City College's website was a median income of about 40,000 just for comparison the median income of families at NYU is 149,300 and at Columbia 150,000 and again those are great schools, they're just not vehicles of upward social mobility, they're vehicles of reproducing the privilege that, that folks already have. The... what percent of students at... across CUNY campuses to the best of your knowledge are, are African American or, or Latino?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I have that data and again we're very proud that CUNY reflects the, the, the demographics of our city. So, at our...

[off mic dialogue]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: So at our senior colleges it's 23.9 percent black, 27.9 percent Latino, 24.2 percent Asian, 23.7 percent white, 0.3 percent Native American and our community college is 28.2 percent black, 39.5 percent Latino, 16.9 percent Asian, 15 percent white, 0.4 Native American.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And do you want to... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Can you repeat that...

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Sure, in community colleges?

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Both.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Oh, both, okay. Senior colleges 23.9 percent black, 27.9 percent Latino, 24.2 percent Asian, 23.7 percent white, 0.3 percent Native American; community colleges 28.2 percent black, 39.5 percent Latino, 16.9 percent Asian, 15 percent white, 0.4 Native American.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And do you want to venture a guess at what percent of either NYU or Columbia students are black or Latino?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I would not like to venture...

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Alright, well I'll tell you luckily at NYU its about six percent black, about 11 percent Latino and at Columbia five percent black and eight percent Latino. Again, and look I'm a... myself a graduate of a private university of higher education, not one of those so you know I just... I think it's worth pointing out as we think about where resources will come from just in how profoundly CUNY reflects the diversity of our city and is an engine of upward social mobility for people like all the young people of New York City and NYU and Columbia the marvelous institutions in many ways do not reflect the, the young people of New York City and they are not vehicles for upward social mobility. So, I guess just one last question on this front, what's, what's CUNY's endowment?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh. We... CUNY has a what we call our investment pool that colleges can

contribute to, the investment pool currently has about 290 million... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: 290 million?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: 290 million... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...in the CUNY investment pool... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Do you want to... do you want to venture a guess at what the NYU and Columbia endowments are?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Probably in the billions.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: NYU has a 4.35 billion dollar endowment and Columbia a 10.9 billion dollar endowment so this kind of brings me to my point because as a result of state law not city law institutions of private higher education in New York essentially for the most part receive an exemption from real estate taxes, if you own commercial property or fee paying parking lots you can pay a little bit but for the most part institutions of private higher education do not pay taxes in New York

1 City and, and the IBO estimates the value of the tax
2 break for all private higher education this is not
3 just those two institutions, is 483 million dollars a
4 year that New York City does not collect in real
5 estate taxes because of that tax break. In Boston
6 some private universities make voluntary payments in
7 lieu of taxes and Connecticut law actually mandates
8 that the state provide municipalities, 77 percent of
9 what's forgone by private universities so it, it just
10 occurs to me as we looked at the property tax
11 commission report that maybe Columbia and NYU given
12 the profiles that we've discussed here should be
13 paying 77 percent, 50 percent, some percent of the
14 real estate taxes that New York City is foregoing and
15 that we could dedicate that money to CUNY to help
16 address the new needs you were discussing, you know
17 we could do that, that 77 million you were seeking
18 from the city would be, you know less than 20 percent
19 of the value of the tax break we're foregoing, is
20 this something that, that CUNY has looked at or had
21 conversations with any of its peer institutions...

22 [cross-talk]

23
24 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: That's not something
25 that we specifically looked at but, but again any way

that the city can generate more revenues that could be dedicated to CUNY we would definitely appreciate and Council Member Lander if I can I just want to take one minute to, to tell a recent study that was done at two of our campuses, so City College and Queens College both commissioned a study with a firm called MC which is a labor analytics... which is something that does labor analytics and interestingly it found that City College provides about 1.9 billion to New York's economy and Queens College provides about 1.8 billion and again as a finance person at... and return on investment is, is an important component that I like to look at. They found that City and Queens College for every dollar that New York invests in City and, and in Queens College they get somewhere between three and five dollars back so any investment in CUNY is a well... is, is a good investment in New York State and New York City.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Amen so I'll, I'll... I have one more line of questioning but I'll leave this one here and I'll just say Chair, you know maybe we could look at... dig in on this a little more deeply, talk to some of the city council staff who had worked on that property tax commission report

1 maybe there's some students or professors at CUNY
2 that could help us dig in here but it seems to me
3 given the tax inequity and the social mobility
4 differences that this might... and we would need help
5 from our friends at the state level because it's a
6 state tax exemption but it, it might be one that its
7 come time to look at if we want to live up to the
8 commitments to social mobility and that's not to take
9 anything away from the Chairs other questions. So, I
10 do just though want to drill down a little on the
11 Chair's questions about Hunter... [cross-talk]

12 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah... [cross-talk]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: ...high school and,
14 and, and elementary and middle school as well because
15 while at the higher ed level CUNY is an extraordinary
16 vehicle of upward social mobility that reflects the
17 diversity of the city, Hunter elementary, middle and
18 high school really is, is not and you mentioned
19 before you kind of compared it to the New York City's
20 specialized high schools like Stuyvesant and, and
21 Brooklyn Tech which have been rightly in the news for
22 just how few black and, and Latino students they have
23 but I guess it, it doesn't sound like you have... that
24 CUNY has focused on asking the questions yet of
25

Hunter about where it sits of the kind that the Chair was asking...

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I don't believe so, again I, I will... I will speak to the folks at Hunter and, and folks in our... in academic affairs to find out more information on that...

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay, so I, I have a little more information and I, I think it'll distress you to learn that actually Hunter is, is substantially worse than the specialized high schools on diversity measures and those specialized high schools are already terrible from the point of view of not having black and Latino students represented in anything like they are in New York... in New York City but Hunter at least according to the data that, that I have is, is actually worse in the two... 2019/2020 school year only 2.4 percent black students and only 6.2 percent Latinx students compared with 25 and a half percent black and 40.6 percent black of the New York City school population and one thing that is distressing and I think telling is that the specialized high schools actually at least have a reasonable percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch, they have a lot of low income

1 students so that figure is 42 percent at Stuy, 59
2 percent at Brooklyn Tech and 42 percent at Bronx
3 Science, it's only nine percent of Hunter's seven to
4 12th graders according to the available public
5 information. So, yeah I guess I'm going to ask in
6 addition to... not just will you get the data and give
7 it to the Chair but will you join the Chair and me
8 in, in focusing on this question and taking steps
9 together to make sure that we make Hunter reflect the
10 CUNY mission, this is not somebody else's mission
11 here, I, I don't know what Stuyvesant high school's
12 mission is other than Stuyvesant high school but, but
13 CUNY has a mission so well reflected in what City
14 College and Hunter College and, and, and Brooklyn
15 College are you know that the best and the brightest
16 are young people of color and low income students so
17 we would... I would assume we'd want to reflect that as
18 well in, in places like the elementary, middle and,
19 and high schools that you operate so I guess I'd just
20 ask you, you made a commitment to the Chair to get
21 the data... [cross-talk]

22
23 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: ...but will you
25 make a commitment to work with us to call attention

to and push and start to make some improvements here as well?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Well I'll, I'll make a commitment to bringing this concern back to my principals, to the Chancellor and others in the administration and to the President of Hunter College and you know make sure that they know of the concern of the Council and certainly we'll get you the information that you've requested.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you very much.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: You're welcome.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you Chair.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. The... my colleague has talked about the great standing that CUNY has in terms of being an institution for upward social mobility and talked about the demographics of those students at CUNY but if we can bring up the chart about the demographic disparity between the instructional staff and students. So, we can see that 29 percent of the student population is black and only 19 percent is reflected in the staff as being black. For Asian and Pacific Islander its 17 percent of the student population and only 12 percent of the

1 staffing. For whites its 15 percent yet its 54
2 percent of the staff and for Latinx it was 38 percent
3 student population and only 15 percent of the staff
4 so this is an issue which I've addressed, brought to
5 CUNY's attention since I've been the Chair and there
6 has not been movement of any significance in this
7 regard and even in CUNY's master plan it was noted as
8 an item to be addressed in the previous master plan
9 and it's also noted in this master plan as an item to
10 be addressed without reflecting on any success in the
11 prior master plan, without any evaluation of what
12 happened in the previous so called master plan. So,
13 how does CUNY intend to rectify this inequity?

14
15 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Well I know that our...
16 this is a very important topic that the Chancellor is
17 very committed to, as you know he's, he's the first
18 person of color to be Chancellor of this university.
19 I think when you look at his... at the folks that he
20 has brought into the executive positions at the
21 university they're all people from... folks that
22 represent minority groups. Allen Lew is a good
23 example, first Asian American Vice Chancellor here at
24 CUNY, his presidential appointments as well. So, this
25 is an important topic to him not only for the

1 executive positions but also for the faculty. Two
2 things I'll just mention real quick is that when you,
3 you look at that chart and I agree with your concerns
4 Chair Barron is... but when you look at those numbers
5 and compare them nationally we are... we are one of the
6 highest in terms of... [cross-talk]

8 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But we don't want to
9 compare them nationally we want to compare them to
10 other similar large cities with similar populations
11 because if you look at it nationally we look great
12 but when we go to smaller communities which are a
13 part of that national assessment that, that skews
14 what it is that we're looking at in a large urban
15 population.

