

1 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON
2 EDUCATION, SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET, COMMITTEE
3 ON HEALTH, THE COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH,
4 DISABILITIES AND ADDICTION AND THE COMMITTEE ON
5 PUBLIC HOUSING 1

6 CITY COUNCIL
7 CITY OF NEW YORK

8 ----- X

9 TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

10 Of the

11 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH THE
12 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
13 CAPITAL BUDGET, COMMITTEE ON HEALTH,
14 THE COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH, DISABILITIES
15 AND ADDITION AND THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
16 HOUSING

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18 May 19, 2021

19 Start: 9:07 a.m.

20 Recess: 5:03 p.m.

21 HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 2)

22 B E F O R E: Daniel Dromm,
23 Chairperson for Finance

24 Mark Treyger,
25 Chairperson for Committee on
Education

Helen K. Rosenthal,
Chairperson for Committee on
Capital Budget

Mark Levine,
Chairperson for Committee on
Health

Farah Louis,
Chairperson for Committee on
Mental Health, Disabilities and
Addiction

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5 PUBLIC HOUSING 2

6 Alicka Ampry-Samuel,
7 Chairperson for Committee on
8 Public Housing

9 COUNCIL MEMBERS:

10 Adrienne E. Adams
11 Alicka Ampry-Samuel
12 Diana Ayala
13 Selvena N. Brooks-Powers
14 Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
15 Laurie A. Cumbo
16 Darma V. Diaz
17 Vanessa L. Gibson
18 Barry S. Grodenchik
19 Karen Koslowitz
20 Farah N. Louis
21 Steven Matteo
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Rafael Salamanca
Robert F. Holden
Mark Levine
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Mark Gjonaj
R. Diaz, Sr.

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A P P E A R A N C E S

Meisha Porter
Chancellor of the New York City Public School
System

LaShawn Robinson
Deputy Chancellor for School Climate & Wellness,
Department of Education

Adrienne Austin
Acting Deputy Chancellor at New York City
Department of Education

Josh Wallack
Deputy Chancellor, Early Childhood Education and
Student Enrollment at New York City Department of
Education

Linda Chen
Chief Academic Officer for New York City
Department of Education

Lauren Siciliano
Chief Administrative Officer for New York City
Department of Education

Kevin Moran
Chief School Operations Officer for New York City
Department of Education

Mirza Sanchez Medina
Lead of Division of Multilingual Learners for New
York City Department of Education

Lindsey Oates
Chief Financial Officer for New York City
Department of Education

Sarah Jonas
Leads the School Support and Capacity Building
Teams for New York City Department of Education

Christina Foti
Deputy Chief Academic Officer, Specialized
Instruction for New York City Department of
Education

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

Nina Kubota
President and CEO at New York City School
Construction Authority

Karin Goldmark
Deputy Chancellor of School Planning and Design
at New York City Department of Education

Scott Strickland
Deputy Chief Information Officer of Strategy and
Governance at New York City Department of
Education

John Shea
Chief Executive Officer at New York City
Department of Education

Elizabeth Williams
Director, Data and Analytics at New York City
Department of Education

Thomas Taratko
Chief Executive Officer, Space Management at New
York City Department of Education

Dr. Dave Chokshi
Commissioner of the New York City Department of
Health and Mental Hygiene

Dr. Torian Easterling
First Deputy Commissioner, Chief Equity Officer
at New York City Department of Health and Mental
Hygiene

Sami Jarrah
CFO/Deputy Commissioner at New York City
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Myla Harrison
Assistant Commissioner of Bureau of Mental Health
at New York City Department of Health and Mental
Hygiene

Michelle Morse
Chief Medical Officer at New York City Department
of Health and Mental Hygiene

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

Daniel Stephens
Deputy Commissioner at New York City Department
of Health and Mental Hygiene

Corinne Schiff
Assistant Commissioner at New York City
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Julie Friesen
Deputy Commissioner of Administration at New York
City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Greg Russ
Chair and Chief Executive Officer of the New York
City Housing Authority

Vito Mustaciuolo
Acting General Manager of the New York City
Housing Authority

Annika Lescott
Chief Financial Officer and Executive Vice
President of the New York City Housing Authority

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2 SERGEANT JONES: PC has started.

3 SERGEANT SADOWSKY: Recording to the cloud all
4 set.

5 SERGEANT PEREZ: Back up is rolling.

6 SERGEANT HOPE: Sergeant Polite, will you begin
7 with your opening statement?

8 SERGEANT POLITE: Thank you. Good morning and
9 welcome the Remote Executive Budget Hearing jointly
10 with the Committee on Education, Capital Budget,
11 Mental Health, Disabilities and Addictions and Public
12 Housing.

13 Will Council Members and staff please turn on
14 your video at this time. Once again, will Council
15 Members and staff please turn on your video at this
16 time. Thank you. To minimize disruptions, please
17 place all cellphones and electronics to vibrate. You
18 may send your testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov.
19 Once again, that's testimony@council.nyc.gov. Chairs,
20 we are ready to begin.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much Sergeant
22 Polite and thank you to all of the Sergeant at Arms.
23 Thank you to Carl Dalbo[SP?] as well. I appreciate
24 all the work that you have done to make these
25 hearings so successful.

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1 Good morning and welcome to the City Council's
2 sixth day of hearings on the Mayor's Executive Budget
3 for Fiscal 2022. My name is Daniel Dromm and I Chair
4 the Finance Committee. We are joined by the
5 Committee Education, Chaired by my colleague Mark
6 Treyger. We are also joined by the following Council
7 Members: Council Member Adams; Ampry-Samuel; Brooks-
8 Powers; Darma Diaz; Dinowitz; Grodenchik; Kallos;
9 Koslowitz; Louis; Riley and Minority Leader Matteo.

10 Today, we will examine the Department of
11 Education's Fiscal 2022 Executive Budget which totals
12 \$31.4 billion. The Executive Budget is \$3.9 billion
13 larger than its Fiscal 2021 Adopted Budget and is
14 \$2.3 billion larger than its current Fiscal 2021
15 budget. The DOE Executive Budget represents 31
16 percent of the city's total budget.

17 Since the Preliminary Budget, DOE has experienced
18 a major shift in funding sources largely due to the
19 federal funding received by the administration
20 totaling approximately \$7.39 billion across the
21 Executive Financial Plan. And unlike prior years, in
22 this year's Executive Budget, DOE is adding only one
23 new baseline need of \$1.4 million for Eastside
24

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Coastal Resiliency beginning in Fiscal 2022. And
\$377.5 million for the 3K expansion in Fiscal 2025.

With additional funding received, DOE has been
able to make key investments in several new
initiatives and programs to address the learning loss
experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. DOE plans
to expand 3K for all, provide additional funding to
support mental health services, fund community
schools expansion, expand restorative justice
practices and the public schools athletic league.

Additionally, the Executive Budget restored
\$336.4 million in cuts that were baselined in the
Fiscal 2021 Adopted Budget. The Council applauds the
significant investments made by the Administration to
support our students. Several of these proposals
were called for in the Council's budget response.
However, more still needs to be done before we can
reach adoption in addressing the exiting budget
concerns.

First, there are concerns about being able to
sustain new initiatives and programs in Fiscal 2025
and onwards. Now funding has been allocated to these
programs in the outyears jeopardizing their
sustainability. Second, the Administration has yet

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to announce its plan on how to spend \$720 million
added to Fiscal '22 Executive Budget for academic
recovery and instructional support. This plan is
key, as it will ensure that our education dollars are
being spent efficiently and effectively.

And also and lastly, several of the education
priorities recommended in the Council's budget
response continue to go unfunded. Of particular
importance to the Council is the \$250 million needs
specifically targeted to class size reduction.

Thank you to Chelsea Baytemur, Masis Sarkissian
and Dohini Sompura from the Finance Division for the
preparations for today's hearings.

I will now turn it over to Chair Treyger for his
opening remarks. Chair Treyger.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Chair Dromm and
thank you for your leadership as this is our final
Exec. Budget Hearing and I truly appreciate you and
your mentorship every step of the way. So, I just
want to begin by saying that.

Good morning. I am Council Member Mark Treyger,
Chair of the Education Committee. I would like to
welcome everyone who is joining us remotely today to
the Fiscal 2022 Executive Budget hearing on the DOE

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Co-Chaired by my colleague Council Member Daniel
Dromm, our Finance Committee Chair.

DOE's Fiscal '22 Budget totals \$31.4 billion and
recognizes a total of \$6.9 billion in CRRSA and ARP
revenue. The Executive Budget uses this funding to
make significant investments to programs that combat
learning loss incurred by students as a result of the
pandemic, including a \$220 million investment for
instructional supports and a \$500 million investment
for academic recovery.

In addition, the Executive Budget allocates \$236
million to provide compensatory services for students
with special needs. It includes \$242 million over
four years to expand special education, 3K seats.
The Executive Budget also uses this federal revenue
to support the expansion of several programs
including \$300 million over four years to expand
social, emotional supports for students. \$49 million
over four years to expand restorative justice in
middle and high schools. \$138 million over four
years to support the creation of 100 community
schools and \$23 million over four years to expand
PSAL.

1
2 The Executive Budget also uses CRRSA and ARP
3 funding to restore \$336.4 in cuts for essential
4 school programs, such as Expanded Arts Instruction,
5 Community Schools, College Access for All, Learning
6 to Work, Affinity Schools, Health Ed Works and Single
7 Shepherd.

8 Finally, it is an historic win for New York City,
9 the Executive Budget recognizes a \$1.1 billion
10 increase over three years in foundation aid that will
11 ensure every school gets 100 percent of the Fair
12 Student Funding allocation they are entitled to by
13 2024. While the Council commends the Administration
14 for using this funding to restore essential school
15 programs for students and to support the expansion of
16 new and existing initiatives, we are concerned that
17 several key proposals that were called for in the
18 Council's budget response are not funded in the
19 executive plan.

20 This includes parity for state approved private
21 and special education PreK teachers or known as
22 4410's. Investments that support a citywide literacy
23 and curriculum program a nurse, social worker and
24 guidance counselor in every school, not just
25 building, a social worker, counselor, nurse in every

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1 school. Investments for small group tutoring and a
2 plan to address targeted class size reduction as
3 mentioned by my colleague Chair Dromm. Furthermore,
4 the administration allocates \$720 million to DOE's
5 Fiscal 2022 Budget for academic instructional
6 supports without any indication or plan as to how
7 these dollars will be spent.
8

9 This funding held in holding codes does not
10 provide transparency into how DOE plans on spending
11 billions of dollars of funding. I would like to
12 remind Council Members that the Chancellor and CFO
13 are here to testify on the expense budget. Please
14 save your capital questions for Deputy Chancellor
15 Goldmark and President Kubota.

16 Before I conclude, I want to thank the
17 extraordinary staff Chelsea Baytemur, Masis
18 Sarkissian, Dohini Sompura, Malcolm Butehorn, Jan
19 Atwell, Aliyah Reynolds who is our new great Policy
20 Analyst. I also want to just give a big shoutout and
21 thanks to Kalima Johnson who has been a tremendous
22 help to our committee. Frank Perez, I want to thank
23 my staff Anna Scaife, Vanessa Ogle, Maria Henderson,
24 Jeanine Keriketti[SP?].

25 And now I will turn it back over to Chair Dromm.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much Chair
3 Treyger. Next, we will hear testimony from the DOE.
4 We are joined today by Chancellor Meisha Porter.
5 Congratulations Chancellor and I wish you good luck
6 in your tenure as our new Chancellor here in the New
7 York City Department of Education. The first hearing
8 that I've Chaired that you've been at and I just want
9 to be sure that I welcome you.

10 Before the DOE begins testimony, I am going to
11 turn it over to our Committee Counsel to go over some
12 procedural items and to swear in the witnesses.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. My name is
14 Stephanie Ruiz and I am Counsel to the New York City
15 Council's Committee on Finance. Before we begin, I
16 want to remind everyone that you will be on mute
17 until you are recognized to speak. At which time,
18 you will be unmuted by the Zoom host. If you mute
19 yourself after you have been unmuted, you need to be
20 unmuted again by the host. Please be aware that
21 there could be a delay in muting and unmuting, so
22 please be patient.

23 During the hearing, if Council Members would like
24 to ask questions, please use the Zoom raise hand
25 function and you will be called on to speak. We will

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be limiting Council Member questions to five minutes
including responses.

I will now administer the affirmation to the
administration witness and including those
individuals that will be available for Q&A. Do you
affirm that your testimony will be truthful to the
best of your knowledge, information and belief?
Chancellor Porter?

MEISHA PORTER: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Deputy Chancellor
Robinson?

LASHAWN ROBINSON: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Deputy Chancellor
Wallack?

JOSH WALLACK: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Deputy Chancellor
Austin?

ADRIENNE AUSTIN: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Ms. Linda Chen?

LINDA CHEN: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Ms. Lauren
Siciliano?

LAUREN SICILIANO: I do.

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1
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. [LOST AUDIO
3 11:28].

4 UNIDENTIFIED: I do.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Kevin Moran?

6 KEVIN MORAN: I do.

7 LOST AUDIO [11:50-12:44]

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sorry about that. Stephanie
9 got bounced off the Zoom. Chairs this is Malcolm,
10 Council for the Education Committee back up host for
11 Stephanie. So, bear with us just one moment and we
12 will finish the swearing in.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Apologies, I lost connection
14 with Zoom.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I can continue with going
17 down this list with Ms. Mirza Sanchez Medina?

18 MIRZA SANCHEZ MEDINA: I do.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And Ms. Sarah Jonas?

20 SARAH JONAS: I do.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Chancellor
22 Porter, you may begin when ready.

23 MEISHA PORTER: Thank you. Good morning, Chair
24 Dromm, Chair Treyger and all the members of the
25 Finance and Education Committees here today. I am

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1 Meisha Porter and I have the privilege of serving as
2 New York City Schools Chancellor. Joining me today
3 is Chief Financial Officer Lindsey Oates, Deputy
4 Chancellor LaShawn Robinson, Deputy Chancellor
5 Adrienne Austin, Deputy Chancellor Josh Wallack,
6 Chief Academic Officer Linda Chen, Chief
7 Administrative Officer Lauren Siciliano, Chief School
8 Operations Officer Kevin Moran, and other members of
9 my leadership team. Thank you for the opportunity to
10 testify on Mayor de Blasio's Fiscal Year 2022
11 Executive Budget as it relates to the Department of
12 Education.
13

14 Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge
15 Chairs Dromm and Treyger as well as the entire City
16 Council. During my brief time in this role, not only
17 have the leaders on this Council welcomed me in a
18 spirit of true collaboration but I continue to be
19 struck by your thoughtful advocacy on behalf of our
20 students and families. I am truly thankful for your
21 partnership and leadership, especially during these
22 challenging times.

23 Just over a year ago, a global pandemic began
24 that completely transformed our city and our schools.
25 Despite the countless challenges this crisis has

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2 presented, our commitment to our students, families
3 and staff across the city has remained steadfast.

4 We have worked tirelessly to understand and
5 address the needs of our students and families from
6 the most basic to the most complex. Since the city
7 first shut down, it was our school system that stood
8 up meal hubs to bring food to New Yorkers throughout
9 the city. To this date we have served more than 100
10 million meals since the start of the pandemic. To
11 address the digital divide, we have distributed
12 almost 500,000 LTE-enabled iPads so that even our
13 most vulnerable students could learn remotely.

14 Responding to the loss and trauma across our
15 city, our schools have continued to expand social-
16 emotional supports and trauma-informed practices.
17 That has included professional development of staff
18 and teachers as well as increased direct mental
19 health supports in the communities hit hardest by the
20 pandemic. We also work tirelessly to provide in-
21 person learning for more students than any other city
22 in the nation by far.

23 And we made changes to our admissions process to
24 double down on our commitment to equity and ensure
25 our classrooms reflected the diversity of our city.

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2 These are just a few examples of the tremendous work
3 accomplished across the city and we all owe an
4 enormous debt of gratitude to our families, teachers,
5 and staff. The resolve and resilience everyone has
6 demonstrated have been nothing short of remarkable.

7 Now, with unprecedented investments from local,
8 state and federal government, we can deepen our
9 commitments and effectively tackle the lasting
10 impacts of the pandemic, especially the academic and
11 social-emotional needs of all of our students who
12 have gone through so much this past year. As we look
13 ahead, we know we cannot simply return to what our
14 system looked like prior to the pandemic. It is
15 imperative that we apply the lessons we learned
16 during the crisis in the next school year. Our
17 students need a school experience that is rooted in
18 both healing and learning. More than ever, we need
19 to connect to students in ways that recognize their
20 own specific needs, experiences and desires so that
21 they can thrive. To make that a reality, we are
22 focused on providing vital resources to our schools,
23 educators and staff members to enable them to deliver
24 the highest-quality instruction possible, in a
25 supportive, enriching learning environment.

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2 As we emerge from this crisis, we have the
3 opportunity to give birth to a school system in this
4 city that accomplishes far more for our children and
5 families than we ever imagined possible in the past.
6 Every element of the Mayor's Executive Budget is
7 aimed at advancing that goal. So is our
8 unprecedented Summer Rising effort, which will
9 provide far more ambitious and expansive summer
10 programming than in the past. This will be the first
11 time we will serve any student in grades K-12 in July
12 and August who wants to participate. In
13 collaboration with the Department of Youth &
14 Community Development, we have reimagined what summer
15 school can be along with partner community-based
16 organizations that best know their neighborhoods.
17 After all the trauma and disruptions caused by the
18 pandemic over the past 15 months, our children need a
19 chance to reboot their education in fun and
20 supportive ways as they approach the full reopening
21 of our schools in September.

22 Summer Rising is an opportunity for them to
23 learn, grow, play and explore the city around them,
24 from field trips to Central Park and museums, to
25 dance and art classes. The program sites are up and

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the applications are now open through DYCD's website.

After enduring months when so many of our students
were isolated from each other and their teachers, the
opportunity to rebuild those face-to-face
relationships will do so much to begin their healing
process and preparing them for the returning to
school full-time in the fall.

So let me turn now to the details of the Mayor's
Executive Budget. As a result of the historic influx
of funding to the city, the Budget provides crucial
investments for our school system when we return next
year and beyond. Many of these investments have been
made with your invaluable input and advocacy. Our
school system is fairer and more inclusive because of
the efforts of this Council in collaboration with
this Administration. The Fiscal Year 2022 Executive
Budget totals approximately \$37.7 billion, including
\$31.4 billion in operating resources and another \$6.3
billion of education-related pension and debt service
funds. Our funding is a combination of City, State
and Federal resources, with city tax levy money
making up the largest share at 51 percent, state
funds 34 percent and Federal dollars 14 percent.

1
2 In the fall, as I have been saying since I
3 started in March, we want to give every student the
4 option to go back into buildings five days a week. I
5 want New Yorkers to know that our buildings are safe
6 and that our schools will be ready. As a parent, I
7 know how challenging this decision can be and we are
8 working hard to meaningfully engage with parents
9 about school next year. This includes our five
10 borough engagement tour that we started on Monday in
11 Staten Island to hear directly from school
12 communities about their experiences over the school
13 year, help answer questions and gather feedback on
14 the Executive Budget. And foster a discussion on
15 school reopening for the fall.

16 These family forums are critical to inform our
17 plans for September and ensure our school communities
18 are supported as we prepare for a strong reopening
19 this fall. Again, we know we are opening schools to
20 a different reality than when we closed and that is
21 important. We are coming back from what has been the
22 hardest year of so many of our lives and I want to
23 make sure that what we teach reflects students' lived
24 experiences and needs given the difficulties of this
25

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2 past year. This budget aims to provide schools with
3 the resources they need to address our new normal.

4 Simply put, this starts with more money going
5 directly to our schools. As you know, thanks to
6 stimulus funding and a long-awaited commitment from
7 the state to fully fund Foundation Aid, I am so
8 pleased to share with you some of the highlights of
9 how we are investing in our students and our schools.

10 As a result of the Foundation Aid, we are able to
11 provide 100 percent Fair Student Funding to all
12 schools. Over 1,000 schools and 700,000 students
13 across every community school district will benefit
14 from this investment, which will help ensure that
15 every single school has what it needs to support
16 students and staff during these challenging times.

17 FSF is driven by equity and specifically provides
18 more resources to schools that serve larger shares of
19 students with disabilities, multilingual learners and
20 other needs. This is an incredible commitment and
21 investment in our students and it would not, it
22 absolutely would not be a reality without the
23 advocacy of so many - especially members of this City
24 Council.

1
2 Along with fully funding FSF, the influx of
3 essential stimulus resources will allow us to expand
4 successful programs that have been proven effective
5 to boost much needed services and restore programs we
6 know are valuable to our students. We want all of
7 our students to see themselves in their curriculum,
8 their classrooms and their schools. This means we
9 will have a dual-pronged approach, addressing both
10 social/emotional learning and academics.

11 To this end, the Mayor's Executive Budget
12 includes historic investments in the mental health
13 and well-being of our students that will build on our
14 strong foundation of social/emotional learning and
15 mental health supports that enabled us to respond to
16 this crisis and the trauma it has caused. We will
17 now add over 600 new social workers, school
18 psychologists and family support workers into our
19 schools. As teachers and students come back together
20 in September, many for the first time in 18 months,
21 every single school will have access to mental health
22 supports. We will also be providing trauma-informed
23 care training to every early childhood staff member
24 who works with students and parents.

1
2 Equally important, we are investing significantly
3 in academic support. Given the system-wide academic
4 recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 that will be
5 front and center next year, our plan for supporting
6 student learning is absolutely essential. This \$500
7 million investment starts with evaluating every
8 student's needs through assessments. It includes
9 accelerating learning for our students with
10 additional learning time, focusing on Math and ELA,
11 with a heightened focus on literacy. The investment
12 will also be directed toward tutoring and more
13 targeted support to our highest needs students
14 including our students with disabilities and
15 Multilingual Learners.

16 High quality professional learning for educators
17 will also be a critical component. We know that
18 providing a high-quality education to every New York
19 City student depends on starting young. As part of
20 this Executive Budget, we are strengthening our
21 investment in early childhood education by adding
22 \$377 million for Universal 3-K for All so that every
23 single family in New York City can access a 3-K seat
24 by September 2023. This builds upon our commitment
25 to bring 3-K to every district by fall 2021 and means

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we will have 61,000 3-K seats all across New York
City.

In addition, another \$22 million will expand the
availability of preschool special education classes
and support state-approved providers to ensure our
early learners with special needs have access to the
strong start and services they need and deserve.

This investment will add 800 new seats across the
city and ensure that our promise of Pre-K and 3-K for
All reaches every student. We know that while this
pandemic has been trying for every student, it has
had the most severe impact on our students with the
greatest needs. To ensure our ability to provide
critical programs and services to our students with
disabilities, we are investing \$236 million next year
to increase special education services. This funding
will build on the progress we have made in
strengthening delivery of related services and
special education programs to students and families.

We are also growing our Community School
strategy, which the RAND Corporation found to be
effective in improving attendance and student
outcomes, in order to bring Community Schools to
every district by the 2022-2023 school year. On top

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of the 27 previously announced new Community Schools,
this funding will create 100 additional sites,
bringing the total to 406. Restorative justice has
been a priority of this Administration and of this
Council and has contributed to a 66 percent decrease
in school suspensions.

So the Budget will expand the availability of
restorative justice programs in our middle and high
schools. We are also thrilled to be expanding our
Public Schools Athletic League, increasing access to
sports programming across the city for high school
students, focusing on schools with the greatest need.
We are also restoring investments we have made in
arts education and the Learning to Work program,
which offers paid internships, student support
services, in-depth job readiness and college and
career exploration activities for targeted high
schools. All of these programs provide essential
outlets and learning opportunities for our students.

Finally, this year has laid bare a lot of the
inequities we have known existed across our city and
schools, perhaps none more stark than access to
technology. The pandemic forced us to harness
technology to create a 21st-century learning

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1
2 experience for our students. While we are focused on
3 returning all students back in classrooms next year,
4 we also know that we need to build on the
5 technological capabilities we developed during the
6 pandemic.

7 So the Budget increases help desk support,
8 continues LTE service for the next school year on the
9 devices that we have already purchased and builds out
10 our digital learning hub. All of this will enable us
11 to continue to integrate technology into the learning
12 process for all of our students and more effectively
13 prepare them for their future. These initiatives all
14 interconnect to our broad vision for remaking our
15 schools as we emerge from the pandemic and into a
16 critical recovery period.