16 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: No, understood and the
17 other thing I just want to mention is something I
18 brought up at the hearing that we had in, in late
19 January on the... on the adjuncts and again whether its
20 significant movement we can... we can discuss but it...
21 just one point I want to mention that I think it's an
22 encouraging data element is that in 2014 the
23 percentage of new faculty hires that were black was
24 6.2 percent and that were Latino was 8.2 percent but
25 in 2019 for black... for new hires that were black it

1
2 was 12 percent and for Latino it was 13.5 percent so
3 we are showing some progress there, we know we have a
4 lot more to do to address this situation and I know
5 that our Chancellor and our board and all of us at
6 the university are committed to, to improving the...
7 these numbers.

8 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Well those numbers
9 that you cited are from 2014 and 2019... [cross-talk]

10 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Correct... [cross-talk]

11 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But if we go back 50
12 years, if we go back to the 1970s it was much higher
13 then than what it is now, much higher than, than what
14 it is now so we've got to really look at how we can
15 get back to a better reflection of matching what it
16 is that we have in student populations with the
17 faculty. I do have a few more questions I want to get
18 onto the record regarding the census 2020... [cross-
19 talk]

20 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...the fiscal 2020
22 budget included onetime various intracity transfers
23 totaling 108 million dollars added for student
24 internship, fellowship and training in partnership
25 with other city agencies. In December 2019 CUNY was

1 allocated 19 million dollars to serve as key
2 programmatic and administrative partner in the city's
3 get out the count effort headed... ahead of this years...
4 the centennial senses, 16 million dollars for the
5 purpose of funding 157 community based organizations
6 and I did have concerns about how those organizations
7 were selected, to perform census outreach and three
8 million dollars to cover CUNY's administrative costs.
9 CUNY also created the CUNY census core comprised of
10 200 students in order to assist in census field
11 activities. So, the questions are how will be CUNY be
12 monitoring the deliverables of community based
13 organizations awarded funding from the complete count
14 fund and as part of the follow up for this hearing
15 can CUNY provide the Council finalized scopes of work
16 and funding amounts for the complete count fund
17 awardees?

19 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Well to your second
20 question Chair Barron, yes we can... we can provide the
21 finalized scopes of work and the individual amounts
22 that went to those CBOs that you cited earlier so we
23 will... we will get you that information. We're really
24 excited about this initiative and we're very grateful
25 for the... for the funding that we received for this.

As you mentioned we have 230 students that are... that are participating in, in what we call the CUNY census core, about 70 percent of these students speak a language other than English and that covers 44 languages and so again we're really excited about that because these students are going to play a key role in getting the word out to the communities throughout New York City and in helping with people whose English is not their first language so we're excited about helping New York City and our students getting terrific experience as part of working in the CUNY census core. This was a, a collaboration between the New York City census 2020 organization and CUNY in terms of reviewing the applications from the CBOs and selecting the ones that, that were selected, our Office of Academic Affairs, the CUNY system administration is administering this and is managing this with the New York City census 2020 organization as well so again we will get you the finalized scopes of work and the, the final budgets for those CBOs and get you whatever additional information you would like but again we're very grateful for the allocation and for... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, is there...

[cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...the opportunity for our students to participate.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. How... is there a person whose responsibility it is to actually monitor it... the deliverables as the process is being undertaken?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes, our Office of Academic Affairs is, is administering this, you know unfortunately we don't have anyone here today that is part of that... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...group but, but yes, there are folks in Academic Affairs at the central office that are... that are monitoring and managing this and, and liasoning with all of the campuses.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: As you talked about selecting involving students who speak a, a variety of languages, I think you said 44 languages that's certainly critical because we want to make sure that we can get a more reflective count and in certain communities there's also a fear or distrust of persons who are not within the community to share

1 this information or to perhaps not respond and my
2 concern is that there perhaps should have been a
3 factor in the criteria that was used to judge the
4 applicants that would reflect those organizations and
5 CBOs that are already operating in the community and
6 that have what's called credibility in the community
7 to encourage people to complete the census and I've
8 been told well they can be subcontracted and they can
9 be employed but I think that perhaps that should have
10 been a factor that should have been considered in
11 making the decision as to what organizations but
12 would you... also we would like to have CUNY provide a
13 breakdown of how they allocated the three million
14 dollars to cover administrative cost as well as a
15 breakdown of any associated head count and a status
16 update on the CUNY census core; is it fully staffed,
17 are there any vacancies and how have its members been
18 incorporated into get out the count activities?

19
20 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: We'll get you all that
21 information.

22 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

23 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh.

24 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: The next set of
25 questions is about mental health support. The second

largest intracity transfer allocated 17.7 million dollars transferred from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, DOHMH for the mental health service core at Hunter College... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: In fiscal 2014 45 million was transferred from DOHMH to Hunter College for this program, did this program end in December 2019?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes, Chair Barron that, that program is ending, I'm not sure if December 2019 was the end date or not but you know we'll find out for you, but that program is ending at Hunter College.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And is H and H taking over that program and if so, what part will CUNY play in the program?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I'm not certain whose taking it over, we were, you know informed that that allocation, you know would not be recurring and that program was phasing out at Hunter College so I'm not certain of what, what the future is in terms of that specific program.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And what substitute programming is there then available to the students in CUNY if CUNY is no longer engaging in this program?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Well all, all of our campuses have varying degrees of supports on mental health and have their own individual programs so there are programs at, at each of the campuses on mental health supports but there's not one thing that's going to replace that program, you know that was part of, you know Thrive initiative and Hunter College, you know was happy to participate in it but again we were informed that that program would be... would be phasing out at Hunter College.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, moving to the ACS workforce institute, the third largest intracity transfer total 15.9 million dollars and it was added in November 2019 fiscal plan from ACS in collaboration with the ACS workforce initiative and the CUNY school of professional studies...

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yep...

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Can CUNY confirm if ACS intends to allow any contracted agency staff to train at the workforce institute?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes, that's my understanding of, of how the program works but we will confirm but that is my understanding and again we're very... we're very excited about this program and the collaboration with ACS, I also... I want to point out that the school of professional studies is the main relationship there from CUNY but that the Hunter College Silberman school of Social Work is also involved in this as well and again it's providing I think a wonderful opportunity to the staff at ACS to get additional academic and educational credits in higher ed through SPS and, and through Hunter.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And how many training sessions will be conducted over the course of the fiscal year because CUNY we know has a historical relationship with other CUNY agencies in providing services and partnership for the program so what new programs are on the horizon that we could look forward to?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Not, not aware of any new programs but as you mentioned earlier Chair Barron we are the, the go to agency amongst... in, in city government because we are a university for training type programs and so as you mentioned our

intracity revenue budget is usually around 100 million dollars a year because we are providing, you know many services to various agencies in terms of training so, not aware of any new programs that are on the horizon but, but we are doing, you know a robust training throughout the year through... for many agencies in, in addition to the one you mentioned for ACS.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And, and do you have the number of training sessions that will be conducted over the course of the fiscal year for the program, the ACS workforce initiative?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Oh, I'm sorry, no I don't but we will... we will get that to... we'll speak to the school of professional studies and Hunter and get you that information.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. I'm going to take a break here and allow my colleague to ask questions, Council Member Rodriguez.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Chair. I think that as you say normally we've been repeating the same frustration or the challenges that we have, you know at CUNY... at the Chair about I'm pretty sure the same challenges that we have when I

used to be a Chair and even when your great partner, Council Member Barron used to be a Chair too, you know when we look at lack of diversity it's like we don't wake up and I think that at some point its like the me too movement, you know I think that a city is only ready to respond when there's like an outrage outside there or people who mobilize and use all the tools to challenge the status quo and even to challenge our progressive... in the city of New York that it's happening under our watch, it's like now we know that there's a crisis in NYCHA but everyone has seen that situation since the 80s and the 90s now it became to the... make it to the news and we... everyone is addressing. I think that when we look at our realities everything is all the pipeline, the challenge is that we don't want to share the privilege. I only say that if you have the public school, the middle class and upper class that's a pipeline, if you say I went to this public school and had a lawyer, you had a doctor, my child went to this public school most likely you are... we are talking about a public school that is completely different than the public school that they have 25 percent of the students living in supportive housing, different

1 from the other school that the student that the
2 student they come in October over the... and the DOE is
3 not adding new resources to the principal neither
4 CUNY has a plan on how to connect it, we're lacking a
5 pre-k to college comprehensive program. That's... if at
6 some point we need to address how did it happen? I
7 was... I went to City College in 1988 there... at that
8 time, most of the students, close to 75 percent or
9 more they were Latino... black and Latinos so from the
10 80s to today the diversity of the city is even
11 higher, 29 percent Latino, 27 percent African
12 American and then we are not able to translate that
13 diversity and instead of continuing growing senior
14 colleges, it is a shame and it's no shame to an
15 individual, it's a shame to the city of New York, to
16 the public and private sector that we have seen a
17 reduction in senior colleges big time when it came to
18 black and Latino, who's taking responsibility for
19 that? Who's saying that's happening in my watch?
20 Who's saying we lack in that project? I know that
21 when we get as a Council Member, as a staff and you
22 guys get a talking point and we don't want to
23 challenge sister agencies but what is the DOE doing?
24 What is CUNY doing? What is the state doing? A