17 The investments in the Mayor's Executive Budget
18 reflect not only the needs of our students but also
19 our vision and aspirations of where our school system
20 needs to go as our city returns from this pandemic.
21 After navigating through the countless challenges
22 posed by the pandemic, we now have the opportunity
23 and responsibility to elevate how we serve all of our
24 students and families in ways far beyond what we
25 imagined to be possible in the past. As we march

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toward fully reopening our schools in the fall, we
look forward to celebrating not only the return of
our students but also giving birth to an ambitious
new era for education in our city.

I look forward to the continued, thoughtful
feedback and advocacy of this City Council so that
together we can provide all our students with the
education they deserve. Thank you for your time, and
we will be happy to answer any questions you may
have.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very Chancellor for
your testimony. Let me start by thanking everyone,
yourself included. Chancellor Carranza as well. All
of the Deputy Chancellors, the support staff that you
have there at Central, the principals, the teachers,
the nurse, paraprofessionals, the aids, everyone who
has really pulled through in this pandemic and been
on the frontline every single day of the last year
and two months, 14 months or so. You know, working
with our students and with all the sacrifices they
have made. I just want to say thank you to all of
you for what you have done for our city. So, thank
you very much Chancellor.

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Let me start by saying we are also joined by a
couple of other Council Members, a few other Council
Members and they are Council Member Borelli, Brannan,
Feliz, Rose, Kallos, Powers, Rosenthal, Rodriguez and
Barron. Council Member Barron, a former Principal as
a matter of fact.

So, let me talk a little bit about one thing than
you did not mention, which was class size reduction.
By law, the DOE is supposed to report on class sizes
twice a year. And the first time on November 15th
and then again on February 15th. Many parents,
teachers and students reported extremely large remote
class sizes this year, sometimes as large as 35, 40
or even 60 students online at once, making it even
much harder to keep them engaged, interested in
learning.

Now, after being asked by the Council to report
on disaggregated class size data, on November 16th,
Deputy Chancellor Karin Goldmark wrote that they
would delay the release of any class size data until
December 31st and any disaggregated data would not be
released until February 15th.

In late February, the DOE finally posted class
size data reporting class sizes of ten or less in

1
2 many cases, which likely reflected only in-person
3 class sizes but no disaggregated class size data
4 reflecting remote class sizes.

5 So, to this day, no disaggregated class size data
6 has been reported. When will you do that and what is
7 the hold up since you've had this data since at least
8 last October?

9 MEISHA PORTER: So, we remain committed to
10 reducing class sizes and definitely see that this
11 budget is going to position us to be able to do that
12 in a way in which we haven't been able to in the
13 past. And so again, thank you so much for your hard
14 work and effort to bring resources to our schools.

15 As far as the data related to our remote classes,
16 is what you are specifically asking for. I am going
17 to pass to - is Deputy Chancellor Goldmark on? No,
18 she is not. Okay, alright, so we will - I will
19 double back with Deputy Chancellor Goldmark to get
20 that data present. We have been working on making
21 sure that we - we want to be transparent and make
22 available all data. You know, clear and possible and
23 as you know that that data that you are asking about
24 that we did post reflects our in-person classes. We
25 also had to make investments to class size obviously

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as a result of COVID and look forward to providing
that data as soon as possible.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, Chancellor, thank you.
We look forward to getting that data and former
Chancellor Carranza did say that that data was being
collected. So, it should be easily available for us
to see. Would you agree with that, that that data
was collected?

MEISHA PORTER: That data is being collected and
we will work to make sure that we make it available
to you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. So, as you
know, the Council has put or asked for \$250 million
in class size reduction for next year to be able to
provide social distancing as well as additional
academic and social support. Students who will need
help to recover from the pandemic. At a previous
hearing, the Chancellor said that the class size is a
contractual issue, implying something to be settled
with the union but not as a prerequisite to quality
education. But in the CFE case, the state's highest
court said that class sizes were too large to provide
students with their constitutional right to a quality
education.

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1
2 So, class sizes have gone up since the court
3 delivered that decision in 2003 and we are finally
4 getting the full foundation funding as a result of
5 the CFE funding. So, don't you think it's right that
6 some of those funds should be spent on lowering class
7 size?

8 MEISHA PORTER: Yes, absolutely. You know as a
9 Principal [LOST AUDIO 33:54].

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: We lost you Chancellor.

11 MEISHA PORTER: Can you hear me?

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Can you just repeat it? You
13 froze for a moment.

14 MEISHA PORTER: Oh, okay, sorry. So, I said, I
15 will start again. As a former principal and
16 classroom teacher, I know all too well of the
17 difference that class size can make and thanks to
18 again, the efforts of this Council getting us to 100
19 percent Fair Student funding, we are going to be able
20 to bring more teachers into our school buildings that
21 will help us to do that work around reducing class
22 size.

23 We also are going to be bringing more mental
24 health supports into place, social workers, arts
25 classes and so, all of those factors are going to

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1 support the reduction of class sizes and we look
2 forward to being really intentional about moving that
3 work forward.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, so as a former teacher
6 myself for 25 years in the Department of Education.

7 MEISHA PORTER: Yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I agree with you, class size
9 is really very, very important. It would give me the
10 opportunity to individualize my instruction. Much
11 better if I had a lower class size and that's what we
12 are talking about is being able to work more closely
13 with students with their individual needs.

14 MEISHA PORTER: Yep.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Let me just talk a little bit
16 about parent empowerment. The DOE's post to elicit
17 parent input on how new funds should be spent. So,
18 are you aware that the CPAC and the Chancellor's
19 Parent Advisory Council, which represents all the
20 PTA's in the city as well as the ECC, which
21 represents the parent led citywide and district
22 education councils have passed resolutions in favor
23 of the city using that \$250 million toward lowering
24 class size next year?

25

1
2 MEISHA PORTER: Yes, we are aware of their
3 position.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, we are going to make
5 them happy?

6 MEISHA PORTER: We are going to do our damndest
7 to make them happy Chair Dromm and all the teachers
8 across New York City.

9 Listen, you know no one knows better than all of
10 us. All of us right? Not only those of us who have
11 been educators but all of us who are parents and have
12 students in our public school system. What a
13 difference particularly in this moment, the reduction
14 of class size is going to make. And so, we are
15 again, we have the resources to do things that we
16 have not been able to do in the past and we will be
17 definitely working to ensure that we are specific and
18 intentional about leveraging resources to reduce
19 class size.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And Chancellor, when I spoke
21 with the Mayor, he did say that uhm, he would work
22 with me on that class size reduction and he said that
23 he wanted to see first what the impact of Fair
24 Student funding would be on class size reduction. Do
25

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2 you have a plan to use that fair student funding to
3 lower class size?

4 MEISHA PORTER: Yeah, we absolutely do and I am
5 going to bring in Lindsey Oates to talk more
6 specifically about what that will look like for us.
7 And I am going to remind the Mayor of his
8 commitments.

9 LINDSEY OATES: Thank you Chair Dromm and I just
10 want to say in transparency, I was not sworn in at
11 the beginning.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

13 LINDSEY OATES: If you would like to do that now
14 for the record.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. We are going to
16 have the Committee Counsel do that.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, Ms. Oates, do you affirm
18 that your testimony will be truthful to the best of
19 your knowledge, information and belief?

20 LINDSEY OATES: I do.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may proceed.

22 LINDSEY OATES: Thank you. So, Chair Dromm, so
23 we are thrilled with the fair student funding
24 investment. I know that you and Chair Treyger and
25 many of your colleagues across City Council have

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1
2 fought for years to reach this historic point where
3 we are for the first time ever able to meet the
4 entitlement for all schools under the Fair Student
5 funding formula. Meaning all schools will be funded
6 at 100 percent and this is wonderful, exciting news,
7 \$600 million investment. What we know from past
8 investments that have raised the floor, is that
9 schools spend this funding on staff. About 90
10 percent of past investments in floor raises have been
11 spent directly on hiring new staff. This includes
12 classroom teachers but also includes positions like
13 guidance counselors, social workers, art teachers,
14 phys. Ed teachers, dance teachers and so on and we
15 want to support the principals choice in making those
16 decisions, particularly at this time, given that the
17 needs vary from school to school. But we do expect
18 that there will be hiring at schools as a result of
19 this investment.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you have any idea at this
21 time what that number might be?

22 LINDSEY OATES: I think it's hard for us to know
23 at this point because these are local decisions that
24 are made on behalf of the school community and I
25 think we will be monitoring this closely as we

usually do throughout the summer and into September
of school.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So obviously than one of the
concerns for me is before we do Adoption, if we are
talking about the \$250 million in class size
reduction, we'd need to get some type of idea of what
those numbers would look like in order to be able to
fairly talk about the \$250 million.

So, I know you don't have an answer for me right
now but moving forward I think that's where we have
to look and we properly need to know before we can
adopt. Okay, thank you. [COUGHS] Excuse me. I just
have a few more questions and then I am going to turn
it over to Chair Treyger.

The Executive Budget is a CRSSA revenue to
restore \$214.8 million in one year cuts that were
identified in the Fiscal '22 Preliminary Budget and
\$121.6 million in cuts that were baselined in the
Fiscal 2021 Adopted Budget. However, given the
nature of this one time relief revenue, the funding
for these restorations decreased or has been
completely eliminated in Fiscal '25 and in the
outyears. So, which of these programs do you believe
need a baseline budget?

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1
2 MEISHA PORTER: So, I am going to pull in to
3 talk more specifically about that as well.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

5 LINDSEY OATES: Thank you Chair. So, as you
6 point out, the funding is, the stimulus funding is
7 temporary but we are incredibly grateful to even have
8 the stimulus funding. We had a very different
9 hearing last year at this time and we are incredibly
10 grateful to have the \$7 billion in federal funding
11 added to our budget this year. And we are grateful
12 that it has been added for the next three years and
13 into half of Fiscal Year '25.

14 We are able to do things that we had only dreamed
15 about in the years past and so, we are thrilled to
16 have that investment. And I think that as we look
17 towards the outyears, we are hoping that we can prove
18 that these investments are you know working and that
19 they will be baselined in the outyears.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, one of the things I
21 certainly would like see baselined is the implicit
22 bias training and the LGBTQ curriculum. So, how does
23 the Executive Budget address implicit bias? Are
24 there any specific programs that are being funded to
25

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1 address implicit bias and will these programs receive
2 enhanced funding through the federal stimulus funds?
3

4 LINDSEY OATES: The existing, so thank you for
5 the question sir. The existing implicit bias program
6 was largely protected through the fiscal crisis of
7 the last couple of years. And major shoutouts to
8 Deputy Chancellor LaShawn Robinson's team for their
9 tireless work, making sure that these really critical
10 trainings continued throughout the shutdown period
11 and through this last school year. So, major champs
12 as the Chancellor would say- to Deputy Chancellor
13 Robinson and her entire team for continuing to ensure
14 that those services were rolled out this year.

15 And we expect that the will continue going
16 forward. I hear you on the LGBT curriculum and we
17 are aware of your request and we will be working with
18 OMB on that.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay good, so we are working
20 on or would like to secure the \$1 million that we
21 have there. Actually we called for \$2 million within
22 the Council's budget response. But as you know, this
23 funding supported the creation of vital curriculum
24 professional development and access to LGBTQ
25 literature.

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2 So, I know that you know it was not included in
3 the budget, can you just tell us why and can we make
4 sure that this happens as we move forward?

5 LINDSEY OATES: So, as I previously said, I can't
6 speak to why it wasn't included in this particular
7 budget but we are aware of your request and we are
8 working with OMB and we will have hopefully more to
9 say soon.

10 MEISHA PORTER: And I just want to - I am sorry
11 Chair Dromm, I just want to add you know, that is
12 part of our commitment to ensure that all of our
13 students see themselves reflected in the curriculum.
14 And so, while it may not be clearly identified, it is
15 definitely a deep part of our commitment. You know
16 and I have said it to you and all of the Council
17 Members I have spoken to. Key to our comeback, key
18 to bringing our schools back is that our students
19 really experience and see themselves in the
20 curriculum they experience every day. So, so more to
21 come but the commitment is definitely present.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you Chancellor and yes,
23 in our conversations, I have really appreciated your
24 support for that. I also just want to compliment
25 Eric Vaughan who is the leader there with the LGBTQ

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2 stuff. He has done a lot of work and I would love to
3 see him get an assistant, so that he can do even more
4 work. I'd like to continue to talk with you about
5 that as we move through the budget process because I
6 think that we could do even more for our students if
7 that were to happen.

8 MEISHA PORTER: I agree.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you Chancellor. I am
10 going to turn it over to my Co-Chair Mark Treyger, a
11 friend and educator. I think it's great when we have
12 two educators talking education and I just yes.
13 Thank you very much. Chair Treyger.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Chair Dromm.
15 This sounds like a faculty conference. It's great to
16 have you Chancellor and the entire team. Just a
17 couple of quick questions before I go into some of
18 the more complex questions. We were aware of and
19 thanks to everyone's collective advocacy about the
20 influx of resources into our schools that are coming
21 and are here now.

22 But Chancellor I ask first, why am I getting
23 emails from folks about a hiring freeze on counselors
24 and in other positions? Can anyone speak to, is
25 there a freeze on hiring these critical positions and

1
2 what are we doing to make sure that schools have the
3 flexibility to hire the staff that they need to meet
4 the needs of their kids?

5 MEISHA PORTER: We have more information coming
6 on hiring but I am going to pull in Lauren Siciliano
7 to talk more specifically about where there are
8 freezes and where we are as a system.

9 LAUREN SICILIANO: Thank you Chancellor and good
10 morning Chair Treyger. Thank you for the question.
11 It's a pleasure to be here today. The Chancellor is
12 absolutely right. We are preparing right now for
13 next school year and we will have more to share very
14 soon about hiring policies for next school year.

15 This school year, as you know, we were for most
16 of the year, in a very different financial situation.
17 And so, we did have restrictions for the majority of
18 the year on certain titles, including counselors.
19 Which didn't mean that you couldn't hire, it just
20 meant that you needed to hire from the ATR pool first
21 but we of course recognize how essential these staff
22 are and will be of course moving into next year. So,
23 we expect to have some updates soon for school year
24 '21-'22. I would also say just in general, at this
25

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2 point in the year, there is not generally a lot of
3 hiring in schools.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, and I appreciate that
5 and you know but before we get to fall, we have
6 summer and we have a promise of a very bold summer
7 rising program, which I think sounds wonderful.,
8 There are questions that have come up with regards to
9 staffing for DOE personnel.

10 I've heard from a number of principals that there
11 are staffing issues, staffing concerns and so,
12 wouldn't it make sense to provide clarity to
13 principals as soon as possible and with any of these
14 freezes as soon as possible so we can begin the
15 process now for summer? And are you aware of those
16 staffing concerns for Summer Rising flow?

17 LAUREN SICILIANO: So, that's a great question on
18 Summer Rising. So, for our summer programs, the way
19 staffing works; I will just take social workers as an
20 example. Existing staff are hired on a per session
21 basis over the summer. There wouldn't be new
22 headcount or staff coming in to support that.

23 So, we are very committed to making sure that our
24 Summer Rising sites have the social/emotional support
25 that our students will need. And we will be working

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2 with schools to make sure that they are able to
3 access those supports.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, is there an estimate
5 time, date, that we can give principals when they
6 will get that information?

7 LAUREN SICILIANO: Yes, so actually Monday of
8 this week, we released initial Summer Rising Budgets
9 to principals, so that they can start to see the
10 dollars that they have.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And Lauren, what about the
12 hiring freezes being left? Any estimate on that?

13 LAUREN SICILIANO: We expect to have more
14 information in the next few weeks as we prepare for
15 initial budget rollouts.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Another item that just, can
17 anyone just shed any light on that I get a lot of
18 emails about and calls about with regards to early
19 retirements and what that will do in terms of the
20 impact on staffing? Can anyone speak to that?

21 MEISHA PORTER: Sure, Lauren, you want to
22 continue with the early retirement conversation?

23 LAUREN SICILIANO: Sure, absolutely. We are
24 aware of course of what was included in the state
25

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1 budget and we are working with the city to understand
2 the plans for early retirement.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, which means there is no
5 plan right now? Or are there discussions underway?
6 Because there not much coming out for us, in terms of
7 information at this time.

8 MEISHA PORTER: There's not a decision as of yet.
9 There are discussions happening with our union
10 partners right now.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Earlier this year, I
12 offered op-ed in the Daily News calling for the DOE
13 to begin on the path to making every single school a
14 community school. There is no doubt that community
15 schools are truly the model for academic and
16 developmental success among students while at the
17 same time supporting the surrounding community.

18 The Fiscal 2022 Executive Budget adds \$9.5
19 million growing to \$51.2 million in the outyears for
20 the creation of 100 new community schools. This is
21 in addition to the Prelim Budget funding, 27
22 additional schools in the hardest hit communities.
23 How is the budget determined for the addition of 100
24 community schools? What is the average cost of a
25

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1
2 community school? And what types of services are
3 included in this estimate?

4 MEISHA PORTER: So, you and I agree Chair Treyger
5 that community schools are amazing resources for our
6 communities, which is why we have expanded and are
7 looking to add over 100 this coming school year. I
8 am going to ask Deputy Chancellor Robinson to talk
9 about how we selected schools, how we are funding
10 schools. But I just want to also add you know, our
11 partnership this summer with DYCD and partnering
12 directly with community-based organizations, I also
13 see as an opportunity to build on that community
14 schools model to introduce schools who haven't prior
15 been in partnership with CBO's in this way, to really
16 think about expansion.

17 With that, I will pass it on to Deputy Chancellor
18 Robinson.

19 LASHAWN ROBINSON: Thank you so much Chancellor
20 and thank you so much Chair Treyger and everyone for
21 your ongoing support for our highly successful
22 community school model right here in New York City,
23 which is serving as model for the nation. So, thank
24 you so much.

25

1
2 As we all know, community schools have proven to
3 be successful and we are continuing to invest in what
4 we know works. We started off by targeting the
5 highest need communities and we'll be launching the
6 27 community schools that will be open this
7 September. So we are pretty excited about that. And
8 the process for the 100 community schools will start
9 shortly joined by our new Senior Executive Director
10 Sarah Jonas, who is on now and can talk a little bit
11 more about the process for onboarding the 100
12 community schools that will be starting with us in
13 September of the '22-'23 school year. Sarah?

14 SARAH JONAS: Thank you Deputy Chancellor
15 Robinson. Uhm, so yes again, I just want to echo our
16 excitement about the city's commitment to expanding
17 community schools. A strategy that we know works and
18 has been proven to work. So, just really excited
19 about those plans.

20 And as far as the sort of determination of which
21 community schools selection for expansion of the 100
22 community schools, we will be planning to engage
23 district and school leaders, as well as community
24 parents and stakeholders to help determine which
25 schools should be prioritized for that additional

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1 expansion. And as we have done in the past, some of
2 the factors that we'll consider would include, you
3 know, which schools would most benefit from becoming
4 a community school and from the strategy and from the
5 services and supports that are part and central to
6 the strategy. And those would include as well,
7 looking at economic needs index, excuse me, as well
8 as the percentage of students experiencing
9 homelessness.
10

11 So, those are some of the factors that we would
12 consider in selecting schools for this opportunity
13 and for the expansion opportunity.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, to Director Jonas,
15 first of all, welcome and congratulations now in this
16 permanent, permanent role. What I would add is that
17 - and this is something that I agree with the DOE
18 when the initial 27, there was a focus of the hardest
19 hit communities, we need to double down on that.

20 The hardest hit neighborhoods, neighborhoods that
21 have been under resourced and marginalized before the
22 pandemic certainly have taken the brunt of this
23 pandemic, particularly our communities of color and I
24 would strongly urge that we double down on that
25 investment, expand those services. Because they do

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1
2 make a difference and I would also appreciate more
3 engagement with the local officials. Mentioned
4 CDC's, local Council Members, local officials who
5 really know their communities best and in terms of
6 the selection and the expansion. Is there a
7 commitment on that end?

8 SARAH JONAS: Absolutely, again, I think that's
9 you know core to the community school strategy, is
10 engaging community stakeholders in thriving community
11 schools. So, absolutely, it would be engaging with
12 communities and community stakeholders to help inform
13 the selection of schools for expansion efforts of
14 community schools, yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I just had a great
16 conversation with a wonderful colleague of mine,
17 Council Member Adams from Queens, who is a
18 phenomenal, phenomenal advocate for community,
19 champion for education. Represents a wonderful
20 district but very hard hit district by the pandemic.
21 And certainly has ideas and suggestions on schools in
22 your district.

23 So, I encourage the DOE to connect Council Member
24 Adams and members that really know their communities
25 the best.

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1
2 I want to move to social workers, counselors,
3 nurses. How many social workers are currently funded
4 in DOE's budget and how many social workers will be
5 funded in the Fiscal 2022 Budget?

6 MEISHA PORTER: I'm going to let Deputy
7 Chancellor Robinson, who has done a phenomenal job of
8 creating a pool of social workers, creating the space
9 for them in our schools and really being thoughtful
10 about centering that need, particularly in this
11 moment as we go forward.

12 LASHAWN ROBINSON: Thank you so much Chancellor
13 and thank you to this Council and Chair Treyger for
14 your commitment to this important work. Currently,
15 within our school system, we have approximately 4,500
16 school counselors and social workers. We also have
17 approximately 1,000 school psychologists and the new
18 commitments that we have that are forth coming
19 include new school-based 500 social workers. We also
20 have new psychologists coming onboard for about 90
21 psychologists and new family support workers, which
22 would give us a total as the Chancellor shared
23 earlier, of approximately 6,000 mental health
24 workers.

1 Our commitment moving into the upcoming school
2 year is to ensure that each school has a school-based
3 social worker or a mental health clinic onsite to
4 support our students and their wellbeing. We've made
5 historic investments in mental health and in the
6 wellbeing of our students, so we are building upon a
7 foundation of social/emotional learning and mental
8 health supports that have allowed us to respond to
9 this crisis. And we also remain committed to taking
10 the work to the next level and ensuring that we have
11 school-based support in place.

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, and again, I want to
13 actually echo the kudos to Deputy Chancellor Robinson
14 or as Chancellor Porter does the I guess the snaps
15 because she is - we are lucky and fortunate to have
16 Deputy Chancellor Robinson in her role and we
17 appreciate her. I guess the question for us is that,
18 even with the new investments, which we are
19 applauding for - because you know me, I'm all for as
20 much social/emotional support for our schools. Even
21 with the investment, how many schools will be without
22 a full time social work in the school?
23

24 LASHAWN ROBINSON: We are - we will have 100
25 percent of our schools covered with either a full-

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2 time social worker or a mental health clinic. Which
3 as you know, many of our mental health clinic staff,
4 social workers and psychologists and other mental
5 health support staff members.

6 So, that is our commitment. Our Chancellor has
7 also focused on cell academic integration, ensuring
8 that young people are receiving social/emotional
9 supports every day within the classroom setting as
10 well. So, we have a comprehensive approach in place
11 as we are moving into the next school year to include
12 tier one supports that will live in classrooms and
13 all the way up through tier three supports, which
14 will be our social workers that will be on staff in
15 our mental health clinic.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, just to be clear and I
17 certainly, I appreciate that answer. For us in the
18 Council and I am sure many of you in the DOE but
19 first in the Council, a major priority particularly
20 in this year. Is to make sure that every single
21 school in New York City, every public school in New
22 York City has a full-time social worker has a full-
23 time counselor, a nurse. And also, just to be clear
24 Deputy Chancellor Robinson, these new social worker
25 investments, they are coming out of central's budget.

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1 They are not coming at the expense of the FSF from
2 the school. Is that correct?

3
4 LASHAWN ROBINSON: Yes, that is correct.

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, so is there a number
6 that we can get because we are not done getting more
7 money for the DOE. We – I've made that clear to the
8 Mayor's team, who I am sure are watching as well. We
9 are nowhere done and we have more work to do. So,
10 you know what we need is how many schools are still
11 without a counselor? How many schools are without a
12 social worker? How many schools are without a nurse?
13 Can someone help us get that number and the cost
14 estimate?