1 student of Sophie Davis in the City College school of
2 engineer costs double than the student who graduated
3 at... like me in political science. When will Albany be
4 ready to match the expense of those senior colleges,
5 when will we the senior colleges; Hunter, City,
6 Baruch, Brooklyn will put together a better plan, a
7 pipeline to go down the body, I was a student at
8 Luperon High School for 13 years and we know that
9 City College did a great project for many families
10 students they were applying to City College and they
11 were denied, they were sent to community college and
12 the admission office of City College they did a pilot
13 project and they accept an average group of students
14 who would be denied at a senior college and be sent
15 to a... to a community college, most of them graduated
16 with an average of three. Let's replicate those pilot
17 projects, let's all stop using the SAT to take kids
18 to Hunter College, to City. If we don't do something
19 about it students will take the street on this issue
20 too. 2020 and it's happening under our watch, but you
21 know what happened that people they don't want to
22 share the privilege. So, pipeline to take kids from
23 Pre-K to college, it's necessary. Let me tell you one
24 thing that I did, 1992 professor Joseph Barba, the
25

former dean of the school of engineer he got some funding for the NSF and he created a Stem institute, his vision was to connect underserved kids in the stem field however in the last six years the program has been doing so well that students been applying not only from the average high school but from the Bronx Science, from the Stuyvesant, from New Jersey, from Connecticut, we sat down I guarantee a million dollar in perpetuity for the stem institute to be expanded to the surrounding school and we lower it to middle school. So, for me we dare, we're here to be for CUNY but the private sector and the public sector have to step in and recognize this as a crisis. It's great to see new leadership at CUNY today and I know that they have the big hearts, those people here in Wall Street they don't care, those who raise a big huge amount of money in other places they don't care. Why Amazon they not come out and sit with CUNY as a... as a first partner, if Amazon would come to the city of New York and they will say we are planning to come here and 50 percent of the jobs will be created and trained by CUNY, I don't think that the support would not be there but when they started with the big one, the Columbia or the NYU and then let's, let's bring

1 CUNY to show that they are also included, then we're
2 failing in that part. So for me it's about I'm ready
3 to be working with the Chair, you know we really care
4 for this but the lack of diversity, you know the
5 hiring committee in college has to reflect the
6 diversity starting there, there's no diversity in
7 those hiring committees, look at the Provost, look at
8 the leadership, there's a crisis at that level let's
9 just start recruiting the students since they are
10 freshman in their first semester and let's take them
11 to offer for them to look at themselves as a
12 candidate from freshman to when they finish and lets
13 raise the money and let's connect them with a
14 position, let's not be afraid, we want to celebrate
15 Martin Luther King and those leaders in January lets
16 lead by example and I have a lot of concerns about
17 how one more time for... and we see the same number and
18 this number is a shame.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you Council
21 Member. I want to talk now about the state budget
22 issues, the community college base aid. The
23 Governor's executive budget proposes to hold the base
24 aid to 223 million dollars for fiscal 2021 but it is
25 good to hear more deals... details from CUNY on this

1
2 issue, if this base aid were increased what might
3 occur for students at CUNY and would this pending
4 tuition increase still occur?

5 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: You know thank you for
6 raising this issue Chair Barron. So, the Governor's
7 executive proposal as you mentioned caps base aid
8 flat at the current years level which is 2,947
9 dollars per student full time equivalent, this has
10 been the case in the last several years that the
11 executive proposal keeps base aid flat and we have
12 been fortunate, we're very grateful that in the final
13 enacted budget the Senate, Assembly and the Governor
14 have been able to come to an agreement to increase
15 that over the last several years but one of the
16 concerns that we have about keeping it flat is that
17 community college enrolment has been down the last
18 several years, has been down throughout New York
19 State at CUNY and so we've had, had some enrollment
20 climbs so if community... if the base aid number
21 remains flat we're going to get... we're going to
22 receive less state aid next year and we're projecting
23 that's going to be about 5.4 million dollars so we
24 are seeking a... an increase to the community college
25 base aid, our budget request includes an increase of

250 dollars per student and 250 dollars per student would not only make up for the enrollment losses but also allow some additional funding for investments at our community colleges as well so we have been talking to the Senate and Assembly about that as part of our state lobbying efforts and we're optimistic that when the final state budget is announced close to April 1st that we will have an increase in the... in the base aid amount for next year.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, we talk about the 250 dollar increase that you're requesting how much would this 250-dollar increase equate to, what is that total?

[off mic dialogue]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: What is it about 12 something like that...

ALLEN LEW: About 12...

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: About 12 million dollars.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Approximately 12 million, okay. And if CUNY were to receive this increase in funding what additional services would be included?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I think that would be something that each individual college would determine on their own if we're fortunate enough to get a 250 base aid increase, I think that'll be part of what we allocate to the colleges, I don't think we would have a specific again prescription to each college as to what the money must be used for, I think every college will make that determination based on, on their needs and, and their enrolment patterns.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And if CUNY does not receive this increase what is your contingency plan?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Well we, we're concerned, I mean as I mentioned in my testimony we have a six million dollar efficiencies target from the city for FY 21, which you know we're hoping will, will not increase as part of the executive or adopted budget conditions with the city so we have a six million dollar efficiencies target from the city and if... again if base aid remains flat in the state side with... that's a 5.4 million dollar loss in state aid so we, we're looking at 11.4 million overall that we'd have to reduce our community college budgets by. Of course as we... as we do every year when we have

efficiencies targets we always look for ways that we can offset that in areas outside of the college budgets but for the most part that would have to be reductions from the colleges budgets.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Would that then mean that where there are vacancies that exist those vacancies would not be filled?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I think that if colleges are looking at reductions of that size that that would be a tool that most colleges would employ to help meet that target, they would not fill vacancies, I think most colleges when they're in that situation try to keep those, those vacancies not being filled on the administrative side and not on the faculty side but, but for some colleges it could be a case where they would have to do that on the faculty side as well depending on the level of reduction that they have to make.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Moving on to the TAP Gap, the TAP Gap refers to the difference between a student's TAP grant and her tuition charges. Historically CUNY has to cover this gap and we're interested to hear more on this topic. If the state does not come in and fill this gap estimated at 79

million dollars CUNY has requested eight million dollars a year for the next four years from the state to help cover the difference between the maximum TAP award and the tuition rate, what is CUNY's plan to fill the gap?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh. So, as you mentioned Chair Barron TAP Gap refers to the amount... the difference between the maximum TAP award which is 5,165 dollars and CUNY's tuition rate. So, for community colleges there is no TAP Gap... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...because we're, we're below, we're 4,800 but for senior colleges there is and as you mentioned it's 78 million dollars in the current year and so as, as, as you referenced in our budget request we are requesting eight million dollars a year for the next four years to help close the gap, we know 78 million is a big number to close in any one year and so we want to... we're basically requesting to see progress towards, towards helping to close that. So, again we are in discussions with folks in Albany at all... in all three houses; the executive, Assembly, Senate and we are optimistic that, that when the final budget is enacted on April

1st that there will be some relief towards that TAP Gap for our senior colleges.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: When was the last time that the TAP ceiling was raised and does CUNY anticipate that this ceiling will move any time soon, I'd say you, you're hopeful, is that based on any kind of concrete evidence that it would?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: It's based on discussions, the last time it was raised to 5,065, its been several years, its been maybe five years or so...

[off mic dialogue]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: How... 2015, thank you, 2015 was the last time it was raised to, to 5,165 from 5,000. So, whether its raising the maximum award which, which you know we would... we would support or its providing funds to CUNY and to SUNY to help, help close the TAP Gap whatever way the state decides that they can manage that we would... you know we would be pleased with any, any additional support that we can receive to help close that TAP Gap.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You talked about the decline in freshman enrollment so the enrollment of first-time freshman at CUNY community colleges who

are recent graduates of New York City public schools has gone down, in FY 16 it was 13,769 and in FY 19 12,916. Do you have any information or any data that explains that drop?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Uh-huh, well let me just clarify that new freshman enrollment at the entire university, at the senior colleges and community colleges actually has been increasing and this past year for fall 2019 semester we enrolled over 40,000 new freshmen which was a record at the university, the highest we've ever had in terms of new freshmen. So, new freshman are still coming which is... which is a great sign, part of the reason why overall enrollment is down is we, we're also... been successful on the backend in terms of graduating more students, last year we graduated almost 55,000 students which again was, was a record at the university but for community colleges in particular the issue really has been we believe related to the economy because the economy here in New York is doing so well we believe that's the main factor in why community college enrollment is down and we, we went back and looked at this over 30 years. When you look at the New York City unemployment rates and community

college enrollment at CUNY there's a direct relationship, when the unemployment rate is very low, community college enrollment goes down, when the unemployment rate is high, people are out of work and, and are looking to get additional skills or get an associates degree to help them seek, seek a position, community college enrollment goes up. At... after the recession in 2008, 2009 to 2012 we had a surge in community college enrollment so that we believe is the main factor in why community college enrollments been slipping the last several years.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, you're saying that the economy has a greater impact on enrollment at the community colleges rather than at the senior colleges?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Correct, overall enrollment at the senior colleges has actually been up the last few years but community college enrollment its been... it's been down, I think it's been down I think four years in a row now.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. I want to ask some questions about the research foundation. In fiscal 2017 the research foundation reported over 14,800 full and part time employees, of these

employees how many are full time and how many are part time?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: I don't have that information but you know in the research foundation there are folks who work at the research foundation who are full time employees, there are also folks who work at our campuses in research activities who are considered employees of the research foundation, in terms of the part time staff there are a lot of students who are hired to work on research projects that could be considered part time staff so I don't have the breakdown but we will get that from the research foundation and, and get that information to you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, of the full time and part time employees of the research foundation some of those employees in fact work for CUNY?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Well they're, they're considered employees of the research foundation but I would say the majority of them work at our campuses, there are several hundred that work in the... you know the headquarters of the CUNY research foundation who actually do the grant administration but the majority

of those people are research foundation employees who work on our campuses.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, if you could get us that information, the breakdown of full time, part time and where in fact they are working... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...and how many that is and the other question we have, we would like to know how many employees bridge both the research foundation and CUNY.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Okay, we will... we will get you all that information.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Talking now about CUNY's... [coughs] sorry, preliminary capital commitment plan, the fiscal 2010 through 2024 preliminary capital commitment plan declined slightly by 14.2 million dollars compared to the adopted capital plan totaling 615.8 million dollars. How many projects does this include?

ALLEN LEW: We have all together in terms of new projects we have 200 projects large and small under design, we can provide you will a list.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay and did you talk about how many projects you anticipate completing this year, did you mention that?

ALLEN LEW: Yeah, this... the... there's a list of completed projects in the capital request book from last year, it's on page 185 like almost the last page of the book, you can see the list there or we can send it to you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And how many new projects do you anticipate starting this year?

ALLEN LEW: As I said we have new projects that were 200 projects and we have...

[off mic dialogue]

ALLEN LEW: Okay. So, new projects would be really the projects that are under... in design, the, the 200 number that I, I mentioned before.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: In design?

ALLEN LEW: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. I had asked many, many, many hearings ago for CUNY to let me know what is the value of the assets that they hold, do we have that number yet?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: The value of the assets?

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right, which of the buildings that you own... I know you lease some buildings... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yeah, I think was it 90... is it...

[off mic dialogue]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Rough, rough value they said 30 billion without the land.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: 30 billion without the land.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, thank you. Project prioritization, CUNY relies on 100 buildings to support students across its seven community colleges and the average age of these buildings is more than 50 years while many buildings are closer to 100 years old, how does CUNY prioritize its capital spending?

ALLEN LEW: So, my office works, works collaboratively with the... CUNY's 25 schools and colleges, staff are dedicated to each college and they work with the Vice Presidents and the facility staff at the college level to understand the campus needs and then to define projects to respond to those

needs. In addition as part of our annual capital request process we complete a comprehensive review of each college's capital program, the budget and planning and design staff meet with campus Vice Presidents and facility staff to prioritize those funding requests with emphasis on securing funding to complete projects that are already in process as well as to make sure the most pressing needs are being addressed. Recently we have begun linking our state of good repair data to our capital request program helping to make sure that we are addressing all aspects of the campus's infrastructure needs.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, do you have a list in order of, okay this is the first project, this is the next and if you do where on that list is Kingsborough Community College, I've been there and their library is really, really in need of major capital repairs.

ALLEN LEW: So, so this, this book really lays out all of the needs and... for each of the colleges and all the community colleges... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]

ALLEN LEW: ...and it actually gets into the weeds and the bushes in terms of the particular,

you know projects whether its infrastructure or whether its related to, you know classrooms and laboratories.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right, so I understand that that's a compilation of all of the needs, is there a list that says okay, this is number one, this is number two, number three, number four?

[off mic dialogue]

ALLEN LEW: Yep, okay...

[off mic dialogue]

ALLEN LEW: You know why don't... why don't we... why don't I get that back to you, you know...

[cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay...

ALLEN LEW: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And, and we would like to have a copy of the document that you're holding up... [cross-talk]

ALLEN LEW: Absolutely, we have that...

[cross-talk]

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: We haven't received it, the Counsel has said they haven't received it so we would like to... no, no, you can stay seated, the

Sergeant will get it for you, Sergeant at Arms, we want you to be comfortable... [cross-talk]

ALLEN LEW: Thank you... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...to focus on our questions, we don't want to disturb you. Thank you so much. So, I'd like to find out how the... how, how the list if there is such a list is prioritized and where on the list can I find Kingsborough Community College with their request.

ALLEN LEW: There's a section for Queen... Kingsborough... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: There's a section and its new... enumerated?

[off mic dialogue]

ALLEN LEW: Number one, number one.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, we'll look at that, thank you. Okay, I have a few more questions going back to the research foundation. I understand that the research foundation's role has changed in light of the financial problems that it faced in 2016, can you give me an update on the research foundation's new role?

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Well I would say their role hasn't really changed overall... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...and, and let me just give you a brief description of the research foundation and why it exists and what it does...

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay...

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: So, the research foundations is a, a separately incorporated non for profit, it's a... it's a 501C3, it exists to... on behalf of CUNY to serve the university but it is a separate organization and really what it does is, you know a lot of people talk about efficiencies and shared services and, and I like to describe the research foundation as... you know one of the best examples of a shared service in that all of the research activities that are being generated by our faculty from mostly the federal government but also from the city and the state as well, the research foundation is administering all of these grants so each college... for... another words if we... if we got rid of the research foundation we would have to expend a lot more money for each college to administer their own grants so the fact that we have one organization that administers all of the grants for the colleges is a really efficient way of doing it, all of our colleges

1
2 rely on the research foundation greatly for grant
3 activity, I think we usually generate between 300 and
4 400 million dollars in grant activity a year and so
5 the research foundation provides a really valuable
6 resource to us. So, I know their role is changing so
7 much but, but again they, they do provide a valuable
8 resource and something that our colleges, you know
9 greatly rely on and work very closely with throughout
10 the year.

11 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: What mechanisms have
12 been put in place so that CUNY and the research
13 foundation can ensure that the quote, "overhead
14 funds" aren't abused as they were in 2016?

15 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yet... again I don't... I,
16 I don't... you know I; I wouldn't use the term that
17 overhead funds were abused but... [cross-talk]

18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay... [cross-talk]

19 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...but what's in place
20 is that... and let me again back up and say what
21 overhead funds are so on each grant, so faculty
22 members get a grant from the National Institute of
23 Health, the National Science Foundation... [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh... [cross-talk]
25

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...and there's an amount that is... that the federal government allows us to... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: ...charge for overhead costs, they really go back to the college to cover those overhead costs so those are, you know again administered and monitored through the research foundation, each college decides how best to use those overhead costs, we do have to report them back to the granting agency again whether its NIH or NSF or whoever the granting agency is so we do have to report those as well, the research foundation also is responsible for issuing financial statement... audited financial statements which they do every year and CUNY's financial statements that we issue every year that again externally audited and that we do bring to our board audit committee are what we call comprehensive or we... I should say consolidated financial statements because we include the RF's activity within the CUNY's consolidated financial statements as well so there is a lot of monitoring, there's a lot of auditing and... of all the expenditures that go through the research foundation.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, I had hoped to have had a hearing particularly on the research foundation and we expect that we will have that hearing some time as soon as possible and will at that point CUNY be able to answer as to... I was told that they're still shaping how this foundation is going to proceed and move forward so are you just... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Well yeah I think... and, and we'll be able to answer all of those concerns at... or all those questions I should say at the hearing, I mean right now the research foundation is under interim leadership and so, you know and there is primary leadership there, there, there could be some changes and obviously with, with our new Chancellor and new Provost again there could be a change in direction but their overall function will continue to be grant administration as it has been for over 50 years.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, I think that concludes my questions, I thank you for your presentation... [cross-talk]

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Thank you... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...and if there are other questions that I have overlooked or forgotten we will submit them to you and ask that you respond.

MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you once again for coming and for sharing.

ALLEN LEW: Thank you.

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Oh, we do want to acknowledge that we normally do receive this document that you presented today, we want to acknowledge that we do normally receive it and just hadn't gotten it yet but thank you so much. Okay. We have two panels and the first panel that I'm going to call is the USS panel Samer Hassan from the Young Invincible, Duwayne Wright, Melanie Kruvelis, you can correct the spelling when you come up..

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Marcia Collier and, and Lisa Nishimura and Timothy Hunter. Hopefully they're still here.

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, how long will it take for them to get here?

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: They're at security?