15 LASHAWN ROBINSON: Yes, I think we would like to
16 follow-up to talk more specifically about you know
17 how we can go about building upon the investments
18 that we've made but I just would like to take this
19 opportunity to thank you for your leadership in this
20 area. For always emphasizing the importance of
21 mental health and wellness pre-pandemic. And we will
22 continue to build upon those endeavors. One has been
23 more toward seeking mental health supports with the
24 New York City public schools in this Council and this
25 Administration, so thank you all so much for caring

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1
2 for and supporting the wellbeing of our students and
3 we can certainly follow-up and continue the
4 discussion.

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes, thank you and we
6 definitely as soon as we can get that information
7 because we have to negotiate this and we have to get
8 this done. I think it's important for us to say that
9 every school will have full time supports in them. I
10 think that's a statement budget.

11 The Executive Budget adds \$720 million to Fiscal
12 '22 for academic and instructional supports, yet
13 there is no level of specificity as to how these
14 dollars will be spent. In our Prelim Budget response
15 the Council called for investments in small group
16 high dose tutoring and in purchasing of evidence-
17 based literacy curricula and literacy intervention
18 trainings.

19 To date, we have not been engaged by the
20 Administration - I'm just making sure folks can hear
21 me. To date, we have not been engaged by the
22 Administration on how you plan to spend this funding
23 to address all of the impacts on learning that
24 students have experienced over the past year. Do you
25 have a specific plan on how to spend these dollars?

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1 Will you commit to invest in these Council priorities
2 to work with the Council on how this funding will be
3 spent and to ensure that there will be full
4 transparency on how nearly \$1 billion will be spent?
5

6 MEISHA PORTER: So, we agree with you Chair
7 Treyger, academic recovery is a critical part of our
8 investment and accelerating learning for every
9 student and every family and every community is
10 critically important. And that has to happen at the
11 school level and it means that we will definitely be
12 refighting students support with interventions that
13 they need to be successful in the future. Create
14 enriching learning experiences for all students.
15 Leverage assessments to tell us where our students
16 are so we can instructional decisions. And so, those
17 are all a part of the decision making process.

18 As we move forward, centering our highest need
19 learners, definitely interested in engaging,
20 partnering with this Council who is so committed to
21 education. But I would also like bring in our Chief
22 Academic Officer Linda Chen to talk more specifically
23 about what those investments will look like in our
24 budget.
25

1
2 LINDA CHEN: Thank you Chancellor and thank you
3 Chair Treyger and the Council for your consistent
4 support and advocacy for academics and also
5 particularly as you've outlined literacy.

6 So, I'll start first with connecting to what the
7 Chancellor just said. We know that the very specific
8 support of our students are best known at the school
9 level. So, what you will see with much of those
10 investments will be funding that will be directly
11 going towards schools and will reflect in a couple of
12 areas, some of which you have identified.

13 One, is as the Chancellor said, we will make sure
14 that they are baseline screeners and diagnostic
15 assessments and tools made available to schools.
16 This is something that we have been working on and
17 making sure that these are well vetted resources that
18 will be used for accelerating, learning for our
19 students.

20 We are also making investments in curriculum,
21 specifically in ELA and math and really zoning in on
22 the interventions that are needed, including high
23 dosage tutoring. We also believe that in order to
24 accelerate learning, we have to really make sure that
25 teachers have the resources in their hands to be able

1 to know how their students are doing. How the
2 resources and training that's needed to provide those
3 very personalized interventions and supports. And
4 also have as part of a whole comprehensive look, into
5 high dosage tutoring that compliments and supplements
6 that work that teachers are doing in tier one or core
7 instruction for all students.
8

9 The Chancellor also mentioned earlier in her
10 comments, the importance of our students seeing
11 themselves in their curriculum. Their ability to be
12 affirm for who they are helps them learn and
13 accelerate those skills. In ELA, in math
14 specifically, I would also say the full picture
15 includes not only those core, sometimes we like to
16 call core subjects but I know I am in good company
17 here with educators where really, the arts are core
18 subjects as well.

19 So, we know that a student needs a full, well
20 rounded and enriching and rich experiences in their
21 education in order to excel in everything from core
22 subjects to enrichment and beyond.

23 I do want to also respond to your question about
24 literacy specifically. We know even before and
25 again, I want to thank the Council for their efforts

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2 and advocacy that foundational literacy is key. It
3 is key to being able to unlock knowledge in all
4 content areas.

5 So, as we said, we will have direct investments
6 to schools but at the same time, we are delineating
7 very clear resources for foundational literacy in our
8 earliest grades and I want to thank Deputy Chancellor
9 Josh Wallack and his partnership with the universal
10 literacy coaching program and early literacy efforts.
11 That also includes research based high dosage
12 tutoring. Some of that has already started this past
13 year. We are continuing to do that in the summer and
14 leveraging summer months to do that work. I would
15 also say another part of this investment is that we
16 know the school day is only so long and we want to
17 make sure that there are opportunities beyond the
18 school day as well to deeply provide those services
19 for students. And we know those decisions are being
20 made very specifically at the school level to support
21 our earliest learners to our high school students
22 being prepared for college and career. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, and Dr. Chen and I
24 appreciate that answer but what I would add is that
25 uhm, that there is a doubling down of the lens of

1 equity in terms of these recovery resources. We have
2 the data about the schools with the attendance
3 challenges. We have the data that with schools with
4 the high number NX grades. We know the hardest hit
5 neighborhood and I agree with you about, that we need
6 to meet the holistic needs of our children and give
7 them a full, rich curriculum during the day of art
8 and music and all those wonderful connections and
9 physical education and so forth. But my issue with
10 making sure that it reaches those neighborhoods and
11 those schools because not every neighborhood had the
12 luxury or the money to send their kids to learning
13 pods where they were learning in person this entire
14 past year.

16 Many communities waited months to get their iPads
17 and their technology and their internet, while some
18 folks had a seamless transition.

19 So, there really needs to be a doubling down of
20 that lens of equity in terms of the resource
21 distribution of these critical recovery dollars and I
22 would love to speak more about that with the DOE. I
23 want to continue on. Every year we spend hundreds
24 and millions of dollars on carter cases for students
25 with IEP's whose needs cannot be met by DOE schools.

1
2 Print based disabilities account for a significant
3 portion of these cases. There is a significant body
4 of research that many print based disabilities can be
5 addressed in general education settings if evidence-
6 based literacy instruction is offered.

7 Unfortunately, this curriculum is often costly and
8 many schools cannot afford to purchase this.

9 In the interest of meeting the needs of tens of
10 thousands of students in the least restrictive
11 setting and the fiscal efficiencies, will the DOE
12 commit to fund a citywide menu of evidence-based
13 literacy curriculum and literacy intervention teacher
14 trainings in?

15 MEISHA PORTER: Thank you Chair Treyger and I
16 want to just reiterate our commitment to ensuring
17 that we are also targeting and directing resources in
18 our hardest hit neighborhoods and making sure we are
19 lifting up those priorities that you spoke so
20 specifically about. And to the programs that you are
21 talking about now. You know I had the opportunity to
22 visit Principal Cavanaugh in PS15 in Brooklyn and see
23 her amazing Spanish language program and the ASIS
24 program in action at her school, integrating students
25 into the general education classroom, who would be in

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District 75. And so, our commitment to this work is
deep.

And to speak specifically to your question and
address your concern, I am going to ask Deputy Chief
Academic Officer for special needs learners,
Christina Foti to join us.

CHRISTINA FOTI: Thank you Chancellor. Good
morning Chairs Treyger and Chair Dromm. It's so nice
to see you all. We absolutely understand the need
and urgency around providing evidence-based practices
in schools uniformly, right? So, the menu, the
completely agree with everything you just have asked
for and are certainly looking at various approaches
to doing that in the upcoming year.

I think we will be able to share more on that
very soon but we are in complete alignment about the
need and the approach. I just, you know, I also just
want to comment briefly on carter cases and you
probably know a lot about this but just to reiterate,
you are absolutely right, the cost of carter cases
has been increasingly large. But unfortunately
carter cases have become increasingly disconnected
from special education practices in this city.

1
2 And of course, you are well aware that the volume
3 of carter cases has skyrocketed. However, the levels
4 of service provision as evidenced by our ongoing
5 reporting City Council for public education services
6 has increased dramatically over the past few years.

7 And so, I want to be careful about making sure
8 that we honor and respect the good work that our
9 educators are doing in our public schools around
10 special education and really also reassure you that
11 we understand the needs for evidence-based literacy
12 programs that are competitive to what's going on
13 outside of the public school system. And really hope
14 to be able to talk more about that soon and are very
15 much in alignment and understand the urgency for
16 those practices.

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Ms. Foti because
18 to me, this is also another issue of equity.
19 Families in my district don't have \$7,000 to \$10,000
20 even more, for a screening to prove that their child
21 has a disability. Then to hire a lawyer. This is a
22 broken system and you know, there is curriculum out
23 there for us to purchase for our schools, provide the
24 adequate PD and training for our teachers to
25 incorporate this in the school day.

1
2 So, it's a good best practice to incorporate and
3 it's cost efficient and I think this is the direction
4 that we need to move in and I would really love to
5 work with you on establishing that once and for all
6 for our schools.

7 I want to just two more quick things and then
8 turn it back to Chair. PSAL, very grateful that the
9 Executive Budget includes funding for PSAL expansion
10 in this committee and the Council as a whole,
11 particularly I know Council Member Reynoso and many
12 others. Council Member Dromm, others that have been
13 fighting for PSAL equity for years.

14 Could you please explain how this funding will be
15 spent including a breakdown of the new teams year
16 over year and how many schools and students will
17 receive access? Will these equity efforts begin this
18 summer?

19 MEISHA PORTER: Sure and I just want to again
20 lift up Deputy Chancellor Robinson and the work of
21 her team and honor Donald Douglas who really led this
22 work for our system. Who we lost this year but like,
23 really bringing this work to life. One of my last
24 meetings with Donald was an Executive Superintendent
25 in the Bronx and really thinking about ways that we

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1 could partner schools to build our PSAL options. And
2 so, I want to just have again, our amazing Deputy
3 Chancellor Robinson speak to the PSAL expansion and
4 the hard work her team has done to do this but also,
5 I just think it is so important to honor Donald
6 Douglas and his memory and his commitment to PSAL and
7 building this system out in the DOE.
8

9 LASHAWN RONINSON: Thank you so much Chancellor
10 and it's really a team effort here and thank you so
11 much for acknowledging the teams loss with the loss
12 of Donald.

13 When the Chancellor started, she was certainly
14 committed to bringing back PSAL sports. Fully
15 recognizing the importance of sports for our
16 students. We are aware that you know, sports benefit
17 our students mental health and wellness, along with
18 building important sale skills. Like you know
19 relationship building and social awareness, self-
20 awareness, confidence, pride.

21 So, increasing access to sports programming
22 across the city is a core focus for this Chancellor,
23 Chancellor Porter and this Administration and once
24 again, we'd like to thank Council for your advocacy
25 over the years. This charge was really led by our

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1
2 young people. I give them all of the credit for
3 leading the way in this area.

4 The funding that we have for PSAL expansion will
5 increase PSAL by 215 new teams. We are looking
6 forward to having 30 shared programs across 100
7 school communities, ensuring that every high school
8 has access to PSAL programming. For the first time,
9 we'll be able to say this and that is the commitment
10 of this Council and this Administration. It's never
11 been said before but we will be able to ensure that
12 every school has access to PSAL sports.

13 We are also excited because we are increasing
14 access for District 75 students as well. Along with
15 direct student support to focus on increased college
16 access. So, making the connection between the
17 scholar athlete and ensuring that PSAL is a pathway
18 to the NCAA for many of our scholar athletes and that
19 would not possible without the commitment of our
20 Chancellor who made it an early priority. So, thank
21 you so much Chancellor.

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you to Chancellor and
23 to Deputy Chancellor Robinson for being a steadfast
24 champion on this but just for clarity sake, will we
25 be able to say that every single high school, every

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1 school, will have the resources to participate in a
2 PSAL program this fall or this coming school year?

3
4 LASHAWN ROBINSON: Yes, we will begin the rollout
5 of the shared programs across 100 schools and I can
6 give you the breakdown across a few years as a follow
7 up.

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Great, the final question
9 and then I will turn it back to the Chair. The
10 pandemic has highlighted the need to have someone at
11 the DOE who has expertise in the laws and protections
12 for students in foster care and focuses full-time on
13 that population. Complicated questions often arise
14 involving students in foster care, such as who can
15 sign consent for special education evaluations and
16 who could attend parent teacher conferences.

17 Students in foster care have the lowest graduation
18 rate of any student in New York City and the average
19 student in foster care misses the equivalent of one
20 and one and a half months of school here. In March
21 2018, the City's Interagency Foster Care Taskforce
22 recommended that the DOE establish an office with
23 central staff to focus on students in foster care.

24 However, the DOE does not have any staff members
25 focused full-time on the needs of students in foster

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1 care. Given the DOE's emphasis on equity, will the
2 DOE commit to adding staff focused full-time on the
3 needs of students in foster care?
4

5 MEISHA PORTER: So, we remain committed to our
6 students in foster care and have been in
7 conversations with our partners at ACS about just
8 this, creating this space in our organization and
9 really you know providing that central level support.

10 So, again, I will let the amazing Deputy
11 Chancellor Robinson, talk more specifically about the
12 work that has started in her office and what we look
13 forward to doing.

14 LASHAWN ROBINSON: Thank you so much Chancellor.
15 Uhm, so first for our young people in foster care, we
16 understand that our young people in foster care
17 facing challenges and we also are organized to
18 provide them critical supports and services that they
19 need. From access to counselors to mental health
20 support and other resources. There is a point person
21 at every school to address the needs of our young
22 people in foster care along with support systems at
23 the DCO and then within the Office of Safety and
24 Youth Development.
25

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1
2 We agree and our Chancellor has shared that you
3 know, he wants to see a stronger coordination of
4 services and uhm, you know will receive a proposal to
5 review having a dedicated office, so that's work
6 that's underway right now. They saw our Chancellors
7 commitment fully recognizing that you know we have a
8 group of young people that require more support. I
9 think it touches upon what you shared early Chair
10 Treyger about the equity issues and ensuring that
11 supports are being targeted to students and student
12 populations of greatest need and our Chancellor is
13 certainly committed to doing just that and we're
14 working on that now.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I really appreciate that
16 and I am very glad to hear that talks are underway.
17 Just letting you know Chancellor, this Council is in
18 full support of creating a dedicated staff, full time
19 positions on this issue. You know equity, it has to
20 be and I am sure you know it has to be an applied
21 practice and not just a slogan. Something that we do
22 every single day, that's why students in foster care
23 are important to us and also, special education
24 preschool children, who I mentioned in my opening
25 statement. If we fail them, if we don't provide that

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program where there is pay parity for their teachers.

Number one, we fail them and number two, they will be
the carter cases of tomorrow as well and they
shouldn't have to go through that process. These
remain very big priorities for us in the Council. We
will have to work with you to get this to the finish
line. I will turn it back to Finance Chair Dromm.

Thank you.

MEISHA PORTER: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you Chair Treyger.

Before we move on, let me say that we have been
joined by Council Members Ayala, Lander and Gennaro
and I am going to turn it now over to Counsel to
allow Council Members to ask questions.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. If any Council
Members have questions for the DOE, please use the
Zoom raise hand function and you will be added to the
queue. Council Members, please keep your questions
to five minutes, including answers. Please wait for
the Sergeant at Arms to tell you when your time
begins. The Sergeant will then let you know when
your time is up.

We will now hear from Council Member Grodenchik
followed by Council Member Kallos.

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you Ms. Ruiz.

Thank you Chairs Dromm and Treyger. Chancellor, I am
not a professional educator but I did the next best
thing, I married one. My wife just finished about
her 70th Semester at Nassau Community College. So,
and I, most of my friends married educators or became
educators. There is just two things I want to talk
about this morning. I have had the pleasure of
working with many of the people who have testified
this morning. I represent eastern Queens. I have a
big chunk of District 26. The northern tier of 29
and at least five, depending on how you count on
District 75 schools in my district and I love each
and every one of them and I think for me, the worst
thing about this pandemic is I haven't been able to
go to my schools in many ways. I really miss going
to schools.

So, on that, I do want to ask you - I have asked
this to at least two of your predecessors so far.
Technology in the schools. When I took over as
Councilman about five and a half years ago, my first
budget, I visited one school and the computer teacher
there was working with nine year old Macs. Which to

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1 me is essentially a nine year old paper weight. He
2 couldn't upgrade, he couldn't do anything and I am
3 wondering if there are any funds? I have and many of
4 my colleagues that are here today will nod, because
5 they understand they have been paying for technology
6 in New York City public schools. Is there any
7 funding of this incredible windfall that we receive
8 going to technology and how will that happen.
9

10 MEISHA PORTER: Yes, thank you Council Member. I
11 am so glad to hear you've married well and all of
12 your friends have married well. So, congratulations
13 to you and we are really excited that we are
14 definitely putting resources to technology and I have
15 talked over and over again about what this pandemic
16 has taught us about the 21st Century classroom. And
17 to your point about those nine-year-old Macs,
18 technology turned over very, very quickly nowadays
19 but what we've learned is that is the interaction
20 between the adult, the teacher, the student and the
21 device that's going to really bring technology to
22 life.

23 But I am going to ask Lauren Siciliano to talk
24 more about our technology allocations in this budget.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you Chancellor.

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1
2 LAUREN SICILIANO: Thank you. Good morning and
3 thank you for the question. As the Chancellor said
4 we have made significant technology investments,
5 including but not limited to the 500,000 iPads that
6 we have purchased for schools and I am pleased to say
7 that the funding that we have received, will allow us
8 to continue to fund the LTE service for those iPads.
9 And we continue to have some iPads centrally
10 available for distribution and to support as needed.

11 In addition, the stimulus funding includes
12 critical investments to make sure that our students
13 continue to have access to 21st Century digital
14 learning tools. This includes funding not only for
15 supports for teachers around access to digital tools
16 but also of course, funds that will allow us to
17 continue to expand wireless access in school
18 buildings. As well as to support schools in taking
19 some of the same device tracking and support
20 protocols that we have been using this year and
21 continuing the next year including expanded help desk
22 support. So, we are absolutely committed to ensuring
23 continued technology investments in our schools and
24 very much appreciate the Council's advocacy in this
25 area.

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I would also note that the infusion of additional
dollars to schools through investments like the Fair
Student formula also will provide resources to
schools to ensure that they can continue to support
technology.

COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Well, I'm happy to
hear that. One thing I do want to put on the
Chancellor's mind because she has nothing else to
think about of course are smartboards. And I will
tell you one of the - I've told this to both Chair
Treyger and Chair Dromm in the past. A number of
years ago, I was visiting, I think it was PS213 which
has several blended programs with P4 and one of the
children was able to participate, a special needs
student using a pointer in his mouth but he was like
every other child. He was able to stop that - it was
basically a roulette wheel to see what you got on the
smartboard and I cried. And I am not ashamed to tell
you that because it was that magic moment that where
it all came together for that one young person.

MEISHA PORTER: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: And he was as much a
part of that school as any other child. So, I thank
you. I wish you good luck and I would love to see

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1 out here in Eastern Queens whenever you have a few
2 moments.

3
4 MEISHA PORTER: Love to do a visit with you. Get
5 us all back in schools.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Okay, thank you.
7 Thank you Chairs.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will now hear from Council
9 Member Kallos followed by Council Member Lander.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I spent the past seven
12 years asking about adding school seats, PreK and 3K
13 in particular and why would this year be any
14 different? When I asked the Mayor during Preliminary
15 Budget negotiations, he said he would make – he would
16 keep his promise to make 3K universal by 2021, if we
17 got funding from the federal government. So, I asked
18 Congresswoman Maloney and she got the money.

19 On March 24th, I was proud to join Mayor de Blasio
20 in announcing the 3K expansion for all of Manhattan
21 and citywide. At the time, I shared concern with how
22 hard it would be to roll out in less than six months
23 but we still have been doing it. We've been going to
24 schools. We have been going to providers. We have

25

1
2 been going to empty storefronts and passing that
3 information along to DOE.

4 I've been a little bit disappointed that we
5 haven't heard back. I am really confident but just
6 to be very specific about it, in terms of my
7 district, at this point I believe there are three
8 sites in my district. One on Roosevelt Island and
9 two - one the 80's and two in the 90's. So, we have
10 four seats for 1,000 - we have 1,000 four-year-old's,
11 so assuming 1,000 three-year-old's to and that's just
12 not going to be enough. Can we use any of the school
13 seats? There was a four percent decline in
14 enrollment citywide but in my district, two of the
15 schools in my district lost more than 25 percent of
16 their students. PS234 lost 171 students. PS89 lost
17 104 students. Sorry, that was just in District 2 on
18 the upper east side. PS158 lost 130 students. PS290
19 lost 101. If you take all the schools on the upper
20 east side and combine K-8, we lost 543 students. Can
21 we make those seats available?

22 MEISHA PORTER: So, thank you Council Member
23 Kallos and you can tell from our commitments in the
24 budget that we agree with you around the importance
25 of centering our early childhood education and this

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1
2 is my second hearing and I am very clear about your
3 question and what is important to you. So, you've
4 made it very much known.

5 I am going to ask Deputy Chancellor Wallack to
6 talk more about PK-3K expansion and what we can do
7 specifically in your district.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: And I have two follow up
9 questions. So, the answers can be as quick and to
10 the point as possible, especially possibly even just
11 yes.

12 MEISHA PORTER: Okay.

13 JOSH WALLACK: So thank you, appreciate it
14 Council Member Kallos and I will be brief. We are
15 committed to working in close partnership with you to
16 achieve the vision of 3K for all as quickly as we
17 can. Our goal is to have a seat for every family by
18 the fall of 2023. In School District 2, we have 45
19 programs that are offering 3K on the application now.
20 But we want to work with you to go as far and as fast
21 as we can. And so, we are in dialogue now with
22 principals and the superintendent in School District
23 2 and throughout your district to see where there
24 might be other opportunities. We will work with you

1 and families through this admission season to go
2 again, as quickly as we can.
3

4 With that being said -

5 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: If school isn't available
6 on the deadline of May 28th, does that mean that that
7 school won't possibly be a 3K site or we will be able
8 to add 3K sites after the May 28th deadline for
9 families?

10 JOSH WALLACK: We will continue to add sites and
11 we will keep you posted on that. We would encourage
12 families to apply for 3K now with the sites that are
13 available. Put their names on waiting lists and then
14 we will keep them informed as new sites become
15 available and they can apply for those as well. But
16 regardless, we will keep your office posted and
17 families posted throughout the district as new
18 opportunities arise.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: We got most of the seats
20 that we did through building out new locations. We
21 forwarded a number of locations, SCA's telling me
22 that they have no plans to open anything by 2021.
23 Everything is for 2022. Is there a way to get some
24 of the existing school sites converted and online by
25 September? Additionally, we have a lot of community-

1 based organizations. They are the ones who got us
2 through this to begin with and some of them have
3 multiple sites. They are owned and operated by one
4 LLC but each site is a different LLC. Can we let all
5 of the sub-LLC's in to do that? And then we've got
6 other providers who are answering the call and
7 saying, we will do this but the DOE won't open the
8 RFP. We open the RFP for September. If you can't
9 for September, would you open it for January?
10

11 JOSH WALLACK: We believe that we can add some -
12 we can work with school leaders to bring some
13 additional district school seats online. As far as
14 school construction goes, that just typically takes
15 you know from the process of securing property to
16 building it out in a safe and healthy way. It take
17 time.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

19 JOSH WALLACK: And we continue to work with the
20 School Construction Authority on that. As for
21 specific community-based organizations, let's
22 continue the dialogue. We have to follow all the
23 rules obviously of city procurement and be careful
24 about that. But where there is flexibility, you know
25 the Mayor and Chancellor have been clear that this is

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a priority and we should push as hard as we can and
we will do that.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will now hear from Council
Member Lander followed by Council Member Rose.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you very much to
the Chairs and to the Chancellor and to the whole DOE
team. I just really appreciate what you guys have
been doing and going through and managing and
supporting and all of this. Really, really grateful.
I want to say thank you again to Lindsey for working
with us on the school budget relief issues. I am
glad we are past that and to Fair Student Funding.

What I want to ask about first is how we are
involving school communities in planning for the
resources we have for social and emotional and
academic supports as opposed to just kind of waiting
or having some menu. I partnered up with somebody
else and did a survey of about 100 remote families
and found that more than half had not heard from
anyone from their school about what would make them
feel confident coming back next year. And it just
seem to me it would be wise to take some of these
resources and invest in supporting our school

1 communities to have the resources to plan together
2 for how they want to invest those funds. Like talk
3 to folks in remote cohorts as well as in person
4 cohorts. Do a lot of outreach. Like that might take
5 money itself. We already have principals; people
6 mostly want to hear from principals and teachers but
7 they are swamped with the work of the year.

9 So, how do we support school communities to do
10 outreach? To be talking to all those families and
11 then involving them in making some you know
12 hopefully, there is some flexibility and room for
13 decision making.

14 I know you guys are doing some borough townhalls
15 but obviously only a very small percentage of people
16 are going to be able to come to those. So, how do we
17 make sure you know, the most important thing it seems
18 to me is not to say to school communities, you know,
19 here is some money and you can spend it in ways x, y,
20 or z but here is how we can help you make your school
21 into a community that supports resilience and
22 healing. And that's an enormous task and so, helping
23 them have the infrastructure. You might even want to
24 pay some parents to be on a school reopening council.
25 Pay some teachers to spend time this summer beyond

1 summer rising to be getting ready for what's
2 necessary to really make the fall supportive and
3 healing for all our students.
4

5 So, can you say a little more about what you are
6 setting up and how that can happen?

7 MEISHA PORTER: Yeah, first of all Council Member
8 Lander, I completely agree with you. The big borough
9 tours are important. They are an important part of
10 the process but what is going to get our students
11 back in school and our families committed is that
12 interaction between the school and the family period.

13 And so, we are doing a number of things. So,
14 internally, we have been going through the process of
15 you know, just going and doing what we call empathy
16 interviews. Just checking the pulse of where our
17 schools are. Where our central office team members
18 are and we are going to be sharing a report of what
19 came out of those conversations. What schools need
20 to really be open from us, from the central office.
21 We are also you know, part of our summer rising
22 planning is about that partnership and providing
23 resources to our school communities to help support
24 the planning process forward.
25

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1
2 But I agree with that they are part of the
3 conversation with us. I am working with our
4 Chancellors Principal Advisory Council to inform
5 school reopening along with our unique partners but I
6 am going to Lauren, Lindsey, I am sorry and Deputy
7 Chancellor Robinson and if we have time, our Chief
8 Academic Officer Linda Chen, talk about what's been
9 happening in their division specifically in service
10 of you know supporting our principals really being in
11 partnership with families around reopening.

12 LINDSEY OATES: Thank you Chancellor and thank
13 you Council Member Lander. We have now released as
14 of Monday, what we call our fall planning grant.
15 This is an allocation that we are doing for the
16 second year in a row for the exact purpose that you
17 are describing. It provides funding to school
18 communities to support, to have the ability to pay
19 per session to teachers, to assistant principals, so
20 that they can do the work that you just described so
21 eloquently throughout the summer supporting
22 reopening.

23 We did an allocation last year. We found that to
24 be successful, so we are repeating that process this
25 year. And that's something that schools know about

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now is posted on Monday, and so they can start to
work towards that. We also did a planning grant to
support planning summer activities.

I know that we have great work on trauma informed
care that does involve payments to families and I
think LaShawn, Deputy Chancellor Robinson can speak
more to that.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Just to be clear, every
school is getting those grants and they don't have to
apply for it?

LINDSEY OATES: No, it's yeah, a grant is a
little misnomer. Every school is getting an
allocation and every school community needs to
support those planning activities.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay and then my last
question is just about making the outdoor learning
program permanent. We have a letter coming to you.
Obviously, especially for Summer Rising. It's been
great to be able to use the streets and outdoor
spaces. We may be open restaurants program and the
open streets program permanent, so I am hoping we
will be making the open school outdoor learning
program permanent. And that might take a little more
time to figure out what it looks like in the fall and

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1
2 what permanent means but at least for the summer, I
3 hope it will get extended beyond the current
4 timeline.

5 MEISHA PORTER: We completely agree with you. We
6 would love to see that we expand outdoor learning.
7 It's been a great resource for our schools and we
8 think as we move towards a potential full reopening,
9 which is what I am hopeful for, we'll need those
10 outdoor spaces to support our schools. So, thank you
11 for your support in that space.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will now hear from Council
14 Member Rose followed by Council Member Dinowitz.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you so much. I want
17 to thank Chairs Dromm and Treyger for their zeal and
18 for just to make New York City schools excellent.
19 And Chancellor, I want to welcome you and say thank
20 you so much for making Staten Island your first
21 visit. Usually we are last on the list and I want to
22 apologize, I had all intentions of participating but
23 something unplanned came up.

24 But my concern has been from the beginning of the
25 pandemic. The loss of learning. A learning loss and

1
2 the fact that so many of our students did not have
3 the equipment that they needed to even participate
4 remotely. So, I am really worried about the academic
5 deficits that they are going to suffer from. So, the
6 Executive Budget included a \$500 million investment
7 in Fiscal '22 for an academic recovery and student
8 support.

9 It's our understanding that DOE hasn't quite yet
10 determined how to use this broad category of funding.
11 So, even before the pandemic, few of them had the New
12 York City's third graders, 3rd through 8th graders
13 were less than reading proficient. Which striking
14 disparities based on race, disability and housing
15 status. Is DOE considering options to revamp the way
16 New York City teaches children to read based on what
17 research shows and ensure students get the reading
18 instruction and interventions that they need? How
19 can DOE best use the federal funding to ensure
20 students learn to read? And will any of these funds
21 be used during Summer Rising and if so, how much?
22 And do you think that 28 to 30 days of programming
23 for Summer Rising is enough time to address young
24 people who have failed courses or need to even learn

1
2 the new ones that the instruction that was given
3 during the pandemic.

4 MEISHA PORTER: Thank you Council Member Rose. I
5 am going to start backwards from the end of your
6 question and pull Deputy – Chief Academic Officer
7 Linda Chen into talk very specifically about the
8 academic recovery and what they are doing. And so, I
9 think Summer Rising is the bridge back to school. It
10 is a starting point. It is absolutely not our ending
11 point and it's going to serve a number of purposes.
12 It's going to provide academic support, academic
13 intervention. It's going to provide very importantly
14 fun times for students back in school. But also,
15 build that bridge back to learning, to in-person
16 learning that we need to have happen for our students
17 to address those gaps that you talked about.

18 As far as our academic recovery work, we are
19 looking very specifically at research based practices
20 around screening, screeners around where our students
21 are so we can provide targeted instructional support.
22 But also, centering our most vulnerable learners as a
23 part of the path forward.

1
2 And that includes our students with disabilities,
3 our English Language learners and our students in
4 communities that are traditionally underserved.

5 But again, I will let Dr. Chen talk more
6 specifically about those – the academic recovery
7 efforts.

8 LINDA CHEN: Thank you Chancellor and thank you
9 Council Member Rose. You are absolutely right. We
10 have students who pre-pandemic we were striving to
11 support. And that is also in terms of our equity
12 work in action, we want to make sure we double down
13 and support those who didn't receive what they needed
14 before and especially through the pandemic, now all
15 of those disparities have been absolutely
16 exacerbated.

17 And so, part of what we are doing is a multiprong
18 approach. So, first and foremost, as you said, we
19 need to be able to identify as quickly as possible,
20 what the learning needs are to accelerate their
21 learning. That means, we need to have screeners and
22 diagnostic tools available to our schools, so that it
23 can quickly and efficiently discern what are the
24 needs in English Language arts and in math.

1
2 And then, we also have updated our core
3 curriculum to make sure that that curriculum can meet
4 our students where they are. Part of this readiness
5 to accelerate their skill development and their
6 knowledge development is making sure that we begin
7 with the social/emotional learning supports.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

9 LINDA CHEN: And affirm students where they are,
10 so that they can really accelerate their learning.
11 We also in addition to the core curriculum updates,
12 we also have interventions that are evidence-based as
13 the Chancellor spoke about in both small groups and
14 pairings. We also have high dosage tutoring that is
15 part of the comprehensive work around recovery and
16 academic recovery.

17 And then lastly, I know we are short on time,
18 specifically around literacy. What we have seen is
19 that over time, students that need and deserve a full
20 literacy instruction. That means foundational
21 literacy, that includes phonics, vocabulary, fluency
22 and comprehension. They have not had equitable
23 access to all of those evidence-based skills
24 programming and interventions. And that is what we
25 are also doubling down on. Not only in our budget

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2 but in our priorities of professional learning and
3 training.

4 So, those are some of the things that we are
5 doing to move towards recovery and as quickly as
6 possible. That's also way as the Chancellor often
7 says, it is so important to open, open the doors to
8 every student to be able to serve them in person.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And I hope that the
10 materials that you use are going to be inclusionary
11 and reflective of the students that are there and not
12 just for Black and Brown people during Black history
13 month.

14 MEISHA PORTER: We are with you Council Member
15 Rose, 100 percent with you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you. Thank you.
17 Thank you Chairs.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Now, we will hear from
19 Council Member Adams.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Thank you so much to both
22 of the Chairs this morning. Council Members Treyger,
23 Chair Treyger and Chair Dromm. Thank you so much.
24 Chancellor Porter, always a pleasure to be in your
25 company and your staff. It's a very exciting time

1
2 right now for the DOE. It's been an exciting time I
3 think, for New York City as a whole in our reopening
4 of schools and enthusiastically getting our children
5 back to work.

6 So, I'm just going to ask a few questions all
7 together. I'm concerned about the lost children in
8 middle school and high school. I represent District
9 28 in Southeast Queens, Jamaica, South Richmond Hill,
10 South Ozone Park and I am concerned about the lost
11 children in my district. Those who disappeared from
12 the system. So, I would like to know what's being
13 done to find them.

14 I know that Summer Rising, we're putting a lot on
15 Summer Rising right now to retrieve them and recall
16 them but what's being done right now to find those
17 children and reengage them again? Time has been lost
18 and they are out of sight out of mind. That's one
19 thing.

20 The second thing that concerns me is and I am
21 going to tie it all together. The unfortunate death
22 of Romy Vilsaint and bullying that he was subject to
23 what appears to be 361 I believe, and the subsequent
24 response of DOE, from what I understand and I get it,
25 it's probably protocol but we think family feels

1 detached and they feel abandoned by the school that
2 they put him in and entrusted him. So, I'd like to
3 hear a little bit about that protocol in that
4 situation.
5

6 And also in taking a look forward as far as
7 antibullying for our children that are so, so
8 troubled and have things pint up and may not even
9 realize the significance of their actions. What are
10 we doing as far as enhancing antibullying treatment,
11 a training for our children and also for our teachers
12 and sensitivity? The child was bullied for days and
13 it continued and now he's not here anymore.

14 Then, my final question has to do with the nurse
15 that saw him. There was a nurse at PS361. My scope
16 and vision, part of it for New York City schools is
17 to have clinic in our schools who brought in the base
18 of healthcare for our children. I think had there
19 been a clinic in place to handle a broader base of
20 issues for our children when it comes to their
21 healthcare, this situation may have been different.
22 I don't know but it may have changed things a little
23 bit.

24 So, I just want to get your thoughts on that.
25 You know, on expanding, some of the great things that

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1
2 you are looking at right now and doing. It's a lot
3 of funding that we are getting. I'm just going to
4 throw out there one more time because my colleague
5 Council Member Rose put this in there. Equity in our
6 school system is a must. Black and Brown children
7 are the majority in our schools and there is no
8 curriculum representative of them, of their history.
9 There is no curriculum that is consistent. Hell, not
10 just the slavery aspect but the academic, the
11 educational, the arts, all of it. Because we
12 encompass all of that and all children would benefit
13 from an inclusionary curriculum that included all of
14 the children in the schools in the City of New York.

15 So, I am going stop there because I could get on
16 a roll but I am going to stop. And again, thank you
17 very much to the Chairs again and thank you for your
18 testimony.

19 MEISHA PORTER: I could join you on that roll
20 Council Member Adams and Council Member Rose. There
21 is no greater advocate for ensuring that a curriculum
22 is inclusive and representative in our schools and
23 we're going to get it done. And it really is thanks
24 to the resources of this Council that we are going to
25 get it done.

1
2 I also just want to honor Romy Vilsaint and his
3 family. This is a heartbreaking tragedy. You know,
4 every time we lose a child in our system, it affects
5 me not only as a leader but as a mother. And I can't
6 imagine, you know, it is unimaginable the pain that
7 the family is in. You know, we are — a full
8 investigation is underway and our deepest sympathies
9 are with the family and would love to talk to you
10 offline if we need to about what ways that we can
11 better support the family outside of protocol.

12 We want to make sure that the family feels
13 supported and covered in this, a just really
14 difficult, challenging, just heartbreaking time.
15 There really are no words. I also want to say, you
16 know as an educator in the Bronx, those lost children
17 out of sight, out of mind, are never out of sight and
18 out of mind for us. They go to bed with us at night.
19 You know, we wake up to them in the morning. They
20 keep us up at night.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time.

22 MEISHA PORTER: And so, ensuring that we have
23 clear protocols around attendance, reengagement.
24 It's the work of our team and under Deputy Chancellor
25

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LaShawn Robinson and I will talk a little bit more
about what that looks like.

I don't know if the First Deputy Chancellor is on
this call could talk a little bit about our summer
program and how we are addressing students who need
to regain credits and how we are bringing them back
in the system but our commitment is to every New York
City public school student and to making sure they
hit that finish line of a high school diploma and
college and career readiness and beyond.

COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will now hear from Council
Member Dinowitz.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you and I want to
thank Council Members Dromm and Treyger. It's you
know great to have teachers in the Council. I am
Council Member from the North Bronx and before I was
in the Council I was also a teacher; I was a Special
Education teacher and I taught here in the Bronx. I
actually still consider myself a teacher.

Before I ask my question, I just want to echo
what Council Member Adams said. Her sentiments about
clinics and schools. I taught in buildings with

1
2 clinics. They were invaluable tools for providing
3 our children with vital mental health supports that
4 they needed and trust me, many of our children do
5 utilize and need those services.

6 One of the favorite classes that I taught through
7 all my years as a special education teachers was
8 environmental science and I was fortunate enough that
9 my school had a garden and I would bring students to
10 the garden and between growing fresh food, eating
11 that food, students learned to love green space.
12 They learned how to be stewards of the environment.
13 Some of their diets even changed and that's not even
14 to mention how being outside and engaging with the
15 environment and growing things impacted their
16 social/emotional health but you know, this type of
17 outdoor education, education, environmental
18 education, it's especially important here in the
19 Bronx. We are ranked the least healthy county in the
20 entire state and many of my constituents have limited
21 access to green space and fresh food.

22 And so, what I want to know is what funds are set
23 aside? What's being done for physical space, so that
24 gardens can be built in schools for all ages? Of
25 course funding for the staff to maintain the space

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2 for sustainability coordinators? And what efforts
3 are being made to coordinate with many of our
4 organizations that specialize in this type of
5 environment. Education and specifically, is this,
6 any of this money, these efforts being prioritized
7 for communities that have historically been left
8 behind like here in the Bronx?

9 MEISHA PORTER: Yeah, you know I know better than
10 anyone else Council Member Dinowitz. You know, the
11 way that the Bronx has been left traditionally. But
12 also, the importance of creating green spaces and the
13 joy it brings young people when they get to engage in
14 those green spaces. I am going to ask Deputy
15 Chancellor Goldmark to talk specifically about how we
16 are providing access. How we are working with CBO
17 partners to build those green spaces in the Bronx and
18 would love to talk again more offline about how we
19 expand those opportunities not only in the borough of
20 the Bronx but of course, our city.

21 KARIN GOLDMARK: Thank you so much Chancellor
22 Porter. Hi, Council Member Dinowitz, it's nice to
23 put a face to the voice. We were talking about a
24 specific green space in the Bronx, I believe that was
25 yesterday.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: It feels – yeah.

3 KARIN GOLDMARK: Hmm, hmm, the day before. So,
4 thank you for your question. Actually, with a lot of
5 support from the Council, we have done really a
6 tremendous amount of work this year on outdoor
7 learning and we have been working closely with the
8 Parks Department and with the Department of
9 Transportation. We now have hundreds of schools
10 across New York City of all types. DOE, district,
11 Charter, nonpublic, every school in New York City was
12 eligible to apply for outdoor learning and one of the
13 things we learned this year is precisely how
14 important that outdoor space was. It's something
15 that we already knew but we have been deeply reminded
16 of and we are actually in the process right now of
17 planning for what outdoor learning 2.0 looks like.
18 How do we take this, not only so that the children
19 are outside, which is so important but so that there
20 are curricular connections to being outside and there
21 is a specific reason to be outside. Which by the
22 way, playing outside is a very good, valid,
23 legitimate, specific reason. So, we are not you
24 know, no shade on that but we are also looking at how
25 do we expand this, so that it's a learning

1
2 experience? And how do we specifically attend to
3 neighborhoods where there actually is less green
4 space. Because many, many, many New Yorkers realized
5 over the course of the last year exactly how far they
6 were from a really large green space, when we were
7 all only walking place which mercifully, we are no
8 longer in that situation.

9 And when we did the outdoor learning initiative
10 the first time, we also prioritized the neighborhoods
11 that were most impacted by COVID and that had the
12 least amount of green space for those outdoor
13 learning permits.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Good and not to cut you
15 off, I have 22 more seconds but again, with outdoor
16 learning, it's not just being outside but engaging in
17 what life can be created outside. How students can
18 build with their hands and see you know and see
19 things grow. And you know as educators, we so often
20 talk about you know seeing the — you know the
21 children seeing the fruits of their labor. It's
22 very, very challenging to see —

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: But — can I have a few
25 more seconds Chair? Okay, you know but seeing things

1
2 grow is very impactful to the social/emotional mental
3 health of our children. So, as you look to 2.0, I
4 would you know – very eager to work with you on
5 making that just not, as you said, not just being
6 outdoors but making that outdoor experience
7 purposeful and of course, of course, prioritizing
8 places in the Bronx and like the Borough of Bronx,
9 which absolutely need that both the social/emotional
10 support and for you know a borough that has
11 historically been behind in health outcomes. You
12 know, the asthma rate is incredibly high and we have
13 high absence rates because of that asthma rate. And
14 children, you know expanding the green space but
15 also, teaching children and raising a generation of
16 children who love and can advocate for and work in
17 their own communities to build and expand their
18 environment and their health is vital.

19 So, I am eager to work with you on that and of
20 course, but again making sure that there is actually
21 funds to do this because it costs money to build a
22 garden. It costs money to pay staff and work with
23 community partners to do that. Thank you.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chairs, we have been joined
25 by Council Member Gibson. Now, moving on with

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2 Council Member questions. We have questions from
3 Council Member Riley.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you Chair Dromm and
6 Chair Treyger for your resiliency during the pandemic
7 and your leadership. Thank you Chancellor Porter. I
8 have no questions pertaining to the Bronx schools
9 because you know for years how much we have been
10 underfunded, underappreciated. I know with your
11 leadership that we won't be having that anymore
12 moving forward. But my question really goes with
13 financial literacy in the education system.

14 As you know, many of our students who are going
15 into college usually don't get the financial literacy
16 that they need before they enter into college and
17 then they accumulate so much debt when it comes to
18 credit cards and different other financial hardship
19 that they realize when they get to college. So, my
20 question is, is there any plan with DOE to invest
21 into more financial literacy for our students,
22 especially students of color that come from
23 communities like the Bronx here in the 12th district
24 and all across New York City.

25

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2 MEISHA PORTER: Thank you Council Member Riley
3 and you know, we probably are victims of that lack of
4 learning around financial literacy early on and
5 definitely believe very much in the importance of
6 teaching financial literacy but also, ensuring that
7 part of the pathway to college and career readiness
8 for our students includes understanding the financial
9 costs and the financial kind of attach from credit
10 card companies on our students around you know really
11 you know getting ready for college in all of those
12 ways.

13 Deputy Chancellor Robinson has really led our
14 work around college access for all, which has
15 included financial literacy around college and
16 college readiness and awareness really being
17 grounded. Not only in the academic skills needed for
18 college, but also the financial skills. And so, I am
19 going to pass it really quickly, so I can get Deputy
20 Chancellor Robinson in.

21 LASHAWN ROBINSON: Thank you Chancellor. I will
22 start and invite Dr. Chen on as well who shares the
23 college access to our work. I think this is a great
24 opportunity. You know the Chancellor spoke earlier
25 around curricula development and investments that we

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2 have to take a closer look at our economic class that
3 all students must take prior to graduation which you
4 know has a focus on financial literacy. I think we
5 can certainly take a closer look and look at
6 alignment with some of the concerns that you are
7 raising Council Member Riley. But Linda's team, they
8 support college access for all high school. We
9 support the middle school component and you know
10 really work together to coordinate those supports
11 with a focus on financial literacy as our young
12 people transition from high schools to the full
13 secondary setting.

14 So, Dr. Chen, if you would like to add, please do
15 so.

16 LINDA CHEN: Sure, very quickly, yes, financial
17 literacy is important and more than ever, we continue
18 to expand those lessons throughout, not just waiting
19 until high school. So, that students are getting
20 financial literacy throughout even elementary to
21 middle school grades and specifically in college
22 access in the high school space, we do quite a bit of
23 work with a number of our partners to support our
24 young people in planning for college and career.
25 There are so many complicated aspects of applying for

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1 college and being ready to be able to not just get in
2 and through that process but to be able to maintain
3 the financial sustainability, not only for college
4 but also for career and for life.

5 So, those are some things that we have included
6 as well.

7
8 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you Dr. Chen and I
9 am looking forward to you know partnering with the
10 DOE to see how we could do more within the Council
11 because we really do want to ensure that our kids are
12 financially literate, especially those going into
13 college and we do have some kids that choose not to
14 go into college, maybe they want to go in a career.

15 So, we want to make sure that we are preparing
16 them you know ahead of time. So, thank you
17 Chancellor Porter. Thank you Chair Dromm. Thank you
18 Chair Treyger. You have been amazing for the
19 Education Committee. We are looking forward to our
20 partnership moving forward. Thank you.

21 MEISHA PORTER: Thank you Council Member Riley
22 for your continued work across the borough. I see
23 you.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you.

25 MEISHA PORTER: As a resident, I see you.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Council Member Riley, don't
4 go too far. I have a pitch, which is that in the
5 Council's budget response, we did ask for \$6 million
6 in funding for the New York City Kids Rise Program.

7 MEISHA PORTER: Yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Which actually sets up a
9 scholarship for students and it has existed in
10 District 30 and 95 percent of the students in
11 District 30 now have a 421K set up for them, 95
12 percent of the students.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Beautiful.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, if we can get this into
15 the budget, which I hope we will work with the
16 Chancellor on and I know that they have met with the
17 Chancellor, this would be a wonderful way to expand
18 that college access to all students. College Access
19 for All will really become real.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Amazing.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, I look forward to working
22 with the Chancellor on that proposal as well.

23 MEISHA PORTER: Definitely Chair Dromm.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you Chair Dromm.

25

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2 MEISHA PORTER: And I can tell you as I told them
3 when I met with New York City Kids Rise. It's a no
4 brainer. We are definitely looking to expand and
5 definitely expanding across the boroughs.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you Chancellor.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Great, a wonderful, wonderful
8 program and it's so community inclusive, it's
9 incredible. But let's go to Council Member Louis,
10 who now has questions and then we will go to Council
11 Member Treyger because we are a little over time and
12 we need to go to the School Construction Authority
13 part of the hearing as well.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Thank you so much Chair
15 Dromm and Treyger for your leadership and for being
16 staunch supporters of our students in schools. So sad
17 to see you two go but you definitely have left us the
18 framework on how we should be carrying the mantle
19 moving forward.

20 I just have a quick question; it won't be too
21 long. Council Member Adams shared a tragedy that
22 happened in my district about a week and a half ago.
23 It still has our community in uproar. But Chancellor
24 Porter, I just wanted to thank you and your team for
25 responding to the community regarding it. But I just

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2 have a quick question about social workers. I wanted
3 to know what framework will be used to access the new
4 influx of social workers, school psychologists and
5 other support staff to schools for this next budget.