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, since they're not all here we're going to move to the next panel, and we'll let them come when they get in. So, the next panel... no, we're going to wait because the rest of them are not here, okay? Thank you so much, sorry. We're trying to accommodate your requests, but we wanted to all be together. Okay, so the next panel consists of four people Bruce I think that's Jacobs or Jacobi, Red Washburn, Sakia Fletcher, and Annelies DeSong and we are going to ask that you all adhere to a five minute clock so that we can get to hear everybody, thank you. Okay, so please give us your name and your testimony.

BRUCE JACOBS: Good afternoon, my name is Bruce Jacobs, Coalition of the Rockaways and Southeast Queens, fighter for the Rockaways and Southeast Queens, US Navy Veteran, 9/11 first responder and medical and religious freedom. There's a lot of questions and also I have to say, he's not

1 here now but we can't keep on attacking rich people
2 because rich people do give a lot of charity so not
3 every rich person is a danger to our community. On
4 this budget... on this thing I don't like the idea
5 first of all that a nonprofit... how... I don't know how
6 they get the contract, is running the CUNY, why can't
7 CUNY itself handle this kind of work? There are
8 enough youth and enough people in this city that
9 could do this kind of work... [cross-talk]

11 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay... [cross-talk]

12 BRUCE JACOBS: Why can't CUNY hire these
13 people instead of hiring a nonprofit that I do not...
14 maybe they're the greatest nonprofit but the idea
15 that this nonprofit how they get the contracts, they
16 sit in conjunction with CUNY. I know from other stuff
17 in my neighborhoods that a lot of nonprofits don't
18 exactly care about the people so my argument is here...
19 is that they have 40 billion dollars' worth of land,
20 the buildings, CUNY... like Kingsborough Community
21 College library is a total mess and other libraries
22 in the city are a total mess. The idea that they're
23 not willing... instead of leasing out these buildings
24 getting rid of some of this property and putting it
25 into the school system, put it into a new library

1 with the way that money is, you know hard in the city
2 now the thought that they don't want to do that
3 there's something wrong with that. Now my idea... they
4 say that the... with the workforce where this money is
5 going, is this money being investigated, a lot of
6 research money it sounds good but then you got
7 millions and... millions of dollars that is unaccounted
8 for, they already had a problem a couple of years
9 ago, what's to say that they're not going to have a
10 problem again. In my opinion there's a very good
11 chance that the same problems could happen. I think
12 that CUNY itself should hire in the CUNY system and
13 SUNY whatever, people from their communities to work
14 instead of nonprofits in all of this. Now another
15 thing, they got to... they say that they're giving out
16 all kinds of 1.2 billion, they're throwing around
17 figures that people can't even walk the streets in
18 their neighborhoods and they can't get a job of
19 course I went to college and yeah I was a veteran,
20 I've got a four year degree and you know what, it
21 didn't get me nothing, if it was due to... more people
22 to go to school but New York... I had New York City
23 Transit Authority it helped me, it helped me to get a
24 good paying job. They're throwing around numbers,

what kind of jobs are these jobs that they're getting people, are they using people for like minimum wage jobs, minimum wage jobs you can't afford to keep going to college or are they giving these people good jobs. The way that he was explaining to me it sounded like they're using the guys going to school, they act like yeah they're giving them experience but they can't afford to live so of course there's not going to be a lot of guys to be going to college. It doesn't matter, you want to try to diversify in all this, it doesn't really work that way, if you can't afford to go to school I don't care if it's cheap, if you can't pay your rent and you can't, you know pay for safety in your neighborhoods how are you going to go to school, you have to pay to support your family, it's not so easy, you know I... everybody wants to go to school, if you have good parents they got a few dollars, they could afford to keep you in their house yeah you could afford it but otherwise it's very hard. Yeah, they give you grants to go to school but it's not really a grant to help you live. And the last thing I'm going to say is that you could be a good student in CUNY and you could get ahead and it doesn't matter what you give you people the person

1
2 themselves have to concentrate and want to get ahead
3 in life, giving everything and just putting a guy in
4 school that's not the problem, its keeping a person
5 in school to do good with their life. Thank you very
6 much.

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, next
8 panelist.

9 SAKIA FLETCHER: Hello, good afternoon.
10 My name is Sakia Fletcher, I'm SGA President of
11 Medgar Evers College. I want to first and foremost
12 say thank you for allowing me the time to speak and
13 to Chairperson Barron I just want to say thank you
14 also. I'm here to talk about one thing and its this
15 capital investment in Medgar Evers College. I know we
16 had a CUNY representative that was here and he spoke
17 briefly about some of the capital investments that
18 they have in up and coming schools however in the
19 projects that I have seen and in the projects and
20 communication with administration at my school
21 there's no capital investments to get students at
22 Medgar Evers College out of dormitory classrooms.
23 There's a huge concern because as a, a campus that is
24 a senior college not a community college we are the
25 only campus that still occupies and uses portable

trailers. This is very concerning because not only does the college use the trailers but also the high school preparatory, Medgar Evers College preparatory high school. I'm here today not to point fingers or to accuse anybody but to see how we can work into getting Medgar Evers College a new building and investing capital investments in this college. Medgar Evers College is a very important college not only I believe to you Chairwoman because you have a large constituency at this Brooklyn College but also I know that I personally had classroom with your son Jawanza, we were on the same... in the same class, public administration, public policy where we had class in the dormitories and when we had to do our project, our power point presentation we actually had to wear our coats during the presentation. The reason why we had to wear our coats because these dormitories are too cold in the wintertime. Usually when the summertime comes its too hot. The conditions in these dormitories are something that is very concerning in this day and age that as a... as an institution that is named and... after Medgar Evers College we still have to deal with academic conditions that is very deploring and really speaks

to the foundation and makes students believe that do we really care, do students through the community... does the... does the city really care about students, do they want to see improvements, do... how much are we really investing in social economic mobility of African American students. Our college has 85 percent or, or higher of African American population, we are a PBI, a predominately black institution, 73 percent of the population is female population, they come from homes of single parent households. The importance of the college I know that... I know that Chairwoman you already know the importance of the college, we graduate women of color who go on to be Council Members that go on to be elected officials who are graduates of law school, city... CUNY Law and go on to do great things however at the college right now we cannot... we don't have room, we don't have room for classrooms, the capacity of the college has grown to the point where the class... that the population is not growing because the capacity and the size of the college is not increasing. So, that means our enrollment is actually going down be... students cannot go here, they don't... they don't see it as an... as a place to go because there, there really is no space.

1 We talk about pipelines and we talk about 12 through
2 K pipelines to college however at my college, Medgar
3 Evers College there's no space to put these... to put
4 these students in right now at the college. There...
5 we, we are really watching the neighborhood be
6 gentrified, we are watching new buildings and capital
7 investments be... go up around the surrounding areas
8 however Medgar Evers College is not on the table.
9 The... it's not in any conversation, its not mentioned
10 in terms of getting a new building, getting students
11 out of portable dormitories, these portable
12 dormitories have been there for almost 15 plus years
13 and, and I haven't heard, I haven't seen and I
14 personally would love to talk to, to you and anyone
15 else from the Council of how we can really move to
16 getting students to have appropriate academic
17 infrastructure. I appreciate your time and I just
18 really want to see CUNY, the city and the state
19 really invest in Medgar Evers College for it to
20 really increase the enrollment of not only the high
21 school, the preparatory high school and, and that
22 preparatory high school was one of the top high
23 schools in Brooklyn, they graduate on an 85 percent
24 ratio where their students go on to Ivy League
25

colleges and their students go on to do great things however the, the high school itself doesn't have a gymnasium so I just really want to work towards how we can get Medgar Evers College and Medgar Evers preparatory high school to have adequate academic infrastructure. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you so much and we can certainly look into the fact that I believe the Vice President said that they do meet with local persons at the college campus to try to strategize and see what they can do so we can certainly pursue that further, thank you so much. Okay, we're now back to the USS panel. We're going to call Timothy Hunter, Samer Hassan, Duwayne Wright, Melanie Kruvelis, Kruvelis, Marcia Collier and Lisa Nishimura and you can certainly give us the correct pronunciation on your name in your testimony.

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you so much, I'll start on my left and ask that you share your testimony and we will put you on the clock for five minutes each, thank you, you may begin, give us your name then your testimony.