6 MEISHA PORTER: Definitely, I'm just going to
7 pass it over to Deputy Chancellor Robinson to answer
8 that quickly.

9 LASHAWN ROBINSON: Thank you so much Council
10 Member for this important question and continuing to
11 you know keep the Romy family in our prayers.

12 Certainly a heartbreaking tragedy that occurred that
13 our Chancellor spoke to earlier. And for our
14 schools, funding for social workers will be sent to
15 schools via a full allocation memorandum. And each
16 school will have an opportunity to hire their own
17 social worker.

18 We've heard from school leaders about the
19 importance of them engaging their school teams and
20 making the selection for the hire. So, that will
21 happen and I believe we should and perhaps Lindsey's
22 team can speak to when the funding will be found but
23 I believe that should be happening shortly if it
24 hasn't already but we will be coordinating closely
25 with schools to ensure that those social workers are

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2 hired and in place this fall. So, schools will
3 receive considerable support in making this happen.

4 MEISHA PORTER: I think Lindsey is muted but the
5 SAM is actually already out and so, we look forward
6 to making sure we are leveraging those resources and
7 Council Member Louis, thank you for your partnership
8 and support of the Romy family. Thank you so much.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Chair Treyger?

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Chair Dromm.
11 Just, I have some quick follow-up and then we can
12 move onto the capital. I wanted to just dig a little
13 deeper on the \$720 million in academic and
14 instructional supports. I think we heard before from
15 Dr. Chen about diagnostic screening. Can we learn a
16 little bit more specifics about that? And also, what
17 comes after diagnostics and the screenings because
18 the work is really also in the intervention services
19 and making sure that they are adequate and again,
20 doubling down on equity in those services. Could
21 someone just go deeper on that for me please?

22 MEISHA PORTER: Yes, yes, Dr. Chen go deeper into
23 that and I just will also add that also included in
24 that investment, is the conversation that has come up
25 over and over and over in this call. And that is

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1 ensuring that we have a curriculum that is reflective
2 of our students and responsive. And so, I just
3 wanted to lift that as well. But go ahead Dr. Chen.

4 LINDA CHEN: Yes, thank you. So, we are looking
5 at a full package right? I think many of you know we
6 have never been able to fully you know RTI or MTSS;
7 those are things response to intervention or
8 multitiered systems to support are things that we've
9 known about for a number of years but we are now able
10 to really fully resource those efforts.
11

12 So, it begins with and again, with the screener
13 right? So, it's like a temperature check. Like, how
14 are students doing in accordance with the grade level
15 or subject area standards and then there are
16 diagnostic tools to go a little bit deeper.

17 So, it's almost like you go to the doctor's
18 office, you get a temperature check and it gives you
19 some high level information that helps teachers plan
20 for core instruction, the instruction the Chancellor
21 is talking about which is reflective of who our
22 students are and are firmed in the curriculum.

23 And then there is like you said Chair Treyger,
24 taking that deeper look into what students need maybe
25 in smaller groups for targeted interventions around

1
2 certain standards. We also know that students may
3 need even a deeper look in terms of diagnostic tools.

4 So, if students are having a hard time reading,
5 we may not know why they can't read at grade level.
6 Is it a decoding issue around phonics or phonemic
7 awareness or fluency. Or is it a sort of meaning
8 based situation around comprehension and vocabulary.

9 So, the diagnostic tools Chair, help to determine
10 and better be more precise as to the types of
11 interventions that are needed, so that we can match
12 what students need with the interventions that can
13 accelerate their learning. And earlier in the, I
14 think you also referenced to, when we think about
15 Tier through three or those intensive interventions,
16 that very support like, around the evidence based
17 literacy intervention specifically that are needed,
18 we also know that takes a fair amount of training.
19 And so that's what also the resources are devoted to
20 around training.

21 To your point earlier around the hardest hit
22 areas and the kids that need it the most, that is
23 where we are prioritizing training, prioritizing
24 resources and also, prioritizing the high dosage
25 tutoring that we talked about earlier.

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CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, just for clarity, is
the DOE considering – how will you conduct this
diagnostic work? Is this going to be a test? Is
this a formative assessment? What is the tool?

LINDA CHEN: These are low stakes assessments.
These are not to be used for high stakes. It's
really for teachers to be able to know how to most
precisely and efficiently provide services. I would
also add, it's important for our students themselves
and our families to understand. We've gotten a lot
of questions. Families like, where are my students?

That information is also designed to empower
students to know where they are to make sure our
families know where our students are and know exactly
what the plan is to support the acceleration of their
learning, so they know what they will be getting as a
result of those assessments.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, a couple of quick
follow-ups. Has this been communicated to schools
that these are low stakes formative assessments not
to be used to evaluate kids in terms of report cards.
Not to be used in terms of teacher observation
reports? That these are just clearly low stakes
assignments and also, where will the schools find the

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2 added resources? Will it be a new SAM? Where will
3 they find the money for the services that come about
4 after this assessment is done?

5 LINDA CHEN: Yes, we have shared that these are
6 low stakes and also, they will come in the form of
7 SAMS and also direct resources as well, both.

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And when can schools expect
9 to see that SAM or hear about, get guidance about
10 that SAM?

11 LINDA CHEN: We are working very hard with the
12 finance office. I will also just defer to Lindsey in
13 terms of timing but luckily there are lots of
14 resources and we are making sure that they are very
15 clearly delineated and distributed.

16 MEISHA PORTER: And I would also add that these
17 assessments, these low stake screeners already happen
18 in our schools. Schools are using ready, they are
19 using map you know, map - fix, correct me Linda.

20 LINDA CHEN: Map Growth.

21 MEISHA PORTER: Map growth assessments and so,
22 these are really assessments that tell a story of
23 where our students are academically. What we want to
24 move to in the new school year is being very one,
25 supporting and resourcing them happening and two,

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1
2 having a consistent practice across our system around
3 how and when they happen.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, and is there
5 agreement on the areas around small group high dose
6 tutoring? How will students be selected and then for
7 that, what kind of guidance will be given out to
8 schools about that? Can anyone speak to that issue?

9 MEISHA PORTER: Yeah, go ahead Linda. I will
10 just start by saying there is absolutely agreement
11 around that. You know we want to make sure that we
12 provide access to that high dosage tutoring that many
13 of our families don't have the resources to provide
14 on their own. And so, there is absolutely agreement
15 on that but Dr. Chen, go ahead.

16 LINDA CHEN: Yes, so between high dosage tutoring
17 and the interventions are very targeted. We are
18 providing information to schools. And again, I want
19 to echo what the Chancellor said. Much of these
20 things are happening in our schools but we are able
21 to make sure that they are the resources and the
22 funding to support these to do it more deeply.

23 So, that depending on how students, their results
24 are in terms of their screeners and their diagnostics
25 and I want to also mention to, that teacher

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2 information is also very important. It's not about
3 one measure or one assessment but the teacher
4 observation and that information and information from
5 families are important as well. Then they can target
6 and align the types of needs with the types of
7 interventions that are needed and that includes
8 dosage and frequency and all of those factors as
9 well.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And Dr. -

11 MEISHA PORTER: And we also - I'm sorry Chair
12 Treyger.

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: No go ahead.

14 MEISHA PORTER: Yep, we also want to make sure
15 that we are not just focusing - although we want to
16 make sure that we are closing gaps but that we are
17 not just leaning into remedial services but also
18 academic enrichment and building you know, creating
19 really strong building blocks that advance students
20 forward.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right and will there be
22 equity accounted for in this new SAM in terms of or
23 multilingual learners? Our kids with special needs?
24 Can anyone speak to that?

25

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1
2 MEISHA PORTER: Absolutely. Mirza and Christina
3 Foti are here and they are like absolutely Chair
4 Treyger and thank you for making sure we lifted that
5 up. Centering our most vulnerable learners will
6 always remain a priority but Mirza?

7 LINDA CHEN: And that's inclusive of what we have
8 been discussing in terms of assessments and
9 interventions are also specifically there one
10 specifically for multilingual learners in mind and
11 student facilities with more intensive -

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I have to say this because as
13 someone who represents a district that has you know a
14 high number of multilingual learners and heard from
15 providers. We need to do better in this regard of
16 getting information out and connecting with our
17 immigrant families or multilingual learners. Because
18 this has been a major, major challenge. I have said
19 this before, not everyone watches the ten o'clock
20 press conferences. Not everyone watches - follows
21 Twitter and Facebook. Families get information in
22 different ways and I think we need to think about how
23 do we double down on partnerships with community
24 based organizations that actually serve our immigrant
25 families on a daily basis to get information and

1 connections to services. I really think that this
2 really needs to be the direction that we move toward.

3
4 I want to just quickly move on in terms of an
5 estimate cost for pay parity for our preschool
6 special education teachers. I know, I previously
7 spoke to Lindsey Oates about this at a meeting.

8 Lindsey, do we have any numbers or data yet on how
9 much would it cost to provide pay parity for our
10 preschool special education teachers, namely the
11 4410?

12 LINDSEY OATES: So, thank you for the question
13 Chair and I would like to invite Deputy Chancellor
14 Wallack to join me on this but as we spoke earlier,
15 we are investing in Special Ed PreK in an
16 unprecedented way. We are thrilled to be able to
17 make that investment and add additional seats. My
18 understanding is we don't have the best access into
19 the financials of the individual organizations that
20 run these programs. They are not contracted with DOE
21 now. They certainly don't work for us and so, we
22 don't have a specific cost estimate. I think we are
23 working on that and I can let Deputy Chancellor
24 Wallack speak to the work that his team is going on
25 that.

1
2 JOSH WALLACK: Thank you. No, that's exactly
3 right and you know, when we with your partnership and
4 help achieve conversation equity for general ed
5 community-based organization teachers, we were able
6 to do that because we had very good information about
7 their salaries and could really project how much that
8 would cost. We just don't have the same information
9 about this organization but we are working with the
10 State Ed department to get that information and would
11 really like to partner with you and your team as well
12 in getting a hold of it and reviewing it, so that we
13 can make the best of the assessment.

14 We share your goal of making sure that all of
15 these educators that do such tremendous work for our
16 children and families are compensated fairly. So, we
17 just want to get that information, so that we can
18 come to the right answers.

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right and to give just
20 colleagues and public context here, because the pay
21 parity agreement that we're able to advance for early
22 childhood educators a few years back. Because it did
23 not extend to preschool special education, many of
24 these providers that served at the time over 30,000
25 children, they are facing major vacancies. They

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2 cannot fill positions because there is no pay parity
3 for special education preschool teachers. This is a
4 state mandated of course program of the state of
5 course bears responsibility. But now that we have
6 these added resources, there's really no excuse not
7 for us to get this done.

8 We do need the data; I agree with you. We have
9 been pushing and getting - trying to get this
10 information but we need to get this and we need to
11 get this done. Because again, we are failing kids
12 and also, these will be the carter cases of tomorrow.
13 Parents, the kids have a right to this education and
14 we have an obligation to get it done. Parents will
15 sue and they shouldn't have to sue to get their kid
16 quality education.

17 So, I think that this is a major, major priority
18 for us to get done but moving quickly along, why
19 doesn't the Executive Budget add additional funding
20 to support DOE's operations for Summer Rising? It
21 seems that this is entirely moving in DYCD, not
22 really into DOE and there is concern about you know,
23 there are supports that we need to provide for kids
24 in summer, particularly our multilingual learners.
25 Particularly kids with special needs. Students in

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1
2 the juvenile criminal justice systems in terms of
3 temporary housing. Can anyone speak to why is it
4 that the money is all in DYCD and nothing in DOE?

5 MEISHA PORTER: I'm going to pull Lindsey in to
6 talk about it quickly but just to know like, the
7 resources are here as well and we are also targeting
8 our special populations of students. And if we can
9 get to it Dr. Chen can also speak to that work as
10 well.

11 LINDSAY OATES: Yes Chair Treyger. Thank you for
12 your question. We are - we had a baseline budget for
13 summer in the city as it was previously called and we
14 are obviously continuing to use the new resources,
15 excuse me, our existing resources. We also have been
16 able to maximize other types of federal revenue to
17 expand these programs to Title 1 and Title 4 in
18 particular. We allocated the funding to schools for
19 planning purposes actually earlier this week on
20 Monday. We can share that link with you so you can
21 see what the school allocation memorandum looks like
22 and you can see the allocations per school in that
23 school allocation memorandum.

24 We are using some stimulus funding in our budget
25 to expand the services this year and DYCD is

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1 obviously funded separately and so, I believe that
2 they received additional resources for their
3 component but I can't speak to those specifically.

4 LINDA CHEN: On the academic front, as the
5 Chancellor said, there are line items also in Summer
6 Rising budget. Schools will make school-based
7 decisions around curriculum and those aspects but we
8 also have been there. Special Education, educators
9 who are trained to provide literacy intervention
10 supports, those evidence-based supports that we were
11 talking about as well as multilingual supports.

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, Dr. Chen, just to
13 follow-up on that, are you making a commitment that
14 any child with special needs in New York City, there
15 is going to be a program for them this summer within
16 our DOE, DYCD partnership, is that correct?

17 LINDA CHEN: Yes, every special education student
18 will be serviced. Whether there are ones with 12-
19 month IEP's or other students with IEP's.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And that also extends to
21 all of our multilingual learners, is that correct?

22 LINDA CHEN: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, so, if there are
24 additional questions on that, we will follow-up after
25

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2 the hearing. Moving along, does anyone from the DOE
3 have data? How many schools do not currently have a
4 full time nurse? Not buildings but schools?

5 MEISHA PORTER: Deputy Chancellor Robinson, can
6 you speak to the nurse staffing situation?

7 LASHAWN ROBINSON: Yes, thank you so much for
8 that very important question about our nurses. The
9 model for the nurses is to ensure that every school
10 has a full-time nurse, every building, excuse me. We
11 would have to get back to you on the number of
12 schools without a nurse but every single school
13 building is covered by having a nurse in place. We
14 engage in this work in partnership with the
15 Department of Health and Health + Hospitals and it
16 has been a successful model to ensure full coverage.
17 This is the first time we have ever had every single
18 school building providing supports for every school
19 across the city in this manner.

20 So, we look forward to continuing with our
21 partnerships with the Department of Health and Health
22 + Hospitals moving into the 2122 school year and we
23 can absolutely circle back with the information.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yeah and Deputy Chancellor,
25 I, listen, I know that you get it and I know that and

1 I know that we are on the same team here. I just,
2 what I would stress is that we need to push for a
3 nurse in every school and not just building because
4 there are school campuses that might have four or
5 five schools in it and if one of the schools let's
6 say, has a child who doesn't feel well, many times
7 they ask the nurse to stay with the child until the
8 parent can come pick them up. But that means you
9 know again; the entire other building campus does not
10 have access to a nurse during these times. And also,
11 we're still in a pandemic and I want to make it clear
12 that this is not over. We still have work to do and
13 even beyond a pandemic, our school should have
14 nurses. There is money for us to get this done and
15 it is a priority for us in the Council that every
16 school does have a full-time nurse. And also
17 resolving, just to be clear for our DOHMH nurses who
18 are required to have the same license and credentials
19 as their DOE counterparts, there are still a pay
20 parity issue there and that has not been forgotten.

21 We need to value our nurses more than ever these
22 days, not just with words but with actions and that
23 goes for many of our school personnel. Our school
24 food workers, our school cleaners.
25

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2 MEISHA PORTER: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Who have really lifted up,
4 they are the foundation safety net of our school
5 communities. We need a lot more help and support and
6 resources for them.

7 Last question and then I will stop here, on
8 compensatory services. I just want to make sure,
9 Does any of the funding for compensatory services; I
10 think we heard a little bit about this but if someone
11 can kind of go deeper, I would appreciate it.

12 Support, universal screenings for dyslexia and other
13 print-based disability and how much does it actually
14 cost for DOE to implement a universal print-based
15 disability screening in our school system?

16 MEISHA PORTER: So, we'll start with Dr. Chen and
17 then Lindsey, I don't know if you have any details on
18 - so, we will stay with Dr. Chen.

19 LINDA CHEN: So, as we mentioned earlier, there
20 are screeners and diagnostic tools that will be
21 provided and they also include the ability to
22 identify print-based disabilities. So, that is
23 inclusive in what we shared earlier.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, just so we are clear,
25 every single child will be able to be screened for

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2 print-based disability, dyslexia and who will
3 actually do that work?

4 LINDA CHEN: There will be universal screeners
5 for all students but specifically in terms of the
6 diagnostic assessments, that's a deeper – once the
7 screeners are done, it will be able to indicate if
8 students need additional specific screeners. That
9 would then identify any print-based disabilities.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And Dr. Chen, last thing,
11 you had mentioned earlier not to reverse question, I
12 just want to make sure that we are on the same page.

13 We are requesting that we actually purchased the
14 evidence based curricula and training to go along
15 with it to provide the intervention services required
16 to address the needs of our children with print-based
17 disabilities. Is that something that the DOE is now
18 seriously considering?

19 LINDA CHEN: Yes, the DOE absolutely has always
20 seriously considered that but now are able to
21 actually resource it and that is both for students
22 with IEPs and without.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yeah, very important.
24 Okay, with that, I will turn it back to the Chair and
25 I thank the Chancellor and her team for the great

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1 partnership and really, really appreciate that this
2 Chancellor getting it and thank you for your
3 leadership during this very trying time. Appreciate
4 it.
5

6 MEISHA PORTER: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much and I
8 just wanted to follow-up Chancellor, you had said you
9 are going to be intentional about reducing class
10 size.

11 So, are we talking about additional funding and
12 moving toward that goal? Is that what we are going
13 to be looking forward to doing as we go through the
14 negotiation process?

15 MEISHA PORTER: Well, I will say, thanks to this
16 Council, we don't have to look for the funding
17 because you've put it in our hands. And so, when I
18 say I am intentional, we'll be intentional about
19 ensuring that the resources that we are putting into
20 schools is to fund more staff members. With that 100
21 percent fair student funding allows us to do, which
22 will then allow us to work on reducing class size.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay but in my conversation
24 with the Mayor, the Mayor did say that he would be
25

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2 open to adding additional funding above and beyond
3 what fair student funding would provide.

4 MEISHA PORTER: We're happy to, you know, you all
5 have never made the financial operations people
6 happier in this system and we are always happy to
7 talk about more funding for our schools.

8 Particularly around, as we come out of this pandemic,
9 class size reduction to address all of the questions
10 that came up particularly around academic recovery.
11 Around social emotional supports, it's going to be
12 critically important.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: My dogs are very upset unless
14 we get class size funding.

15 MEISHA PORTER: I also heard your dogs question
16 and tell your dog I am working on it for them as
17 well.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, alright.

19 MEISHA PORTER: We recognize the dogs.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. We have questions from
21 Chair Rosenthal and then that will be it for this
22 portion, I promise.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Great, thank you so
25 much. Chancellor, I look forward to meeting you.

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1 You are dream and I really appreciate all your work.

2 Very, very impressive.

3 I just wanted to double down on the Rise program
4 and you know, just sort of wonder you know in
5 thinking about the Rise program and the Mayor's
6 interest in signing the legislation about private
7 employees being able to opt in to the city's pension
8 plan. Just that, you know, the Rise program is the
9 answer for economic equality. It's among the answers
10 and I hope you will seriously - you know, it's one of
11 those things where it's something little on the
12 fringes but it has such a big outside impact. So, I
13 just wanted to weigh in about the importance of that.

14 The second question, just following up on the
15 budget for Summer Rising. Do you show that in the
16 budget, in the Executive Budget? Is there a line?
17 Is there a way we can find the funding for it?

18 MEISHA PORTER: Lindsey, I am not sure but I am
19 going to ask Lindsey to talk about it.

20 LINDSEY OATES: Thank you for that question
21 Council Member Rosenthal. So, there is not a
22 specific line item in the Executive Budget, partly
23 because the Executive Budget was released as you know
24

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1
2 at the end of April, when we were still finalizing
3 the budget allocations for the Summer Rising program.

4 We are spending just in the interest of
5 transparency and I apologize, I didn't say this
6 before when Chair Treyger asked the same question.

7 We are spending \$40 million on the Summer Rising
8 program from our stimulus package and we can ask OMB
9 to reflect that more clearly in our budget now if
10 that would be helpful for your purposes but we are
11 spending significant new resources in addition to
12 stimulus funding like I said before, we are using
13 existing resources like Title 1 and Title 4.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay, great thank you.
15 And then lastly, just to double down on Council
16 Member Dromm's question about reducing class size.
17 Could you just say again would the money to reduce
18 class size come out of Fair Student Funding or will
19 there be a separate allocation for hiring teachers to
20 lower class size and I left this question to the end
21 on purpose because I think it Segway's right into the
22 School Construction Authority and the need for more
23 classrooms if we are going to be able to really
24 reduce class size.

25

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1
2 MEISHA PORTER: Definitely does, great Segway.
3 Yes to Fair Student Funding, the increase, getting
4 all of our schools to 100 percent. We will
5 absolutely support class size reductions but we are
6 never, ever going to say stop advocating for more and
7 to go above and beyond that.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Well, wait, that's an
9 important differentiation and I see Chair Treyger
10 wants to jump in. I am happy to turn it over to him.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: No, I just want to add
12 because - and Chair Rosenthal, thank you for always
13 centering like the most critical needs of our school
14 communities. I really, really appreciate you. You
15 have been a champion on it as well. But I don't want
16 to overlook an existing structure that schools have
17 already that I was on when I was a teacher. I was on
18 my school's school leadership team SLT, so when
19 people talk about planning and so forth, there are
20 preexisting structures within schools that do this
21 work day in and day out and they advance what's
22 called a CEP, comprehensive education plan. They set
23 goals each year, so I appreciate the SAM, the
24 resources but there are folks doing this work day in
25

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1 and day out within the school community and I just
2 want to give them a shout out.
3

4 MEISHA PORTER: Thank you Chair Treyger.

5 Absolutely. You put your teacher hat on real quick
6 and SLT member hat back on. I am sure your school
7 community appreciates it.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Alright, so with that
9 in mind and with the Segway to School Construction
10 Authority, are you contemplating – you know, do you
11 think of those things hand and hand?

12 MEISHA PORTER: So, I'm glad our Deputy
13 Chancellor Goldmark come on her camera at the precise
14 moment. You know, they are hand and hand but we also
15 are resourced to do a different thing than we've ever
16 been resourced to do in the past. And so, you know I
17 think creating more seats across our city is a part
18 of the conversation but it's not the only part of the
19 conversation. But Deputy Chancellor Goldmark?

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

21 KARIN GOLDMARK: Does that mean I am done?

22 MEISHA PORTER: Why don't you jump in there.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I think you can answer
24 and Chairs, I promise, not a follow-up question. And
25 don't take advantage of me Ms. Goldmark with that but

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1
2 if you could give the comprehensive answer to that
3 question, I'd appreciate it. Thank you so much.

4 KARIN GOLDMARK: Okay, so I was going to – we are
5 about to have the whole capital hearing. So, as the
6 Chancellor said, there are many paths to addressing
7 our capital needs including new classrooms and
8 smaller classes. We are working on the 53,000 new
9 seats that are in this capital plan. We have a
10 number of building enhancement projects. We also
11 have a new funding stream for innovation and
12 inclusion. We have a new funding stream for District
13 75 seats, which is a major need in the system.

14 So, there are lots of ways we're addressing the
15 many challenges we have on the capital end. I don't
16 want to step on President Caboda's toes too much with
17 all of what we'll be talking about but we do have the
18 largest capital plan that we have ever had and we
19 have been making progress over the last ten years on
20 our capacity overall, which is a major, major driver.

21 In terms of the other things that we can do,
22 we've been working with schools on how we can have
23 campus planning. This is something that Kevin Moran
24 has been meeting, so that we are taking a look at how
25 we are using our buildings. Many buildings that have

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1 colocations in them haven't been revisited since the
2 colocations and sometimes the way we use the space
3 isn't optimal for students. So, all of the buildings
4 that we currently have, all 1,400 are also up for us
5 to take a look at what we can do to serve children
6 better in the spaces. Not all at once though sorry.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You know, let's Deputy
9 Goldmark, Deputy Chancellor Goldmark. Let's stop
10 here. I do have follow-ups about class size
11 reduction but let me formerly start the part of the
12 hearing regarding School Construction Authority, if
13 that's okay with Chair Treyger. Yeah, okay, good.