TIMOTHY HUNTER: Alright, so good

afternoon Madame Chairman of the... Inez Barron. As always, it's good seeing you and the other members of the Higher Ed Committee. My name is Timothy Hunter, Chairperson of the University Student Senate and Student Trustee for the City University of New York. I'm here because, you know there's a lot of problems that we're dealing with here in CUNY and you know my colleague Sakia highlighted some of those problems as well specifically at Medgar Evers and at other college campuses. We understand that the City Council like, you know handles a lot of our community colleges and of course there are some specific asks that we want to make sure that the City Council strongly, strongly considers before we continue. First things first that I definitely want to highlight before we even get into anything else is the university's stance on tuition and I heard the other city Council Member, like I think Council Member Brad Lander speak about tuition compare... in comparison to Ivy League and private schools but we need to understand that like the City University of New York is not a private school and should not be compared to these schools because we are a different

caliber that serves a different constituency and its important that we continue to keep that schooling affordable. Not only that but City Council like, you know funds at community colleges for the most part and also the city... the community college tuition is the highest here compared to our 75 mile radius of schools in New York City so there are SUNY... I think there's only two other like community colleges that have tuition rates that are above 5,000 but our 4,800 mark is among the highest in a 75 mile radius which means we're, we're like the least affordable community college in like the area of like the tristate. So, kind of like seeing that like holistically and seeing that those are the same numbers that like, you know our CFO put up in presentation to the board but for some reason neglected or omitted, you know during his testimony it kind of worries me that you know the Council may get mislead or other members of the Council may get mislead when it comes to the talk of tuition policy. The second thing I wanted to talk about is, you know the cost of like earning the degree has, has like just increased dramatically, you know you were fortunate enough to attend, you know free CUNY and

we... that's something that we also want to kind of get back to however its impossible to do that if we continue to increase tuition and put the burden on the backs of our students. As we kind of look at the, the other things that we want to achieve, another one of our big talking points that we spoke about briefly is single stop being a one stop shop for all. So, if you look at our testimony on page two there's a student named Taylor McMahon who attended Hostos Community College who had to skip breakfast and lunch and a lot of other things and like had no financial support at home but due to like having a single stop on, on her campus she was able to kind of like, you know help... like use... like help like file her taxes, kind of use that space as a one stop shop for everything that she needed which turned into money for her to like, you know like, like buy more text books and they also helped her to apply for food stamps and also other SNAP benefits as well and not only that but then some single stops also give opportunities, you know for food insecurities and if you look at the third page we have those things listed such as like you know providing training and outreach to students to promote awareness and fight

1 stigmas, offering special programs and tax
2 preparation services for students. The problem with
3 single stop though is that its only at all of our
4 community colleges, one senior college and its not at
5 any other like you know of our like senior colleges
6 like City Tech, Medgar Evers, Baruch and you know we
7 don't want to call it like single stop but we're
8 trying to refer to it as like single stop like
9 support services due to some like contract confusion
10 we don't want to like liberate that but we think
11 that, you know this is something that CUNY has asked
12 for last year in their budget, I'm surprised to see
13 that they didn't ask for it this year again which
14 kind of worries me as well but last year they asked
15 for 2.4 million dollars to expand single stop to all
16 of their campuses, to all senior colleges, that's
17 something that we definitely support, it costs I
18 think 220,000 to run a single stop per campus so
19 instead of just doing a one time like you know
20 million dollar investment in food insecurity and then
21 us having to come and beg for it again next year we
22 think maybe a 2.4 million dollar investment in single
23 stop that like also can be a vehicle for not only
24 food insecurity but also menstrual product insecurity
25

1 that we know that the women's caucus is extremely
2 interested in. We think that would be some great
3 opportunities to get more involved. In the interest
4 of time I want to talk about some of the other
5 things, of course you know we fully support an
6 expansion of ASAP and the restoration of our child
7 care services which is later on in our testimony and
8 also our menstrual equity at our community colleges,
9 that's something that we've been speaking with
10 Council Member Helen Rosenthal about but we also want
11 to make sure that like you know we're helping our
12 students like you know through CUNY Citizenship Now
13 and expanding that to most full campuses. One of our
14 priority campuses are... is Staten Island so we would
15 encourage... you know we had a conversation with the
16 staff of Debi Rose, we know that she's not like
17 really like active right now but we want to make sure
18 that we kind of bring CUNY Citizenship Now to the
19 college of Staten Island so that we have... the
20 students there have opportunities, you know to, you
21 know not only like figure out what's the next steps
22 but like, you know after they graduate but also stay
23 around in New York City and contribute to the
24 community at large and you know potentially, you know

be in these same seats listening to us and helping us fund higher education as a whole. So, thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Next panelist.

MELANIE KRUEVELIS: Great. I... great, good afternoon. My name is Melanie Kruevelis and I'm the Senior Manager of Policy and Advocacy at Young Invincibles. We are a nonprofit dedicating... dedicated to elevating young adults in the political process and expanding economic opportunities for our generation. I wanted to thank the New York City Council and the Committee on Higher Education and Chair Barron for the opportunity to testify at today's hearing. Today's preliminary budget hearing for the Committee on Higher Education comes at a critical moment for New York's college students. Today, nine out of every ten jobs created in the US goes to those with a college degree. Here in New York City, workers with a bachelor's degree earn on average 550 dollars more a week than those with a high school diploma alone. So, while there are multiple pathways to a living wage career, a college degree does remain one of the best bets a person can make to attain long term economic stability. And as

we heard earlier today, researchers point out that here in New York City the CUNY system in particular is one of the nation's most important resources for propelling generations of low income students into the middle class and that's a really critical point given the makeup and experiences of the CUNY student body. We know that about half of CUNY students come from households making less than 20,000 dollars a year and we also know that CUNY students are experiencing homelessness and hunger at alarming rates. A 2019 survey of 22,000 CUNY undergraduates found about half struggle with food insecurity while nearly 15 percent experience homelessness in a given year. We do also know that CUNY students are balancing their lives as college students with responsibilities outside of school including working part time or full time and caretaking responsibilities. In short, for many CUNY students college is one... just one of the many responsibilities and costs that they face. Today, as we consider the city's commitment to the public higher education system, we have to recognize the reality for New York's college students. While CUNY's tuition prices are lower than many other public university systems,

though increasing now at both the, the senior and community college, CUNY students are also living in one of the expensive... most expensive regions in the country so affording tuition is just one piece of the puzzle when it comes to all that students must cover including rent, food, transportation, health care and child care. So thus we urge any enacted budget for fiscal year 2021 must recognize that reality and as such we urge the Council and the Mayor to build on recent investments made towards investing... addressing basic needs among CUNY's college students that includes the recent pilot aimed at addressing food insecurity on campus as well as our support for single stops as Tim just mentioned and recent investments in CUNY campus child care which had reversed decades of flat investment in campus child care. We also are urging the Council to work with elected in Albany and beyond to support investments and programs like CUNY ASAP and ACE and are going to continue to work with students to urge our state elected to address the serious implications of the TAP Gap and its impact on student success. As the Council and the Mayor work towards an enacted budget, we also believe it is critical to hear from students

1 themselves and the challenges and opportunities they
2 identify in their campuses. Today I'm joined by Samer
3 Hassan, our Policy and Advocacy fellow at Young
4 Invincibles and a senior at Columbia College. I'm
5 also joined by three CUNY students and young
6 advocates; Marcia, Lisa and Duwayne from CUNY
7 colleges. So, I urge the Committee on Higher
8 Education to consider the concerns and the solutions
9 that they are bringing to the table today. Thank you
10 for your time.
11

12 SAMER HASSAN: Thank you, Melanie. Good
13 afternoon, my name is Samer Hassan and I'm a senior
14 at Columbia University studying political science.
15 I'm also the Northeast Policy and Advocacy Fellow
16 with Young Invincibles. I want to thank the New York
17 City Council and the Committee of... on Higher
18 Education for the opportunity to testify at today's
19 hearing. Columbia University is known for its large
20 endowment and Ivy League status but I'm here to tell
21 you that the reality between its beautiful façade and
22 the students within it are very different. I
23 transferred from a community college and was
24 instantly aware of the inequities at school. As I
25 listened to the struggles of my fellow college peers

1 around New York City, I can't help but notice the
2 dynamics between community college students and four-
3 year colleges and how they mirror each other. There
4 is a connection between these public and private
5 institutions and that is their inability to tackle
6 real world problems like basic needs of which so many
7 New York City students face. Student homelessness and
8 housing insecurity are rampant in not only the city
9 but across the nation. In fact, even at Columbia
10 there are students sleeping in 24-hour libraries and
11 only eating food provided by school events. In
12 today's society, it is normal for students to have to
13 choose between food or a textbook. There is an
14 inherent problem here, one that I don't believe many
15 colleges are taking into account, the reality that
16 many of New York's student can't afford to have the
17 luxury to just be students. The average student has
18 many additional costs to cover than just tuition and
19 this is not limited to Columbia students but to every
20 college student across the city that I have
21 encountered. I am able to attend Columbia due to a
22 prestigious scholarship for first-generation low-
23 income students, it pays my tuition but only my
24 tuition. While the scholarship itself is purported to
25

1
2 be an amazing opportunity for its recipients, the
3 reality is that students, myself included, are coming
4 from nothing and require more aid than the school is
5 willing to help with. For example, our financial aid
6 office told us to apply for the Pell Grant as it
7 would help us cover the cost of housing.

8 Unfortunately, after receiving the grant, Columbia
9 took the aid and applied it to the scholarship I
10 already had, essentially turning my scholarship into
11 a last dollar program. State and federal financial
12 student aid should go to the students who desperately
13 need the money, not the institutions who have the
14 connections to establish other avenues of financial
15 backing. I'm here to ask the City Council to provide
16 housing, transportation and food programs that
17 support all college and university students in New
18 York City. I am here to ask you to hold more private
19 institutions like Columbia University accountable to
20 ensure that the basic needs of students are met and
21 that eligible nontuition grants be given directly to
22 students who have a duty to ensure all of our
23 students have a level playing field in order to
24 attain a quality education. Our school tells first-
25 generation low-income students like me to focus on

our studies and we'll eventually begin climbing the ladder of social capital and economic opportunity. But we respond by saying that we can't even get to these ladders in the first place because we're too busy working just to live. What we want and desperately need is a level playing field. We are smart, talented, and civically engaged members of society but you will never know that because we're too busy just trying to survive. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, next panelist.

MARCIA COLLIER: Good afternoon, my name is Marcia Collier and I'm a senior at City College studying medicine and psychology. Thank you to Councilwoman Barron and the Committee on Higher Education for the opportunity to testify at today's hearing. I'm here today to ask the City Council to urge Albany to action and close the TAP Gap and to consider my plan to generate the revenue needed to help fill a portion of that gap. I would also like to ask city legislators to expand the CUNY ASAP and ACE programs across New York City. CUNY and SUNY systems maximum tap award in recent years does not cover the full extent of tuition. 42 percent of city college

1 students receive TAP and use it as their primary
2 method to pay their tuition, that's 6,739 students at
3 City College alone. According to the Professional
4 Staff Congress Union, there is 139-million-dollar
5 deficit that leaves CUNY to cover 74 million of that
6 gap. Consequences are but not limited to staff
7 shortages, limited course availability, increased
8 workloads on remaining staff and fewer advisors or
9 resources for students overall. Prior to 2011,
10 students would have their tuition costs covered by
11 TAP with colleges receiving adequate TAP payments to
12 help cover costs including libraries and adequate
13 support services. In my time at City College I've
14 seen my fellow classmates drop out of college because
15 it was no longer affordable unless they could find
16 thousands of dollars to pay off the balance.
17 Furthermore, remaining balances puts holds on
18 student's accounts leaving them unable to register
19 for classes or receive a transcript. As a low-income
20 student, it is crucial TAP covers the full tuition
21 amount so I may access the resources and be able to
22 afford to stay in school. The early outcomes report
23 for the City University of New York, CUNY ASAP
24 program stated the success of the program over the
25

past ten years. As of fall 2009 more than 90 percent of ASAP two-year graduates indicated plans to transfer to four-year colleges. Students attending four-year colleges like myself have found it difficult to afford the 127-dollar metro card monthly for school. Student fees, tuition, food, housing and transportation costs make it difficult to keep a budget for low income students manageable and realistic. ASAP, ASAP graduates overwhelmingly credit the financial incentives and comprehensive advising as to why they graduated. The... this program has been piloted at two senior CUNY colleges in the form of the Accelerate, Complete and Engage program or ACE which has already seen positive outcomes. It would be more impactful if all four-year colleges had this program which would result in higher graduation rates, less incidences of requiring welfare benefits and increased tax contribution from educated individuals that are now in a higher tax bracket. I'm proposing a plan that New York City may be interested in piloting; a ten-cent increase on the toll of New York City bridges and tunnels will generate about 56 million dollars a year. Over the course of one and a half years the CUNY TAP Gap would be fully closed.

This small investment would, would improve our college system and provide more tax generating graduates which would bring in a lasting return. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, next panelist.

DUWAYNE WRIGHT: Good afternoon, my name is Duwayne Wright and I am a senior at Borough of Manhattan Community College. I will be attending Baruch in the fall pursuing a degree in business. Thank you to the Councilwoman Barron and Council... and Committee on Higher Education for the opportunity to testify at today's hearing. I am here today to ask the City Council to increase investments in CUNY, both for programs and services that better support students through, through to college completion but also to cover the cost of tuition for students. Over nearly the past decade, CUNY has increased tuition significantly and as a result it has become increasingly unaffordable to many. Even with state programs like the Excelsior scholarship, programs are so restrictive that many people are not eligible. College was created as a means to... a means to a better quality of life. However, the given, given the

rising costs of college that is not always the same... always the case. In 1636, traditional higher education within the United States began in Boston. Other states soon caught on and then the rest of the world. However, with the boom, there emerged a lack of room for certain economic... ethnic groups due to the cost of college. In the last four decades, the price of college has increased exponentially and caused the student loan crisis. Today over one million people attend college with a staggering 70 percent of them in debt. The financial epidemic cripples students nationwide. As a result, it is hurting our, our economy and the financial future of students as they cannot afford to put a down payment on a home and build... and build other avenues of wealth as they are burdened with debt. College is expensive enough with tuition. However, above tuition costs such as housing, food and transportation, make college less of a reality. In fact, 42 percent of CUNY students had household incomes less than 20,000 dollars annually. In addition, in a city like New York, it is immensely expensive to be a student. In fact, a report by the Hope Center at Temple University recently revealed that 14 percent of CUNY

1 students experience homelessness and over half have
2 experienced housing insecurity. It is clear that CUNY
3 is not adequately supporting students. Why aren't
4 more programs like ASAP, which have been shown to
5 double graduation rates being expanded? Why aren't
6 more academic, financial and other support services
7 being adequately funded across each CUNY institution?
8 These are the questions that I ask today, in hopes
9 that you provide more students with the resources
10 that they need to be successful and graduate from
11 college. Thank you.

12
13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

14 LISA NISHIMURA: Good afternoon, my name
15 is Lisa Nishimura. I'm a senior at John Jay College
16 of Criminal Justice graduating this May with my
17 bachelor's degree in criminology. Thank you
18 Councilwoman Barron and the Committee on Higher
19 Education for the opportunity to share my story and
20 present challenges that I faced during my time at
21 John Jay in hopes of improving CUNY policies to allow
22 more students like myself the opportunity to afford
23 college. I'm here today to ask you to take steps to
24 provide funding opportunities for students like me,
25 who cannot receive either federal or state financial

aid due to their inability to provide certain documentation, something which is outside of their control. I would also like to see the eligibility requirements for programs like ACE to made available to more students in the future and would like the eligibility criteria to be expanded to allow for more sophomores to enter into the program. These investments will help ensure that more students like me have access to financial aid and other programs that help make college affordable. Throughout my entire five years at John Jay, I was unable to receive any state or federal aid, having solely to rely on scholarships and work to pay my tuition. While I received a 1,000-dollar scholarship from my honors program every semester, this scholarship was not enough to cover even half of my tuition. As a result, every semester I was met with a Bursar Hold, preventing me from registering for classes until I paid off the remaining balance which was usually 3,000 dollars. To some, 3,000 dollars may not... may be a small amount. However, coming from a low-income family, with a single mother, this amount could have been used to pay for my rent, bills or food. To obtain aid, I have tried numerous avenues, all with

1 dead ends. I tried applying for the Excelsior
2 Scholarship, but because it required FAFSA completion
3 and documentation I was not able to apply. I even
4 tried filing to be an independent student because if
5 granted this status I would be eligible to both... to
6 both state and federal aid. Ultimately, I was denied
7 independent status. The bit of hope I had to not
8 relive the same financial nightmare I had experienced
9 came crashing down. On top of it all, the financial
10 aid office was not helpful in finding alternative
11 means of funding. They simply said there was nothing
12 they could do and that was the end of it. program
13 requirements also continued to prevent me from
14 participating in other programs. Even programs such
15 as the ACE program that provides funding for
16 textbooks and free metro cards, I could not be a part
17 of due to certain requirements. As an honors student,
18 I was not eligible and the following year when the
19 policy was changed to admit honors students, I was no
20 longer eligible because I was a sophomore and not an
21 entering freshman. Despite the socioeconomic barriers
22 I continued to face, being able to graduate is a huge
23 feat and one that I take pride in. However, I know
24 that this is not the reality... the reality for many
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1 students who are in my situation. I once asked again
2 the New York City Council to invest in programs that
3 support students who are in situations similar to
4 mine and help them realize their college dreams.
5 Thank you.

6
7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I want to thank the
8 panel for their testimony, I want to acknowledge
9 we've been joined by a member of the Committee,
10 Council Member Ulrich who's here and certainly your
11 testimony is critical to what it is that we are
12 trying to improve in CUNY's programs and intent and
13 their plan, certainly all the things you've talked
14 about are critical, the increasing tuition even
15 though they've frozen it for four years or whatever
16 its still increasing much more than what it had been
17 previously and we want to continue to make sure that
18 Albany does its part, that they increase the support
19 that they give and not rely on student tuition as I
20 said earlier to operate the college and the programs
21 that are going on. So, we want to thank you all,
22 encourage you. As I said I didn't have to pay tuition
23 because CUNY was free and that certainly is the
24 objective that we have going forward to make sure
25 that we can make sure that postsecondary education is

free to all of those who are residents of the city and who have the desire to go on and achieve those goals. So, thank you once again for your testimony and wish you all the best. Thank you.

MELANIE KRUEVELIS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I'm sorry, Council Member Ulrich do you have any comments, okay, thank you. Okay, we have one more panel. Annelies DeSong, Santana Alvarado, Emelia Decaudin, you can correct the pronunciation when you come up, and Deborah Bell. Okay. Thank you. Oh, as you're seated you may begin in the order that you choose.