14 Alright, good afternoon and welcome to the City
15 Council's sixth day of hearings on the Mayor's
16 Executive Budget for Fiscal 2022. My name is Daniel
17 Dromm and I Chair the Finance Committee. We just
18 heard from the Department of Education on the Expense
19 Budget and we will now be joined by the School
20 Construction Authority.

21 We are joined by the Committee on Education
22 Chaired by my colleague Council Member Mark Treyger
23 and the Subcommittee on Capital Budget Chaired by my
24 colleague Council Member Helen Rosenthal. I just
25 want to check to see if we have other members who

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1
2 have joined us. Yes, we have Council Member Adams,
3 Ampry-Samuel, Ayala, Brooks-Powers, Dinowitz, Gibson,
4 Grodenchik, Koslowitz, Louis, Riley, Rose and
5 Minority Leader Matteo.

6 In the interest of time, I will forgo an opening
7 statement but I would like to turn it over to Chair
8 Treyger and Chair Rosenthal for their statements.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you. Thank you Chair
10 Dromm. I will be very brief. I just want to make
11 sure that we just kind of – as Chair Dromm mentioned,
12 just get right to highlighting our critical
13 priorities in the Capital Budget. Certainly, the
14 pandemic has made it abundantly clear how important a
15 device is and also adequate internet bandwidth is to
16 the success of every one of our students to support
17 this to Council, COVID investment of \$270 million
18 over the next three years to fund additional devices
19 and replacement devices in addition to any type of
20 additional support to adequate internet bandwidth and
21 capacity for our school communities. We also called
22 upon the administration to expand the expansion of
23 the AC Initiative which we advocated for to include
24 and also non-classroom spaces. You know, through out
25 our school food workers, they work in kitchens that

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1 are fairly hot, not safe and they do incredible work.
2 We need to honor them more than just words and tweets
3 but with actual resources and respect.
4

5 And we also call for doubling of the previously
6 secured \$750 million for disability the Council
7 secured to further expand accessibility of our
8 schools.

9 Lastly, to further the goals of the Council's
10 green new deal for New York City, we ask for an
11 annual investment of \$80 million to increase
12 installations of solar panels in schools. And I will
13 turn it back over now to our great Chair of our
14 Capital, Chair Rosenthal.

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: All good, thank you so
16 much for that lovely introduction but I think you
17 said it all and looking forward to the hearing.
18 Thank you so much again Chairs.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, I guess we are going to
20 turn it over now to Counsel, who will swear in the
21 witnesses and then we will proceed.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chair. My name is
23 Stephanie Ruiz and I am Counsel to the New York
24 City's Council's Committee on Finance. Before we
25 begin, I want to remind everyone that you will be on

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2 mute until you are recognized to speak at which time,
3 you will be unmuted by the Zoom host. If you mute
4 yourself after you have been unmuted, you will need
5 to be unmuted again by the host. Please be aware
6 that there could be a delay in muting and unmuting,
7 so please be patient.

8 I will now administer the affirmation to
9 Administration witnesses, including those available
10 from DOE for Q&A. Do you affirm that your testimony
11 will be truthful to the best of your knowledge,
12 information and belief? President and CEO Nina
13 Kubota?

14 NINA KUBOTA: I do.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Deputy Chancellor
16 Karin Goldmark?

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: She needs to be unmuted.

18 KARIN GOLDMARK: I do. I do. Thank you.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Ms. Lauren
20 Siciliano?

21 LAUREN SICILIANO: I do.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Mr. Scott
23 Strickland?

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: He needs to be unmuted.

25 SCOTT STRICKLAND: I do.

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1
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Mr. John Shea?

3 JOHN SHEA: I do.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Mr. Thomas
5 Taratko?

6 THOMAS TARATKO: I do.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and Ms. Elizabeth
8 Williams.

9 ELIZABETH WILLIAMS: I do, thank you.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Ms. Kubota you
11 may begin when ready.

12 NINA KUBOTA: Great, thank you very much. Good
13 morning Chairs Dromm and Treyger and Rosenthal, as
14 well as member of the Finance and Education
15 Committees. My name is Nina Kubota and I am
16 President and CEO of the New York City School
17 Construction Authority. It's my pleasure to join you
18 today. I am joined by Karin Goldmark Deputy
19 Chancellor of the Division of School Planning and
20 Development. We are pleased to be here today to
21 discuss the February 2021 Proposed Amendment to the
22 current Fiscal Year 2020-2024 five year capital plan.

23 Since 2014, the SCA has created 51,540 new seats
24 in fulfillment of the Mayor's commitment to reduce
25 overcrowding and increase diversity, including 10,973

1 seats as part of the Mayor's PreK and 3K for All
2 initiatives. We will continue to create seats in
3 areas of current overcrowded and projected enrollment
4 growth. In fact, we are currently in process on
5 20,676 of the 57,000 seats in the plan with another
6 5,500 seats in the pipeline. We are nearly halfway
7 there only two years into the plan.
8

9 And in spite of the challenges we face during the
10 current COVID-19 pandemic, we will be opening eight
11 new buildings and additions as well as three 3K
12 centers for the start of the 2021-2022 school year.
13 Our success is due in no small part because of the
14 partnerships we have built across the city,
15 especially with the City Council and the tireless
16 dedication of the staff at the School Construction
17 Authority who work to provide state-of-the-art
18 schools for New York City's public school students.
19 We are deeply appreciative of your strong support and
20 generous funding our schools. We are all working
21 towards the same goals to ensure our children have
22 the best environments in which to learn.

23 So far in this plan we have received over \$800
24 million allocated by the City Council, Borough
25

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1
2 Presidents and other mayoral Council sources. And
3 again, thank you for your ongoing support.

4 The Proposed FY2020-2024 Five Year Capital Plan,
5 represents the Administrations continued commitment
6 to equity and excellence for all students and builds
7 on the foundation that we have developed with the
8 previous Fiscal Year 2015-2019 Capital Plan. Since
9 the current Fiscal Year 2020-2024 plan was adopted,
10 the plan has grown from \$17 billion to \$19.3 billion,
11 an increase of \$2.3 billion.

12 At \$19.3 billion, this is our largest ever
13 capital plan. Here are few highlights of our
14 February 2021 Proposed Amendment to the Capital Plan.

15 \$7.8 billion for over 57,000 new seats in
16 fulfillment of the Mayor's commitment to reduce
17 overcrowding. Over \$1 billion for technology
18 enhancements. \$750 million to make 50 percent of the
19 elementary school buildings partially or fully
20 accessible and one-third of all buildings fully
21 accessible. \$589 million in support of the 3K and
22 PreK for All initiatives. \$276 million for
23 electrical work to support air conditioning in all
24 classrooms by the end of 2021. And \$84 million for
25 improved ventilation.

1
2 The February 2021 Proposed Amendment to the
3 Fiscal Year 2020-2024 plan has funding allocated in
4 three overarching categories. Our capacity program
5 totaling \$8.92 billion. The capital investments
6 category with \$6.72 billion allocated for work in
7 existing buildings. And finally, our mandated
8 programs at \$3.63 billion.

9 The Proposed Amendment for the FY20-'24 Capital
10 Plan includes \$8.9 billion for the Capacity program,
11 which consists of five categories: New capacity, 3K
12 and Prekindergarten Early Education; Class size
13 reduction; facility replacement program and capacity
14 to remove transportable classroom units.

15 Of the \$8.9 billion is allocated to capacity.
16 \$7.8 billion will fund over 57,000 new seats in an
17 estimated 93 buildings and will help us alleviate
18 existing overcrowding and respond to ongoing pockets
19 of growth in certain neighborhoods.

20 In addition, we have secured opportunities to
21 include new public school facilities across the city
22 within several major predominantly residential
23 development projects undertaken by private developers
24 in areas of projected or existing overcrowding.
25

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Also, included in our capacity program is \$589 million for the city's 3K and PreK for All initiatives. In addition, \$140 million has been allocated to the Class Size Reduction program. This funding allows us to make significant strides towards reducing class size citywide and further promotes quality and equity in our schools by addressing pockets of over crowding through targeted investments.

\$180 million is allocated for the capacity to remove TCU's program which will allow for the construction of needed capacity where necessary in order to remove the remaining TCU's.

Lastly, \$217 million will fund the Facilities Replacement program for schools that must be relocated during this plan. Funds in this category cover the cost to construct a new building or to build out a new leased location. While creating seats is a key component of what we do, the capital investment portion of the plan allows us to upgrade and make repairs to our existing facilities. As a reminder, 200 of our buildings are over 100 years old and the majority of our buildings are over 50 years old.

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1
2 The plan directs a total of \$6.72 billion for
3 capital investments in two main categories. \$3.11
4 billion for the Capital Improvement program, which
5 includes building repairs and necessary capital
6 repairs such as roof and façade work, structural
7 repairs and safeguarding our buildings against water
8 infiltration. And \$2.8 billion for school
9 enhancement projects. Which funds the realignment of
10 existing facilities to better suit instructional
11 needs, bathroom upgrades, science labs, the Mayor's
12 Universal Fiscal Education Initiative, accessibility
13 and other necessary improvements.

14 Every year, we make progress on moving TCU's in
15 use across the five boroughs. This plan dedicates
16 \$230 million in both CIP and capacity dollars for the
17 ongoing removal of these units. To date, we have
18 remove 231 of the original 354 TCU's. Of the 123
19 remaining TCU's, we have plans in process to remove
20 another 74 and we are developing plans to remove the
21 final 49.

22 Other highlights in our capital investment
23 category include \$200 million for safety and
24 security, \$119 million for specialty room upgrades,
25

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\$100 million for athletic field upgrades and \$50
million for bathroom upgrades.

The mandated programs category with \$3.63 billion
allocated includes approximately \$650 million for
boiler conversions in buildings currently using
Number Four oil. The remaining funds are assigned to
cover other required costs including code and local
law compliance. The SCA's insurance and completion
of projects from the prior plan.

Since we appeared before the Education Committee
in March, the mayor has announced additional and
significant investment in our city's youngest
learners. \$815 million has been added in the recent
Executive Budget, which includes the expansion of 3K
for All to every school district in the city, as well
as \$120 million to support the transfer of early
learn to the DOE's portfolio.

We are working hand and hand with our partners at
DOE's Department of Early Childhood Education to
bring those seats online over the coming school
years. The Mayor has committed to adding up to
\$16,500 more seats for three-year-old's and by this
fall, the city will provide approximately \$40,000 3K
seats across all 32 districts.

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1
2 And I speak for the entire SCA in saying we are
3 incredibly excited to play a significant role in this
4 expansion, investing in and providing an early start
5 to our youngest students is an important down payment
6 in our next generation of leaders.

7 Public feedback plays a crucial role in our
8 capital planning process. Each year we undertake a
9 public review process with the Community Education
10 Council's, the City Council and other elected
11 officials and community groups. We offer every CEC
12 in the city the opportunity to conduct a public
13 hearing on the plan and we have attended hearings at
14 every CEC.

15 As you know, we also partner with individual
16 Council Members and CEC to identify local needs.
17 Thank you again for your partnership and support. I
18 will now turn it over to Deputy Chancellor Goldmark
19 who will discuss additional aspects of the plan.
20 Thank you.

21 KARIN GOLDMARK: Thank you so much President
22 Kubota. Good morning Chair Dromm, Chair Treyger and
23 Chair Rosenthal and members of the Committee's on
24 Finance and Education. My name is Karin Goldmark and
25 I am Deputy Chancellor of School Planning and

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1
2 Development at the New York City Department at the
3 New York City Department of Education.

4 Before I begin, I would like to first thank
5 Speaker Johnson and the Chairs, Dromm, Treyger and
6 Rosenthal and the City Council for your continued
7 leadership throughout this pandemic and for all
8 you've done on behalf of New York City during this
9 time. Not only with respect to education but
10 certainly with respect to education and with respect
11 to everything.

12 You remain fierce advocates for equity in our
13 school communities and we are so grateful to have you
14 working with the DOE on how best to serve all the
15 students of New York City.

16 Your insights and supports have been crucial in
17 the midst of this crisis as we pivoted to remote
18 learning in our 1,600 school communities across the
19 city last spring and then reopened school buildings
20 this year.

21 The proposed February 2021 plan continues to
22 demonstrate the Administration's commitment to
23 creating a safe and positive learning environment for
24 all students and staff. We are proud to say that in
25 a very short period of time, we made huge strides in

1 closing the digital divide, making critical
2 investments in technology and improving ventilation
3 and accessibility in our school buildings.

4
5 The pandemic exposed existing inequities in the
6 nation and in our city and we know these resources
7 and upgrades have been central to moving our school
8 communities forward and advancing our equity and
9 excellence for all agenda.

10 As we look forward to a full reopening in fall,
11 our returning students will be welcomed back to
12 noticeably improved buildings. The plan, that's the
13 Capital Plan, was approved by the panel for
14 Educational Policy in April and will be considered
15 for adoption by the City Council as part of the
16 city's budget.

17 As you are aware, we testified before this
18 committee regarding the proposed to amendment in
19 March. While there are no changes from the proposed
20 plan we presented in March to now, I welcome the
21 opportunity to revisit some of the highlights of the
22 plan, particularly since members of the Finance
23 Committee actually did not all participate in that
24 hearing.

1
2 So, just a few highlights with respect to
3 technology. The proposed amendment allocates \$1.02
4 billion for technology. This includes funding for
5 emergency remote learning student devices, increasing
6 bandwidth in school buildings and upgrades to
7 classroom connectivity.

8 Since the start of the pandemic, ensuring that
9 all students have access to remote learning devices
10 has been a major priority of the DOE's, of the city's
11 and I will say of the Council Members and we are so
12 grateful for all of your help with all that effort.
13 We have purchased over \$500,000 LTE enabled iPads to
14 support students in need. Prioritizing equity, we
15 started distributing centrally purchased internet
16 enabled devices to our most underserved students.

17 We continue to fill device requests as we receive
18 them from schools to ensure that families have what
19 they need to participate in remote learning.

20 We are grateful that the Council's longstanding
21 and continuous investment in technology for our
22 schools made it possible for the DOE to distribute
23 devices to students since the onset of this crisis.
24 To say as a side, I know if each of you went back and
25 added up and thought through all of the devices and

1 laptop carts that you provided to schools over the
2 years, never knowing that it would be in this moment
3 more essential than ever. I just want to take a
4 moment and thank you for all, each and everyone of
5 those devices that you provided to schools, helped
6 make that gap of 500,000 was that and not one
7 million.
8

9 Another anchor of the plan is a \$750 million
10 allocation towards improving school-based technology.
11 Since 2015, the DOE has increased our overall
12 internet bandwidth to 240 gigabytes across two major
13 data centers, where we used to have just one. And
14 this allows schools to access much faster
15 connectivity. Previously, embarrassing number here,
16 the DOE has only 14 gigabytes to share across all the
17 schools in New York City.

18 This investment will allow us to upgrade critical
19 equipment's like routers, switches, firewalls and
20 wireless access points in schools. Upgrading also
21 ensures that the equipment has the latest security
22 protections and controls in place.

23 With respect to ventilation, health and safety
24 have been at the center of every single decision
25 connected to reopening school buildings. And the

1 science shows that our rigorous multilayered approach
2 has made our schools the safest places in New York
3 City.

4
5 As part of this comprehensive effort, last summer
6 we surveyed the ventilation in every building twice
7 and have conducted extensive repairs in spaces that
8 needed attention.

9 And just a brief pause to thank the School
10 Construction Authority in addition to all of our
11 internal inspections, the SCA conducted external
12 inspections giving parents that piece of mind that an
13 external expert [INAUDIBLE 2:53:29] in every building
14 in New York City.

15 Following federal center for disease control
16 guidance for school operations on air ventilation to
17 reduce the spread of COVID-19, every classroom was
18 inspected by School Construction Authority led teams
19 of professional engineers.

20 Repairs and remediation efforts were based
21 directly on those assessments including fixing
22 windows and fan motors and cleaning air ducts. Out
23 of the 64,550 classrooms in our system, over 99
24 percent are safely in use. We also identified and
25 prepared alternative spaces for those schools that

1
2 needed them. And we have made the clear commitment
3 that any space that does not meet our ventilation
4 standards will not be used.

5 In buildings with central HVAC systems, we
6 replaced existing filter elements with new ones,
7 rated at MERV 13. The DOE has also purchased indoor
8 air quality monitors for carbon dioxide testing as
9 CO2 is an indicator is adequate ventilation. In
10 137,000 high efficiency particulate air, also called
11 HEPA purifier units.

12 These purifier units are certified to remove
13 virus size particles from the air and are being used
14 in all our occupied classrooms, nurses offices and
15 isolation rooms. We will continue to order more
16 equipment as needed.

17 Relatedly, custodian engineers have been key
18 contributors in ensuring that our students and school
19 communities remain healthy and safe.

20 DOE's division of school facilities, we allocated
21 building cleaning staff to ensure continuous daily
22 touchpoint and whole building overnight disinfection
23 of all occupied school buildings. I have witnessed t
24 his myself many times of the workers going through
25 the building cleaning throughout the day. All

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1 buildings were provided with electrostatic sprayers
2 to increase efficiency of disinfecting labor tasks.
3 Meaning, these are units that go on the back and the
4 person can then go through the room and spray the
5 room and disinfect the room very efficiently.
6

7 In addition, all schools have had sufficient PPE
8 and supplies to ensure safe operations for full in-
9 person learning which our custodian engineers manage
10 for the entire building.

11 A little off script here, just a huge shout out
12 to Kevin Moran and his team who have really shown the
13 strength of daily operations and ensuring that
14 schools have the continuous supply of PPE, that the
15 cleaning protocols are clear and in place. Its been
16 one of the responses that we are most proud of with
17 respect to this pandemic.

18 Okay, moving on, I want to talk a little bit
19 about a new program category in the capital plan.
20 It's called innovative diverse equitable and
21 accessible spaces. Inspired in part by the Council's
22 great advocacy for accessibility and the Council's
23 calls for innovation, we have created a new category
24 in the capital plan. Because if the past year has
25

1
2 taught us anything, it's that teaching and learning
3 can blossom even in nontraditional spaces.

4 And as part of the proposed amendment, we are
5 excited to launch the Ideas Initiative, which stands
6 for innovative diverse, equitable, accessible spaces.
7 This new ideas undertaking will foster the creation
8 of dynamic and innovative learning spaces in ways
9 that empower communities, respond to students voices,
10 encourage new partnerships and advance diversity,
11 integration and inclusion.

12 These efforts will further support the DOE's work
13 to promote equity and excellence by providing access
14 to 21st Century learning opportunities to more
15 students across New York City.

16 With respect to accessibility, the Proposed
17 February amendment continues to recognize the
18 importance of ensuring access for all students and
19 has emphasized accessibility as a major priority. As
20 part of this administrations equity in excellence for
21 all agenda and as a direct result of support from the
22 Council and our community partners, the amendment
23 continues to include \$750 million towards the
24 critically important work of making our school
25 buildings more accessible. And I will just remind

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1 this group that this \$750 million represents a huge
2 increase for the prior capital plan which had \$150
3 million in it due in large, large part due to the
4 advocacy of the Council.
5

6 We greatly appreciate the Council's support in
7 this area. Our teams are meeting with students,
8 families and community partners to ensure that we
9 truly understand the needs of students and families
10 and can make the necessary changes as quickly as
11 possible.

12 To drive this work forward, we established
13 offices of accessibility planning within DOE's
14 division of space management and school facilities as
15 well as an SCA. Working together, DOE and SCA have
16 planned and approved 41 new accessibility projects in
17 our historically underserved districts. We are
18 committed to making one-third of the buildings in
19 every district fully accessible by 2024. And at
20 least 50 percent of our building's housing elementary
21 school grades fully or partially accessible by 2024
22 and I am pleased to report that we are well on track
23 for that goal.

24 And a quick shout out here to Tom Taratko who has
25 carried this work through thin times and through

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1
2 thick and is driving really the biggest upgrade and
3 accessibility that this system has ever seen.

4 In a system this big, there will always be more
5 work to be done. We will continue to update our
6 capital plan in response to changing conditions and
7 needs from our school communities and we will seek
8 your input in that process as always. We are
9 thankful again for your collaboration and generous
10 support of capital projects now more than ever.

11 Our students have been able to expand and improve
12 their educational experience because of these efforts
13 and we look forward to seeing our future students
14 benefit as well.

15 We are proud that we were the only large school
16 district in the country to safely reopen school
17 buildings in the fall for in-person instruction and
18 look forward to welcoming all families back this
19 coming school year.

20 It will be a time of renewal in spaces that will
21 never be the same as they were before last March.
22 The pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges to
23 all of us but together, we have stepped up and
24 responded in extraordinary ways on behalf our
25 students and families that we can be proud of. Thank

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1
2 you again so much for allowing us to testify today
3 and we would be happy to answer any questions you may
4 have.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you Deputy Chancellor
6 Goldmark. Let me start by talking a little bit about
7 the capital plan. The DOE Executive Capital Plan
8 included no funding for any capacity work from Fiscal
9 '25 and beyond. Can you provide an explanation as to
10 why no funding was added for capacity projects and do
11 any of these projects in the SCA Capital Plan have
12 timelines that go into Fiscal '25 or beyond.

13 NINA KUBOTA: So, I think there is sort of a two
14 part answer to that. One is that you know we work in
15 a five year fixed capital plan and we work very well
16 with OMB as we enter into a new capital plan cycle.
17 Very different from the city's kind of rolling plan.
18 So, you know I just want to address the first point
19 which is we will work with OMB as we get closer to
20 the next capital plan cycle of the FY25-'29.

21 With that said, yes, there are costs that we
22 anticipate will go into that next capital plan cycle
23 as we have in this plan where we tag it under the
24 prior plan completion cost. We don't know what that
25 will - what those costs are right now since we are

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1 just you know, ending the second year of the capital
2 plan. But as we get further into the capital plan,
3 we will know the costs that will hit the FY25-'29
4 cycle.
5

6 But to your point, if there are projects that are
7 opening, especially capacity projects that are
8 opening in the 25 or beyond, we certainly will expect
9 that there will be costs associated with that would
10 affect the next capital plan cycle.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, do you now know if there
12 are projects that will go beyond 25?

13 NINA KUBOTA: I do believe that there are few
14 capacity projects that are underway under you know,
15 in design that will open in that later part. So, yes
16 we do know some.

17 KARIN GOLDMARK: And if I could jump in here. Oh
18 sorry.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I was going to say, I just am
20 still confused as to why we can't get it included
21 into the ten year plan. It doesn't make sense to me.
22 I mean, if most of the city is on a ten year plan,
23 why we can't get that from SCA.

24 NINA KUBOTA: I was just going to say our
25 enabling legislation actually prescribes that we do

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1
2 it in a five year fixed cycle. So, you know, which
3 is why we cannot say, we don't have that rolling
4 plan. We don't have a ten year plan. Again, just
5 because of our enabling legislation.

6 KARIN GOLDMARK: I will just note Chair Dromm
7 that each Capital Plan includes a category called
8 Prior Plan Completion, which essentially includes
9 those projects that roll. So, this is how we have
10 addressed this – the difference between the city's
11 ten year capital plan and SCA's statutorily required
12 five year capital plan.

13 Which by the way, requires your – not you the
14 person but your approval as the City Council and the
15 Panel for Educational Policy and a presentation to
16 each CEC. So, we actually can't have a plan that
17 hasn't gone through each of the public engagement
18 steps. So, we are constrained in our ability to have
19 a plan in place beyond our process as detailed.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: But you do provide timelines
21 to OMB right? Beyond the 25? Beyond the five years?

22 KARIN GOLDMARK: President Kubota, feel free to
23 jump in. What we have is, we have essentially plans
24 for each project as we move forward and so, we know
25 which projects are slated, not to be done by 2025.

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1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you know that now?

3 KARIN GOLDMARK: I don't that's fair two years
4 into the plan but please President Kubota.

5 NINA KUBOTA: Correct, that is not - it's not
6 definitive in which projects will be awarded and when
7 they will complete. So, and that said, I just want
8 to take a step back and you know every year we do
9 discuss with OMB our plans and every year we are part
10 of that. We do look at the ten year funding. And
11 just as an example, we published this capital plan,
12 the first draft of this capital plan in November of
13 2018. And months leading up to that, you know I
14 think there was very little, maybe \$1.8 billion for
15 each of the subsequent years of this plan and when we
16 published, before we published, we discussed it with
17 OMB and instead of having an about a \$8-10 billion
18 plan, we, with OMB came up with the \$17 billion.

19 So, it's not to say that what you see in the
20 outyears is what's going to be the funding when it
21 becomes a reality in Fiscal Year '25.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Got it. I see that but you
23 know, there has to be some type of an estimate moving
24 forward. But to just see zero's in the outyears is
25 concerning to us in the Council. I am going to take

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1
2 it up further with OMB at the final hearing, the last
3 day of hearings when they come in and we will discuss
4 it further then.

5 Let me just go to something on universal 3K. The
6 Executive Budget funds \$785 million for \$6,451 seats.
7 The 3K programs to support the extension of universal
8 3K. So, what is the SCA's timeline to have all seats
9 online and how many new sites will be built or leased
10 with this new funding?

11 NINA KUBOTA: So, currently we are going through
12 that site evaluation process. You know working very
13 hard with early childhood to identify the locations.
14 With that said, each site is going to be different in
15 its composition. We do try to have at least eight,
16 about eight classrooms per site. So, with that said,
17 I guess that we just do the math. It's about 80
18 sites but again, that's in theory.

19 I will say that we, you know, since this was
20 announced we've been working very closely with DOE
21 and have of the 6,400 seats, have really identified
22 at least about one-third that we are proceeding into
23 the next steps, meaning into design with. Our goal,
24 our internal goal is to try to get as many seats
25 online for September 2022. There will be instances

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1 that a project is larger or more complex that would
2 push it to 2023 but internally, our goal is September
3 2022.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, one of my concerns is
6 where and how those seats are going to be allocated,
7 which districts obviously but also, in districts that
8 are overcrowded, will we see pushed into schools that
9 are already overcrowded or will there be new
10 construction of early childhood sites? Or an
11 agreement with CBO's? Can you explain that a little
12 further to us?

13 NINA KUBOTA: Karin, is that okay if we turn it
14 over to Elizabeth?

15 KARIN GOLDMARK: Yeah, I was just going to offer
16 that we can have Ms. Williams from DECE address this
17 question.

18 ELIZABETH WILLIAMS: Sure, thanks. Am I off
19 mute?

20 KARIN GOLDMARK: Yes, you are.

21 ELIZABETH WILLIAMS: Okay great, thanks. Thanks
22 Deputy —

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And Ms. Williams, were you
24 sworn in? I'm sorry.

25 ELIZABETH WILLIAMS: I was. Thank you Chair.

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CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, great. Thank you.

ELIZABETH WILLIAMS: Thanks for having me here.

Yeah, so, to your point, PreK and 3K are going to be
a mixed delivery model. And so, we are going to
pursue all the avenues that we currently have PreK
and 3K seats and that really does include a strong
emphasis on our community-based partners, our
NYSEG's.

But obviously we have places where we know we
don't have enough seats and so, those are the places
that we are really targeting with SCA to build out
more 3K capacity. They already helped us out in
meeting the promise of universal PreK.

So, we are really refining like where those
places are with them and as President Kubota said,
they have already done a great job in looking in
those areas. You know, we have those areas that we
know are top of mind for us but we are also going to
get a lot of information from the family application
that's open now in terms of really, what parents are
excited about 3K. Who are we you know, hoping to
have a seat for? And as we said, fall of 2023 is
still our goal to have a seat for every family who
wants one.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, let's just take a district
3 like District 24, where I believe in the last plan,
4 most of those seats were taken and redistributed to
5 other districts. Are the seats that you are talking
6 about above and beyond those seats? Or how do you
7 plan on adding extra seats in 24 or let's say even 30
8 or even District 20?

9 ELIZABETH WILLIAMS: Sure and Chair Dromm, can
10 you explain a little bit about what you mean by
11 redistributed to other districts.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I believe that in the last
13 plan, the seats that were originally 4,900 and
14 something seats that were originally allocated for
15 District 24 were removed from the plan and then
16 redistributed throughout the city. And that's what
17 concerns me, is that if there is no new seat
18 construction there, where are you going to put these
19 UPK's? And District 24, as you know is probably
20 still within the top three. That's why I mentioned
21 24, 30 and District 20, the top three most
22 overcrowded districts and not even just in terms of
23 the districts but the subdistricts and I am glad that
24 you mentioned a little bit about like you know
25

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2 targeting it but my concern is in those districts,
3 what are we going to see there?

4 ELIZABETH WILLIAMS: Yeah, I may ask President
5 Kubota to speak to the redistribution but yeah, I
6 think communities like Corona, East Elmhurst are high
7 on our list and we are trying to get seats in those
8 areas for sure. Either in our community-based
9 partners or working with SCA. We also have the Hall
10 of Science that we are hoping to be able to add 3K in
11 as well when that opens. So, yeah, these are areas
12 that are high on our list for making sure we have
13 enough seats for every family.

14 KARIN GOLDMARK: I'll just - I'd like to add -

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I just want a point of
16 clarification. Isn't Hall of Science UPK not 3K?

17 KARIN GOLDMARK: We are hoping that we will be
18 able to add 3K there if capacity allows. Because, as
19 you know, you were deeply involved in this that the
20 challenge of siting UPK, PreK in District 24 was a
21 massive one that took a massive effort on the part of
22 School Construction Authority. Lots of partnerships
23 with the community-based organizations that provide
24 the NYSEG seats and developing new options,
25 innovative options like the Hall of Science.

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1
2 With that said, we know that with 3K, we will
3 face challenges in some of the same areas where we
4 had challenges with PreK however, a couple of things
5 working in our favor. One, is that we learned a lot
6 from those experiences. Two, is that we actually
7 have some capacity in some of those parts of the city
8 where we had such great challenges because basically
9 we were taking everything we could get. We now
10 actually have some options and some ways to expand
11 access.

12 And so, I do not expect that this will be an
13 exact repeat of the challenges that we had with
14 finding sites for PreK. As we expand, what I will
15 say is that the partnership with individual member of
16 the Council to find sites, to find community-based
17 providers, to come up with innovative ideas has been
18 an essential way that we have been able to get to the
19 point we have with PreK and we expect – that
20 partnership will also be necessary to help us get
21 there with 3K.

22 And I apologize, there is an apparently massive
23 construction going on and I am going to step away for
24 one moment to get a headset, so that I am not giving
25 everyone the sound of a buzz saw during this hearing.

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1
2 I will still be listening. I just wanted everyone to
3 know what I am doing.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

5 KARIN GOLDMARK: I think you may be happier once
6 I have the headset in and you don't hear the buzz
7 sound behind me.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I am not hearing it too much
9 but anyway.

10 KARIN GOLDMARK: Oh, okay great.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yep. President Kubota, can
12 you address the loss of the seats in District 24 for
13 me?

14 NINA KUBOTA: So, I think you know over the past
15 10-15 years, we've certainly build many, many seats.
16 Thousands of seats in District 24 but it doesn't
17 diminish what you are saying. We still have a seat
18 need thereof I think about 1,100 seats. District 30,
19 you also pointed out another 3,000 seats there.
20 District 20 is another one. Not obviously in your
21 district but 3,500 seats.

22 And of those, we have already started to site and
23 to go into and design with a lot. District 24, I
24 think about 500 are already seated. District 30, 15
25 of the 3,000. With that said, I think with 3K, we

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2 were afraid initially that it would be competition
3 with new capacity but we are finding not because you
4 know in discussion with early childhood, with this
5 five to ten classroom model, we are able to use
6 smaller facilities or smaller properties than we
7 would for new capacity.

8 So, that's allowing us and which is why we have
9 been successful in the past few weeks to site so many
10 seats because it's not in direct competition with the
11 new capacity. So, in terms of siting, I don't think
12 we are taking away from new capacity versus 3K. So,
13 that's sort of the good news.

14 In terms of redistribution, you know I will defer
15 to DOE in terms of how they are doing it but we - in
16 our real estate department are making the distinction
17 between the two different types and we have been
18 successful in both so far.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: There is so much more to
20 discuss on this and I don't want to just belabor the
21 point but I think that in many ways you've helped me
22 make the argument for reduction in class sizes. By
23 arguing that small classes make a difference and that
24 even with the UPK and the 3K, it helps in terms of
25 siting places to put these classrooms.

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1
2 So, I look forward to continuing to work with you
3 on this. And also, Deputy Chancellor as to your help
4 in getting the \$250 million for class size reduction.
5 With that, I am going to turn it over to our Co-Chair
6 Mark Treyger.

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Chair Dromm and
8 thank you Deputy Chancellor Goldmark. President
9 Kubota, thank you for the entire, I see that the
10 facilities team, we appreciate everyone's
11 partnership. Just a quick question Deputy
12 Chancellor, since you oversee planning, you oversee
13 facilities, uhm, from your vantage point right now,
14 are our schools ready in terms of the maintenance, in
15 terms of everything beyond the instructional piece.
16 Are they ready to fully reopen to welcome back every
17 single child in light of the guidance that's
18 improvised for both summer and of course the fall.
19 Which is on many parents and school communities
20 minds?

21 KARIN GOLDMARK: Thank you so much Chair Treyger.
22 So, I just, unfortunately I need to start by giving
23 credit where credit is due. I would love, love to
24 take a victory lap on managing the facilities because
25 it's been a better year for that but to be fair to my

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1 wonderful colleagues, that is - that's Kevin Moran
2 and that's John Shea. I wish that I could say I had
3 done all of this but I just want them there.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: No, I said you all foresee.

6 KARIN GOLDMARK: No, but I don't oversee it.
7 That's what I am talking here about.

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yeah, yes.

9 KARIN GOLDMARK: Kevin Moran and I are coequal
10 colleagues and we have a wonderful working
11 partnership. He reports to the Chancellor, as do I.

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well, I appreciate Kevin.

13 KARIN GOLDMARK: He does the actual managing of
14 the buildings day to day along with John Shea. But
15 we are all one team and absolutely, we are proud of
16 each other's work as well as of our own and I am
17 thrilled with the work that's happened as a parent as
18 well as a DOE official. So, our buildings are all
19 open. They are actually the safest place to be in
20 New York City. And at this point, with guidance
21 being where it is, we are conducting analysis. It
22 looks like to us like the vast, vast, vast majority
23 of schools in New York City can accommodate all their
24 students. We are working very hard to get that
25 number to be 100 percent under the current guidance,

1 understanding that that guidance can change at any
2 time. But it will be a very rare exception that a
3 building won't be able to accommodate its students
4 and with respect to the safety, we are ready to go.
5 And Kevin or John, if you would like to add anything
6 please feel free. Oh, I think John Shea needs to be
7 unmuted.
8

9 JOHN SHEA: Yep, they got me. Thank you very
10 much and thank you Deputy Chancellor for the intro.
11 I agree 100 percent. I think we have discussed this
12 with the Council at the last hearing about our plans
13 to get open for this year, so I won't get into that
14 but I will reiterate the fact that all of our schools
15 are open. They have been open for many months now.
16 We had a winter ventilation plan, which we
17 successfully navigated and we have a summer
18 ventilation plan, which we are totally navigating now
19 and will continue to.

20 I want to point out that we also are using this
21 opportunity to make enhancements to the systems that
22 we already have to continue conversations of the
23 partnership with the SCA, with this Administration
24 and with Council and with our labor partners to get
25 what we need to continue to make the repairs that we

1
2 need and also, very importantly to provide the
3 information in the public transparency for what we
4 are doing.

5 The total that we have for the ventilation status
6 is a public document that we are in the process of
7 updating, so there is still time now. Custodians and
8 our custodian engineers are a very valued partner
9 here in this and have been on the front lines and are
10 our first line of defense for everything whether it's
11 cleaning or ventilation that happens in our
12 buildings. They have the ability to go in and update
13 the information that's there, so the people can
14 actually see what's going on in their school
15 building.

16 So, we are very comfortable with what we have
17 done. We feel very comfortable about where we are
18 going and we are happy that the Council has continued
19 to focus on this and support us in those efforts.

20 KARIN GOLDMARK: And I will just to reiterate
21 that we have very, very low positive rate in schools,
22 .22 percent. It's really again, just the safest
23 place to be in New York City is in New York City
24 school buildings.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right and just for
3 clarification, yes, I want to begin by giving a shout
4 out to our school cleaners, our custodians, facility
5 staff for doing really incredible work. Being under
6 resourced quite frankly historically as well, which
7 we need to increase support on that front but the
8 issue is, is that when you say the buildings are open
9 now and I understand that the majority of our school
10 families are still in remote.

11 The question is, for fall are we preparing for
12 everyone to come back and will we be able to be in
13 compliance with guidance, health recommendations from
14 public health experts. Are we preparing for everyone
15 to be in school, in-person, in the fall or Deputy
16 Chancellor, can you shed light on the discussions or
17 deliberations with regards to remote option from your
18 standpoint, where does our preparation effort stand
19 for every child coming back to work, to school, I a
20 sorry in the fall?

21 KARIN GOLDMARK: So, if any of us have learned
22 anything over the last 16 months, it's been that
23 unpredictable things will happen. But I will say,
24 what we are doing now is we are planning for a full
25 in person return with respect to our building

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2 capacity. And again, to your question, almost all
3 the buildings in New York City can accommodate all of
4 the children under the current guidance and for the
5 small number of buildings where we have a capacity
6 challenge, we are working with each and every one of
7 those buildings to develop a plan that will allow us
8 to bring all of the children back.

9 So, I can't tell you exactly what the plan is for
10 each of the schools that have a challenge. I can
11 tell you that the number of schools that have a
12 challenge is in the range of ten percent of the
13 schools. It's a very small number of schools that
14 have an actual challenge of bringing all of their
15 children who are enrolled back. So, that is not just
16 the families who are currently attending but also the
17 families who for this year have chosen remote.

18 You will see many, many states are announcing
19 that everyone is coming back full-time. We are
20 working to make sure that we can keep that promise to
21 families for all of the buildings. And for the small
22 number of buildings where there is a challenge, we
23 are working through each one as I have just said.
24 And one of the many learnings we have had this year
25 is that there is a whole network of community

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1 organizations who can help us with this question.

2
3 There are all kinds of options we can mobilize,
4 particularly when the numbers are relatively speaking
5 very small.

6 So, even for those small number of schools that
7 have a challenge, most of them are very close to
8 being able to accommodate all of their students. And
9 so, with some creative problem solving, some ally
10 organizations, we will be able to figure it out and
11 that's what we are working through now.

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: But from a planning -

13 KARIN GOLDMARK: Our goal is to - our goal is for
14 every family to come back in person.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: But from a planning
16 perspective, can you shed light on where the DOE
17 stands with regards to a remote option for the fall?

18 KARIN GOLDMARK: Uh, well, so obviously, another
19 lesson from the last 16 months is that you always
20 need to plan for multiple contingencies. So, we are
21 in those discussions. That's not only a capital
22 question but we certainly are working on what you
23 know, if something - currently everything is trending
24 in a positive direction in terms of what we will be
25 able to do in the fall. If something were to arise,

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2 would we have of course back to what I will call the
3 bad old days. Obviously, we have learned a
4 tremendous amount over the last 16 months about the
5 kind of responses that we need to be able to mount.
6 We are very hopeful that the trends will continue in
7 a positive direction and that we won't need to employ
8 emergency measures as we have this year.

9 I mean, I will say over the last 16 months, we've
10 done, you know we set up emergency childcare in six
11 days. We pivoted to remote learning in four days.
12 We didn't do a lot of planning in many cases, we had
13 little opportunity to do that in some cases and we
14 are now in a position where we can think through not
15 on the timeline we would like. Not in the normal
16 timeframe for a normal year but in a timeframe that
17 allows us a little bit of room. But we are making
18 progress on that.

19 And Lauren Siciliano, if you would like to jump
20 in, please feel free.

21 LAUREN SICILIANO: Thank you Karin. I would just
22 add to build on what Karin shared that you know, in
23 terms of our planning right now, we want to give
24 every student the option to come back into school
25 buildings five days a week, starting this fall and

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2 that's why from a capacity planning perspective, we
3 are doing everything that Karin outlined. And it
4 just, I can't say enough about the hard work of our
5 staff, our students and all of New Yorkers quite
6 frankly to be able to put us in a place where we are
7 or even planning for this. But we also know that
8 this is an extraordinarily deeply personal decision
9 for families.

10 The Chancellor talked about in the earlier
11 hearing that she is doing town halls and engaging
12 with families across the city. And so, we will have
13 more information to share soon on specific plans for
14 the fall. But just really wanted to share a huge
15 thank you to everyone who has made just this planning
16 moment possible because it seems a very far stretch
17 away not too long ago.

18 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, what I would just
19 add is that I get all that, I am just trying to be
20 mindful of our school administrators who are the
21 one's responsible to operationalize everything that
22 we are talking about right now. And I just continue
23 to hear from them that they are kind of still in the
24 dark about you know summer and fall. And they, you
25 know, under normal circumstances, principals are

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1
2 planning for summer and fall even like January,
3 February. They are already thinking ahead. They
4 can't do that. They are still even waiting for their
5 FSF numbers quite frankly. I just mentioned in the
6 expense budget hearing about waiting to lift the
7 freeze on certain positions.

8 It's hard for them to plan when they don't really
9 have information and guidance, so if and by the way,
10 I just want to be clear from my vantage point, I do
11 support a remote option. The only difference is it
12 should not be the responsibility of the individual
13 school to deal with it anymore. It should be handled
14 by central. Because principals need to have full
15 energy and attention and time dedicated to
16 operational as a plant for in-person in the fall.

17 Deputy Chancellor, is that something under
18 consideration? Can you speak to that?

19 KARIN GOLDMARK: Uh, so, the - a couple of things
20 to note. One, absolutely and I sympathetically
21 recognize the challenge that school principals have
22 been through and when we talk about the extraordinary
23 achievements of staff in the DOE over this year,
24 principals have not only gone above and beyond, which
25 they do in a normal year, it has been incredible what

1 they have done and what they have been through and
2 they are a group, candidly, our frequent conversation
3 at the DOE is that, we want the principals to have a
4 real break this summer, a real rest because they have
5 been going nonstop for 16 months and doing whatever
6 they need to do to serve students under the most
7 adverse conditions.
8

9 With respect to planning, I recognize that we are
10 not on the calendar we'd like to be on. I think that
11 still is unavoidable this year. Obviously, we have
12 had in the last ten days several changes including
13 vaccine availability for children 12-15 that really,
14 really change the landscape. And so, and the CDC's
15 guidelines have been changing frequently over the
16 last ten days. So, part of what makes planning hard
17 this year is that we could plan for the rules as they
18 currently are and those rules could shift on us
19 tomorrow or in two and a half months.

20 So, our job is to tell administrators what we do
21 know but we can't make up what we don't know. And we
22 don't know exactly what the guidelines are going to
23 be that will be in place for fall. So, we are
24 working with the current guidelines. We are working
25 towards every family being able to return to a

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2 buildings in person in the fall. Whether that will
3 be the scenario or not is not something that we now
4 know. What we can do is start giving principals and
5 school teams and SLT's to your earlier point. The
6 kind of information that we do have and what we do
7 know things will be like but that's the best we can
8 do and I understand that it's incredibly frustrating
9 to try to plan in May.

10 I also, just have to remind all of us that we all
11 want to get back to normal; all of us do. We are
12 still in a transition moment. We are still in a
13 moment where we aren't operating under the normal
14 timelines and we aren't operating yet under the prior
15 set of constraints and parameters. And so, how we do
16 that has to be as fast as we can for administrators
17 and also as clear as we can and we hope to be able to
18 give administrators guidance. We also have done a
19 series of planning allocations because we recognize
20 that schools are going to need to do some planning
21 over the summer, which is not the normal timeframe
22 but it is going to be necessary this year. And
23 that's one of the reasons for that allocation that we
24 discussed earlier.

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1
2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Deputy Chancellor, last
3 year we were subject to a state executive order that
4 we had to submit reopening plans to the state and get
5 approval. Are we subject to any type of state
6 executive order with regards to reopening plans for
7 the fall?

8 KARIN GOLDMARK: Uhm, as of now, that is unclear.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, so if you can get
10 back to us on that. If you learn more because last
11 year we were told repeatedly that anything that the
12 city comes up with has their approval by the state.
13 It's not clear to us. I know the state voted to
14 resend a lot of the governor's powers. It's not
15 clear to me if this was the one area that is still
16 kind of in a grey area. So, if NYSEG still has - or
17 if NYSEG now has full authority back again, if you
18 can give us clarity on that, it would be much
19 appreciated.

20 And I want to get to just a couple more technical
21 questions on capital and then we will turn it back to
22 Chair Rosenthal. Uhm, with regards to technology
23 devices, you know, internet bandwidth capacity, are
24 we making the commitment that not only, you know if
25 the school needs to replace devices that will be

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1 provided for them? Also, if there is issues of
2 something that requires maintenance. Usually these
3 maintenance agreements with these companies are very
4 expensive for a school. I know about this because
5 the smartboard that was in my school needed some
6 fixing and it wasn't cheap to get maintenance. Can
7 anyone speak to making sure that the school does not
8 shoulder the burden for the replacement of devices
9 and the maintenance agreements?
10

11 KARIN GOLDMARK: Yes, so I will invite in my
12 colleagues from DIIT. I will just start by saying
13 yes, the maintenance agreements are a longstanding
14 point of contention. In the past, we have required
15 schools to purchase maintenance agreements when they
16 purchase devices for precisely the reason you just
17 articulated. We don't want equipment out there that
18 can't be fixed or that then creates an additional hit
19 to the budget and this leads to some kind of back and
20 forth with schools. Sometimes schools think they can
21 find a cheaper device but the cheaper device does not
22 have the maintenance contract.

23 Broadly speaking, we are engaging in device
24 replacements, so as devices break, we are replacing
25 them. Uhm and the overall budget allows for the

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2 backend equipment upgrades on a five year cycle. So,
3 20 percent of the schools will be getting router,
4 firewalls, which are equipment upgrades every year.

5 So, I will stop here and then just invite my
6 colleagues from DIIT if they would like to add
7 anything to what I have said.

8 Okay, I will take that as a no or Scott
9 Strickland, did you want to jump in?

10 SCOTT STRICKLAND: I think you covered it and we
11 have covered on the school-based devices as well as
12 the infrastructures. I think we're good.

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, just making sure that
14 we are all on the same page that if there is any
15 school that has any internet capacity issues,
16 bandwidth issues, that should just, there are
17 resources that not from their own budget, are
18 available for that to be addressed. Is that correct?

19 KARIN GOLDMARK: For bandwidth, absolutely. The
20 bandwidth is in that \$750 million. Absolutely, the
21 school should not be paying its own bandwidth. We
22 have so much more bandwidth than we used to have,
23 more than ten times the amount we had years ago, when
24 I first started this job.

1
2 Absolutely, the bandwidth is covered with respect
3 to devices. You know schools sometimes have devices,
4 their own devices, there should be maintenance
5 contracts with each of those devices. And so, there
6 should not be a situation where a school has
7 equipment that breaks and they can't get a repair.
8 That is - our system is designed to avoid that
9 problem and so, if a school does have a problem, they
10 should immediately contact the DIIT and let us know
11 and it's a matter of getting on the process and
12 fixing it.

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I'll just add again, the
14 equity lens here. There are schools with you know
15 let's say extra resources of money, private
16 fundraising that get extra bandwidth, extra internet
17 capacity, which allows them to run programs at a
18 faster speed, which does make a difference. A
19 certain amount of time in a class, you can't go
20 beyond it. And then there are schools that have
21 through lines slower speeds, which will lead to
22 delays and impacts in instruction.

23 So, bandwidth equity now is going to be an issue
24 for us, maybe for the depth of bandwidth but also as
25 equity in the bandwidth.

1
2 A question about the air conditioning ventilation
3 in school kitchens. Can anyone speak to how much
4 money is in the capital plan for air conditioning in
5 school kitchens to really address the working
6 conditions that our school food work – many of them
7 are subjected to. Can anyone speak to that?