ANNELIES DESONG: Good afternoon, my name is Annelies DeSong and I am a freshman at the City College of New York pursuing a major in business administration. I'm also a senator for our undergraduate student government. I'd like to thank Councilwoman Barron and the Committee, Committee of Higher Education for holding this meeting and allowing me to speak on CUNY funding. Believing that higher education is a privilege that one should finance themselves whether that be public or private contradicts the need for an educated working class as a common benefit. While the state is required to pay

the expense of the Excelsior Scholarship neither the state nor the city are required to provide funding to finance the TAP Gap. The current expense of the TAP Gap is at 79 million dollars and if an effort was made to close this gap CUNY schools could use that money for student resources instead of compensating for what neither the student nor TAP can pay for. It could fund support services like single stop and expand them to all CUNY campuses. The TAP Gap hurts students struggling... in struggling communities the most because when more students cannot afford to pay the rest of their tuition schools that are already underfunded have to allocate a larger portion of their already insufficient budgets just to give underprivileged students access to an education. CUNY levels the playing field for students from all backgrounds and contributes largely to the middle class of New York City. This is not something we want to lose because we are unable to see the importance of closing the TAP Gap and funding certain programs. Compelling for the need to subsidize cost deficits for students in impractical... is impractical and unfair to the students they serve. It is important to fund programs such as ASAP, SEEK and single stop so

that underprivileged students can pursue their education on grounds equal to their peers. College degrees are becoming more and more necessary, removing barriers to obtaining one is critical to ensuring that more people can participate in the middle class. With that being said, the Council has the potential to lift an enormous burden off of students. Thank you for your time.

SANTANA ALVARADO: Good afternoon, what a beautiful day. My name is Santana Alvarado and I am the Chairperson of the New York Public Interest Research Group, NYPIRG student Board of Directors and a CUNY Hunter College student. NYPIRG is the state's largest nonpartisan student advocacy organization. Our Board of Directors consists of college and university students elected from campuses with NYPIRG chapters across the state. Through NYPIRG, CUNY students are educated and empowered to impact policy decisions on issues that affect us as well as the community at large including decisions about funding for public higher education. We appreciate this opportunity to share our suggestions in response to the Mayor's preliminary budget proposal. We urge you to freeze public college tuition at community

colleges. Community colleges are a local and potentially affordable path to a higher degree or a better job for many New Yorkers including those who need to be close to their families, homes and jobs. Moreover, community colleges provide crucial job training and re-training for underemployed and unemployed workers in a rapidly shifting economic environment. New York Community colleges tuition costs are among the highest in the nation creating a barrier where access must be paramount. Tuition rates at community colleges have been frozen for the past four fiscal years however without adequate support for the city or state... from the city or state, CUNY community colleges will be raising tuition 200 dollars next year. This will be an unfair burden placed on some of the most vulnerable New Yorkers particularly those who do not qualify for financial aid such as those who cannot commit to a full-time course load. Currently nearly 40 percent of CUNY's community college students attend part time. We have heard from many students who are parents, have jobs and other responsibilities which do not allow them to take on a full course load. We urge the City Council to ensure that students and families are protected

from the burden of a tuition increase at CUNY community colleges. CUNY's budget requests include a 250 per full time equivalent increase at community colleges from the city and state. We urge this funding request be met and we urge that the city cover the additional 16 million needed to ensure tuition remains frozen. NYPIRG appreciates the attention brought to food insecurity by CUNY and the city including the food insecurity pilot program launched this academic year. We support the scaling of cafeteria voucher programs to more students and more campuses. We look forward to continuing the work together in service to campus food pantries and by supporting policies which combat hunger on campus. We urge the New York City Council to provide sustained funding that reduce and eliminate college student food and housing insecurity more permanently. NYPIRG also urges the New York City Council to provide funding to hire new campus counselors and provide training to current and new staff and volunteers. Critically these costs must be added to CUNY's operating budget allocations from the city and state and must not burden students with additional fees. When we talk about supporting student's mental health

programs, we don't need to further saddle students with the cost, that's not helping. Many students are eligible for public benefits that could help them make it through college and finish their degree, the single stop program at CUNY provides an essential service in helping connect students to the millions of dollars and public benefits that they are eligible for including housing, SNAP benefits, health insurance, tax preparation and financial counseling. Single stop has received national recognition for its tremendous success, and we support the expansion of single stop offices to all CUNY campuses. NYPIRG also urges the City Council to watchdog proposed cuts to CUNY childcare funding in Governor Cuomo's executive budget for New York State and guard against any possible program cuts. Additionally, ASAP and other opportunity programs including search for education, elevation, and knowledge or SEEK and College Discovery offer many benefits to students and to our city and they should be expanded. CUNY has also proposed a Math Start ASAP pilot program expansion to intensively address math proficiency among 1,200 students over the next four years and to expand its ACE program, the four year adaptation of the

1
2 successful CUNY ASAP, to 5,000 students over the next
3 four years. NYPIRG urges the New York City Council to
4 protect and increase funding to opportunity programs
5 including the two pilot program expansions listed
6 above. I'm a product of Bronx Community College, of
7 ASAP, of single stop and all of these services that
8 we're here to recognize and advocate for and I know
9 that there are thousands of students who are
10 struggling in New York City that need our support so
11 I'm so glad to be here to testify and I urge you all
12 to continue working with us. Thank you.

13 DEBORAH BELL: Good morning. My name is
14 Deborah Bell, I'm the Executive Director of
15 Professional Staff Congress which is the union that
16 represents 30,000 faculty and staff at CUNY. We are
17 here to acknowledge the role of this Committee and,
18 and you Chairwoman Barron in your advocacy for
19 students, for faculty, for staff over the years, we,
20 we appreciate it and I personally appreciate your
21 acknowledgement of women's history month at the
22 beginning of our hearing today. In addition, I want
23 to acknowledge the fact that the city has funded our
24 recently negotiated contract, the state has not in a
25 full sense. The city has stepped up and that contract

is an important piece in being responsive to what the students are seeking today, that is to say providing salary increases, fringe benefits, stabilizing factor in the university and committing to do that over the, the period of the contract. We have... as you know we have worked with CUNY and with the city to make significant improvements in adjunct pay, that is going to make a huge difference to students as well because we are ensuring that adjuncts will have the time to meet with students and work with them to succeed in their courses. Having said that we are here today to ask you to consider an additional 81 million dollars over and above what the Mayor has proposed in his budget and over and above the 23 million dollars we hope you will seek to continue the council funded programs. We support doing that, but we want to draw your attention to the fact that there is an opportunity here to make some creative moves in terms of serving the student needs at CUNY. We propose an additional 30 million dollars for community colleges for a cohort of scholars and counselors, 280 and this is on page two of my testimony, 280, one city fellow, this is a concept that Barbara Bowen brought to you several years back,

1 she unfortunately couldn't be here today because
2 she's in Albany with our members advocating for more
3 state money, 150 new full time faculty positions in
4 the community colleges, 140 new academic advisors,
5 career counselors and mental health counselors and I
6 will say Chairwoman Barron in response to your
7 question to CUNY, the union's approach is that CUNY
8 needs one mental health counselor for every 1,000 FTE
9 students at the university that requires a
10 significant increase and that... those increases vary
11 from college to college as the university indicated
12 but the... they have to hire more people to do this
13 work and career counselors and academic advisors to
14 really serve the students. We also support CUNY's
15 request for 34 million dollars for the senior
16 colleges, we think... you know the math Vice Chancellor
17 Sapienza explained, its bringing that contribution
18 rate up to date with HEPPI index but we would
19 recommend using that in a new more creative way.
20 Again, a one city fellows' program to provide 175 new
21 full-time faculty positions and 150 staff advisor and
22 counselor positions in the senior colleges. We
23 believe that by identifying a program that crosses
24 community and senior college lines it can help bind
25

1 together the entire university, it can be a focus for
2 diversity hiring that you've stressed over the years
3 to CUNY, it can also be a focus for moving full... part
4 time faculty into full time faculty positions, there
5 are a lot of experienced hard working part time
6 faculty who really can serve the students better if
7 they are appointed to full time positions. Having
8 said that we are in opposition to the wellness fee as
9 of course all the students are but we... so we believe
10 that the other funds should be dedicated to expanding
11 the university's capacity. Also we... because I'm going
12 to run out of time, we support the four million
13 dollars for program cuts that were in the preliminary
14 budget as the students have talked about, 102 million
15 dollars for increased costs for building maintenance
16 and energy costs and the 11.5 million dollars it will
17 cost to freeze tuition at the community colleges.
18 This is all critical. So... we also support the capital
19 budget request, I just want to put that in and
20 appreciate the questions you raised with the
21 university, we do believe they are doing their best
22 and it is... it is an opportunity this year because the
23 states agreed to match funding twice over to really
24 focus on capital funding. Thank you very much.
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COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you to the
panel for coming and for sharing your perspective on
how we can improve CUNY. We appreciate your
testimony. Are there any others wishing to provide
testimony at the hearing? Seeing none we will now
adjourn this hearing, thank you very much.

[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date March 26, 2020