8 KARIN GOLDMARK: President Kubota, I am going to
9 invite you back in just because I feel like it's been
10 a long time since I have seen you. And this is
11 something that we have been discussing actually with
12 the Council. This has been a consistent point that
13 you have raised. The AC for All initiative did not
14 include common spaces like cafeterias and kitchens
15 and auditoriums. That was a classroom initiative and
16 we have been discussing the challenge around AC in
17 kitchens. There are obviously numerous challenges
18 with that including, well, it's really hot in the
19 kitchen, so there is also the challenge of
20 conditioning a space that also has heating elements
21 in it like stoves and range tops.

22 So, we do not currently have air conditioning in
23 kitchens as a building upgrade model that we do as a
24 regular matter, but we are very aware of the
25 challenges and this is definitely something that the

1 union is representing. The kitchen workers have been
2 bringing to our attention.
3

4 We are working through what might some options be
5 but we don't at this point have a building
6 enhancement program that would address that in all of
7 the schools where we have that challenge.

8 NINA KUBOTA: Right, that's correct. The \$276
9 million was specifically for classrooms. So, again
10 on PA type spaces and not kitchens but we have been
11 hearing for some time, you know about our food
12 workers and we are continuing to explore sort of
13 longer term. Chair Treyger, you are very aware of
14 the complexities with HVAC systems. A lot of these
15 spaces would require essential an HVAC system, not
16 just split systems, which is even more complicated
17 than a window AC project.

18 With that said, we have - and I think John as he
19 has been shaking his head. At this point, we have
20 implemented a temporary measure where we are and I
21 don't want to say we because DSF is doing this and
22 John I see is off mute. So, he can speak to this but
23 where we are installing window AC's in kitchens to at
24 least as a stop gap till we find a long term solution
25

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1
2 and John, I will turn it to you. I think you are
3 aware of this.

4 JOHN SHEA: Sure, thank you President Kubota.
5 So, yes, school facilities in partnership with the
6 Office of Food and Nutritional Services is surveying
7 kitchens to see what kitchens could be good
8 candidates for window installations. We are in the
9 process of doing a number of those now. We are
10 working with folks to identify funding, so that we
11 can expand that and hopefully into the next fiscal
12 year do a whole lot more of those.

13 So, it is in the plan. Funding is still an issue
14 but we are actively pursuing that and I'm working and
15 expanding that program.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: John, how many school
17 kitchens do you have funding for right now and how
18 many are needed to get every school kitchen air
19 conditioned?

20 JOHN SHEA: I know that within the past month, we
21 have done ten and I believe we have identified
22 another ten. The number of ones that need it and
23 could use it, I don't have that in front of me. I
24 believe school food was still surveying that
25 information but we can get that to the Council.

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CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: John, please do because
this is a priority for us. We need to do more than
just thank school food workers with Tweets and words.
We need to deliver and this has been a longstanding
issue. And quite frankly, you know HVAC systems, I
know they are complicated but our schools are worth
it. Kids you know and staff should not be subjected
to very hot temperatures. Ventilation has been a
preexisting issue but the school food workers are
subjected to boiling hot temperatures and what
happens is that they have to you know open a window
and if a fly flies into the kitchen or to bacteria,
the Health Department and others say, oh, there is a
fly. Meanwhile, how are they supposed to breath in
there? It's so hot and stifling inside.

So, we need to resolve this. So, John, if you
can get us the data on the number of kitchens that
need the AC units. Let us know because we are going
to fight hard to get that capital money. Every
classroom should be air conditioned and I'm glad to
see that money had been restored for that initiative
but we need to get our school kitchens, our
cafeterias and our common spaces covered as well.

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1
2 And with that, I will turn it over to my great
3 colleague Chair Rosenthal.

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Great, thank you so much
5 Chair Treyger. You are amazing and you already
6 covered so much. I really appreciate that and Deputy
7 Chancellor's Kubota and Goldmark, always a pleasure
8 working with you. I'm so glad you guys have stuck it
9 out. I mean, really hearing you over the last hour
10 or so, you are dedicated obviously. This is really
11 hard stuff and you both stuck with it. New Yorkers
12 don't know how much gratitude they owe you.

13 So, let's start with the kitchens. I mean, I too
14 am interested in that. We have you know, I am
15 thinking of PS87, where it's just a tiny little space
16 for the workers and boy, the notion that you could, I
17 mean, they are right next to an outside wall. The
18 notion that you could just you know, put a huge
19 opening there with a screen sounds amazing.

20 So, I would love to see the numbers John when you
21 have those, on which schools are in the mix to get
22 them and which schools just are more of a challenge.
23 I think that would be really helpful information if
24 you could.

25 JOHN SHEA: Will do.

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1 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, thank you. Uhm,
2 and then so just as you know in my role as Chair of
3 the Subcommittee on Capital Budget, there is always
4 this uhm, big delta between the money committed. The
5 money planned to be spent and then the money actually
6 committed. And I was just wondering if you could
7 talk a little bit about Fiscal Year '21 and '22 in
8 that regard. As of March in '21, I think DOE
9 committed \$1.26 billion. Which represented only
10 roughly 40 percent of the planned commitments. Which
11 means that you have roughly \$4 billion more
12 appropriations that you could commit. How much do
13 you really think you are going to be able to commit
14 by the - by five, six weeks from now? Thank you.

16 KARIN GOLDMARK: I am only smiling because what a
17 year it's been and thank you for your kind words
18 Chair Rosenthal. In terms of yes, the funds that are
19 allocated and the funds that are committed, right.
20 The agencies have to spend the money. His was
21 obviously a very wild year for that and on the SCA
22 side, obviously there was an incredibly long
23 construction pause, where no projects were moving
24 even when construction, when private construction
25 resumed, public construction waited even longer. So,

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1 that was a huge hit in terms of actually spending
2 money because -

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, no, it's citywide
4 for sure. I just wondered if you have a sense of
5 what's going to happen by the end of this year.

6 KARIN GOLDMARK: So, I do know that as a state
7 board member, we just approved - I'm sorry President
8 Kubota, I would have to look in my book which is on
9 my text. Not in front of me but I know we just
10 committed several hundred million dollars in
11 contracts. I don't know if you have a sense of how
12 much more is going out.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And just what the total
14 will be for '21.

15 NINA KUBOTA: Right, so we have allocated \$4.6
16 billion in FY21.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: \$4.6 has been committed?

18 NINA KUBOTA: No, no, no, that's -

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Allocated, right, sorry.

20 NINA KUBOTA: And actually each subsequent year
21 is pretty similar. So, you are right Deputy
22 Chancellor Goldmark, the construction pause but also
23 the design pause did cause -

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: No question.
25

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1
2 NINA KUBOTA: With that said, you know, I am not
3 sure how aware you are of our structure but 40
4 percent of our designs are done in house. And so, we
5 were able to keep designing despite the pause which
6 was great. And I will say because of that and
7 because we were able to unpause at a certain point,
8 we are on track to commit that \$4.6 billion. And
9 just by the nature of the way things are you know
10 scoped and designed and the timeframe in which it is
11 done, typically most of our commitments are done or
12 obligations are done in that last quarter of the
13 fiscal year.

14 So, I will say that we have in the last
15 approximately two weeks turned over four big, well
16 over \$2.2 billion worth of projects. So, those are
17 all out on the street. You know, we are receiving
18 the daily – this is the business season for that back
19 hearing for us. So, you know and we commit through
20 June 30th. So, we are actually on track believe it
21 or not, we are on track.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: God bless you. I am God
23 smacked, that's so impressive and then, so we also
24 notice for Fiscal Year '22 that the appropriations I
25 think went up some. So, do you – is that because you

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are hopeful that you can make the total, I think for
next year it's \$4.4 billion.

NINA KUBOTA: Correct, correct and we are
accompanying in that also and I know there is some
changes with the Executive Budget in terms of more
allocations for 3K, so we are working very hard. And
as I mentioned a little bit earlier, all of those
commitments are on track to be committed for FY22.
However, we are already in the design process for
about so far one-third of the \$6,500 3K seats. So,
you know we are moving on this. So, that's our goal.

KARIN GOLDMARK: And I will just, I will just
quickly, yeah, I know Chair Rosenthal is like, wow.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: DDC did not give me that
answer, so nice.

KARIN GOLDMARK: It's pretty awesome and I will
just remind everyone that in terms of capital
improvement projects in existing DOE buildings, SCA
really tries to get as much work done as possible in
the summer. And so, while we are opening as many DOE
buildings as possible this summer, we are closing
some for capital projects and that's another reason
why there is this big stacks contracts at the end of
the year. Contracts go out to bid, the work happens

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2 over the summer, we open up on time, in style in the
3 fall and SCA has never missed a school opening. It's
4 an amazing track record and we are happy clients.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And I am just going to
6 ask my Committee staff to text me - Sorry to do this
7 publicly but if there is any additional information
8 needed on the commitment plan, if you could just text
9 me about that.

10 Second, I want to talk about devices and tracking
11 devices and lastly, I am going to ask about solar
12 panels. I see my colleagues have their hands up and
13 I really want to be able to get to them. So, one
14 thing that you just mentioned Deputy Chancellor
15 Goldmark that I hadn't heard last time is that each
16 school is it, has their own maintenance plan for the
17 devices. Is that what you said?

18 KARIN GOLDMARK: No, what I was saying was that
19 for a long time we have had centralized purchasing
20 contracts where if the school is going to buy a
21 laptop, they are buying it off of a contract and
22 essentially that includes maintenance. It's not that
23 each school has its own maintenance contracts. It's
24 that we make schools buy devices that come with a
25 warranty, with a maintenance contract.

1
2 But I am going to ask Lauren Siciliano, our Chief
3 Administrative Officer to come in and invite her in
4 because essentially, anything I say here is something
5 I have learned from her.

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Right, right, no and
7 that's great. I mean but let me just sort of do big
8 picture. I think big picture, the problem is that we
9 are hearing from principals is that you know, there
10 are a lot of damaged devices. They can't get
11 replacements or they can't get them fixed or replaced
12 fast enough for the kids. There aren't like devices
13 that they are you know, holding back that they could
14 give immediately to a student if a student you know
15 says their device has been broken.

16 So, just sort of big picture, you know do you
17 have a system citywide for tracking the devices? Do
18 you know how many are out of service at any time?
19 How quickly kids can get a new one? And this is and
20 I am asking truly because I am hearing from
21 principals and others may speak up as well, that its
22 continued to be a serious problem in their schools.

23 KARIN GOLDMARK: Yeah, essentially we did this
24 massive purchase right at the beginning where we
25 realized what was about to happen to us and what was

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1
2 happening to us in that moment. We are now migrating
3 to a system where we have ongoing replacement of
4 devices. I will let again my colleagues speak to
5 exactly where we are in that process. I will just
6 remind everyone that we are obviously by far the
7 largest and we were the earliest to act on buying the
8 devices but it did become a bit of rough on the
9 toilet paper kind of effect. Things we all remember.
10 In that every school district in America, well, every
11 school district in America and not just school
12 districts but other clients like companies entering
13 this market to start buying devices.

14 And we got a head start but yes, exactly, I know
15 you are not saying it with prejudice, your saying
16 like I understand.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And I'm really not
18 throwing shade at all.

19 KARIN GOLDMARK: Yeah, yeah.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So, it's more that, okay,
21 so just describe where are we now and are we set?
22 Like what's in stock for future need to address this?
23 Are you able to stay on top of it? What can we do to
24 make it so it's easier for you to stay on top of it
25 given that the device is the only thing that's

1 connecting nearly all of our students to their
2 education?
3

4 KARIN GOLDMARK: So again, Lauren or Scott,
5 please feel free to jump in with the kind of detailed
6 level of how we are now moving to that steady stage
7 of constant replenishment.

8 LAUREN SICILIANO: Yes, absolutely. So, I will
9 talk about this in a couple different buckets and
10 first and foremost, I just want to thank you and the
11 Council for all of your advocacy in the space around
12 prices and on bandwidth. We would not be where we
13 are right now without help with that and it reflects
14 a tremendous amount of investment and work to date.

15 So, on the iPad's that we purchased centrally,
16 those 500,000 devices, they are capitally funded.
17 When we rolled out those devices, we also rolled out
18 the new device tracking and management approach with
19 that large purchase. Uhm and so, each device is
20 assigned to an indivual seat when the device is
21 distributed. So, we know systemwide where the
22 devices are and can track them.

23 What is included in our stimulus proposal is
24 taking many of those lessons and applying them -
25

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1 those lessons in schools and applying them, expanding
2 them to other devices outside of just 500,000 iPads.

3
4 The other thing I want to mention here is uhm,
5 for the iPads, obviously the cost of the iPad
6 includes warranty, it includes Apple care support for
7 replacements and any schools struggling with
8 replacements, they should absolutely reach out to the
9 DIT help desk for support. Before the capitally
10 funded iPads for broken devices, just a reminder that
11 those devices need to be replaced with an expense
12 funded item. [INAUDIBLE 3:53:34] capital funding but
13 I just wanted to remind folks about that.

14 And then outside of the iPads for the devices
15 that Karin was reading to you that the schools
16 purchase, we are seeing schools continue to purchase
17 large numbers of devices and we do centrally fund
18 what we call PCS contracts or uhm, upgrade, fix
19 support contracts are tied to those devices.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, can you separate
21 out the ones, I am not sure it matters, between the
22 ones that were funded with Reso. A Council Member
23 funding versus you know centrally funded. And I ask
24 because many in my school said that they couldn't,
25 their kids really couldn't use the iPads they needed

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2 and then we put you know funding in for that. We are
3 continuing to put funding – I mean, I am, I am sure
4 my colleagues are as well.

5 LAUREN SICILIANO: And so the question is
6 specifically on the Reso. A devices is can we –

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Are you tracking that
8 expenditure as well and are those devices sort of –
9 do you integrate that into the total package of how
10 you track all this?

11 LAUREN SICILIANO: Got it, got it. It's a great
12 question. So, for the Reso. A funded devices,
13 historically they have their track. They have
14 historically been tracked separately. What we are
15 hoping to be able to do as we expand our management
16 device platform and our tracking platforms is to be
17 able to integrate that together. Both for us in a
18 support perspective but also quite frankly for the
19 school, so that they are not seeing – they are not
20 tracking devices in multiple ways and seeing them
21 across multiple buckets.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, I think that uhm, I
23 think it's really important.

24 LAUREN SICILIANO: We agree, absolutely. We very
25 much want to do this.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I think you know, one for
3 Fiscal, obviously fiscal and managerial
4 responsibility but also to understand better what the
5 right product is for our students. I mean, I do
6 think it's meaningful. I don't know how many of my
7 colleagues are confounding this but really, almost
8 all my schools are asking me to put money in the
9 budget from Chrome Books.

10 So, what is that given the fact that you had to
11 turn on a dime and you got stuff so fast and you know
12 the biggest school system, understanding all that.
13 So again, no shade, just you know commonsense.
14 Should we be continuing to buy? Like, do you think
15 about which types of students? Maybe it's different
16 grades that should use iPads versus laptops? I'm
17 going to get off, I am going to stop asking about
18 this but all of which to say, I don't think - I think
19 I understand it's a challenge but I do think it's
20 worth having a good handle on this.

21 LAUREN SICILIANO: I could not agree with you
22 more. We are very excited about the opportunity to
23 create device tracking tools for our schools that we
24 haven't been able to create before. And that we have
25 had to stand up in limited instances to support the

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1 pandemic but being able to expand that is just a very
2 exciting prospect.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And do you coordinate
5 with just like, do you purchase under knowing that
6 Council Members are allocating funding as well or?
7 Okay, I really am going to get off the dime but you
8 are doing your job right?

9 LAUREN SICILIANO: I'm trying every day, I
10 promise. I would just say quickly on the Reso. A
11 devices that when we purchased the iPads, we
12 purchased one device and we needed to do that because
13 of everything we have talked about before. The
14 volume we needed in the short timeframe. Our goal
15 would not be to decide the single device for the
16 system. And I think that through the Reso. A program
17 as we move forward, our goal would be for schools to
18 be determining which devices best meet the needs of
19 their students and to have much more variety.

20 So, completely same page there. I am happy of
21 course to discuss in more detail.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay. Lastly, solar
23 panels. In the Council's Preliminary Budget
24 Response, we called for more funding to retrofit the
25 schools for solar. Let's I guess start this way.

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1
2 Which agency budget would reflect the money for a
3 school to get solar roof panels? Would it be in
4 SCA's, DCAS, DDC?

5 NINA KUBOTA: So, the current solar program is
6 DCAS funded and DSF implemented. So, it actually
7 does flow through DCAS and currently, I believe and I
8 know John would know this but I believe there are 50
9 that are complete with another 200 in process. So,
10 you know, I will let DOE speak t that but in
11 addition, don't forget we have Local Law 94 and we
12 are compliant and we have another ten capacity
13 projects that will have PV's as a result of Local Law
14 94.

15 So, I don't know if John you want to add anything
16 to that?

17 JOHN SHEA: Sure, I will just give you the
18 numbers that we had as of yesterday. We have 42
19 projects that are completed for a total of 8.2
20 megawatts. We have 20 that are currently -

21 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Whew, slowdown, sorry.
22 42 projects done, 8.2 megawatts, okay.

23 JOHN SHEA: Alright, we have 20 that are actively
24 in construction, which are 4.5 megawatts. And we
25 have 205 that are - I'm sorry 206 that are total

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1
2 currently in the pipeline for implementation. But as
3 President Kubota points out, those are all funded
4 through DCAS and they give them to us.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So, first of all Deputy
6 Chancellor Kubota, your numbers were almost perfect.
7 So, you know, two stars for that.

8 Uhm, got it and uhm, what's the total universe of
9 buildings?

10 JOHN SHEA: When you say total universe, we
11 identify -

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, I mean, I guess the
13 question is what's the total universe of buildings
14 that are solar ready and then the total universe of
15 buildings? In other words, the ones that probably we
16 can't put on solar for one reason or another.

17 JOHN SHEA: Right, so the 206 is a pretty good
18 number for the ones that have been identified as
19 possibilities.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay.

21 JOHN SHEA: That are ready for the pipeline and
22 DCAS and their contracts have certain standards that
23 the building needs to meet. The area, the age and
24 warranty of the roof.

25 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yep, yep, yep.

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1
2 JOHN SHEA: So, we've already done that vetting
3 of those 200 buildings.

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Right.

5 JOHN SHEA: And I am sure -

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So, you are hitting all
7 the low hanging fruit?

8 JOHN SHEA: Correct.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, and then, so in
10 other words, if I wanted to fund a solar roof for my
11 school, the money would not go in as CA's budget? It
12 would go in DCAS?

13 JOHN SHEA: I would say if you had a candidate -

14 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Or DOE's?

15 JOHN SHEA: If you had a candidate building, I
16 would share it with my office and we would check to
17 see if it's in the DCAS program and if not, if it
18 could be in the DCAS program and that's how we would
19 do it.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So, one of the things
21 about DCAS is that their most recent report is from,
22 I think 2018 in terms of solar ready buildings
23 citywide. So, do you have your list that you are
24 working from for the 206 or all of them? The roughly
25 260, 70 that you could share with us and sort of what

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1 the different states are in process done to be done
2 this year, next year, the year after, the year after?

3
4 JOHN SHEA: Sure, we could provide that and it's
5 the same information that DCAS would have. I am not
6 sure what they are sharing publicly but just to share
7 with the Council, we actually have a solar project
8 manager full time that sits in my office to manage
9 these projects that funded by DCAS but they work for
10 us. So, we have somebody that does this all day long
11 and I could share the data.

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Oh and that was my last
13 question. Uhm, so that's great you have someone
14 doing that from the management of the installation.
15 How about from the perspective and this is more, I
16 guess a DOE question. From the perspective of
17 helping the schools ready themselves, uhm, and back
18 to your point Deputy Chancellor Goldmark about what a
19 hell of a year its been fore principals. Uhm, and
20 you know I was talking to a principal the other day
21 about it and he said shoot me. In the most generous
22 way. I mean, I love this guy, you know, he is one of
23 the best principals in my district but sorry, that
24 was flip. I didn't mean to say it that way.

25 KARIN GOLDMARK: That's okay.

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1
2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Don't call 911. He is a
3 great guy. But uhm, you know just sort of feeling
4 totally overwhelmed. So, is there staff available
5 who can say, yeah, you know the DFA has it under
6 control. We central staff are going to work with
7 your science teachers to implement this. Don't
8 worry, we got you.

9 KARIN GOLDMARK: So, more broadly than just this
10 question of - with respect to all of the work that
11 principals are doing. I want to be fair, there's
12 like, you know, I think for most of them, this is the
13 least of the things that they are feeling burnt out
14 about.

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Exactly and the last
16 thing on there - they want to care about and yet so,
17 so critical in every single way.

18 KARIN GOLDMARK: So, yes, just a couple of thread
19 of what you raised. First of all, uhm, look one of
20 the great advantages of having a Chancellor who has
21 been a principal in the New York school system is
22 that Chancellor Porter regularly starts meetings with
23 - here is what I would have done as a principal. If
24 you sent me this, I would have ignored it.

25 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Nice.

1
2 KARIN GOLDMARK: If you sent me this, I would
3 have appreciated it. You know she has a very good
4 principal ear because she was one in this very system
5 for a long time.

6 And she was also a creative principal which also
7 means something in the system. And then there is
8 just the recognition of what this year has been like
9 for anybody who leads a community. So, this is
10 really true across New York City of the pastors and
11 the preachers, like everyone who leads a community
12 has had this responsibility on their shoulders and
13 principals really lead the school community. They
14 lead teachers, staff, everyone in the building,
15 families. And so, that work of leading the community
16 through a crisis, unlike anything we have ever seen,
17 in a context where no one has been able to do
18 everything that we know we need to do for kids
19 because of the public health constraints you know
20 when it comes to the learning.

21 So, this challenge, my heart goes out to
22 principals and that's like not even the relevant
23 part.

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Same, same, exactly.
25

1
2 KARIN GOLDMARK: Have been in this really just a
3 crucible all year long. With that said, we are
4 encouraging principals to take the vacation that they
5 need to take. We are encouraging principals to set
6 up the structures they need to set up, so that they
7 are delegating responsibilities. We are not saying
8 delegate this responsibility, not that one because to
9 the point of how principals feel is they don't want
10 us to tell them to delegate one piece of work and
11 that we will manage it centrally versus another.

12 They want to tell us what they want support with
13 and what they want to do themselves. And so, we want
14 to be respectful of that. So, we're not saying like,
15 you never have to do anything about solar roofs. If
16 they want to okay, if they don't want to hear about
17 it from us, okay. And with everything we do in our
18 exchanges and directions with them, we are trying to
19 be responsive to that.

20 We are also coming back from just you know, there
21 were real challenges around -

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: You know what, I am sorry
23 to interrupt you.

24 KARIN GOLDMARK: Yeah, go ahead.
25

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1
2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I really do need to turn
3 this over to my colleagues.

4 KARIN GOLDMARK: Yeah, okay.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Sort of just yes, no, do
6 you have a team of people who go in and help
7 principals?

8 KARIN GOLDMARK: Yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Alright, so principals
10 have someone they can reach to. Okay, yes, yes, yes,
11 Deputy Chancellor?

12 KARIN GOLDMARK: Yes, I am sorry. I thought you
13 were saying we are moving on and I was getting ready
14 to move on. Yes. Principals, we are engaging
15 differently with principals and with respect to solar
16 roofs in particular, we have ways of supporting them
17 but more generally, this question of how do we give
18 principals room to do what they need to do is a very
19 live one.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Great.

21 KARIN GOLDMARK: I see hands up. I will -

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Alright, thank you all so
23 much. Thanks for the additional time Chairs, back to
24 you. Thank you colleagues.

25

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CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. We have two
Council Members with questions.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chair. If any
Council Member has questions for SCA, please use the
Zoom raise hand function now and you will be added to
the queue. Council Members, please keep your
questions to five minutes including answers. Please
wait for the Sergeant at arms to tell you when your
time begins and the Sergeant will let you know when
your time is up.

We will now hear from Council Member Riley
followed by Council Member Adams.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you Chair Rosenthal,
Chair Dromm and Chair Treyger. Thank you President
Kubota and Deputy Chancellor Goldmark for your
leadership.

I am Council Member Kevin Riley; I am newly
elected in the 12th District. I think I really want
to stress the emphasis on the kitchens. Within my
district, we had an incident on [INAUDIBLE 4:08:31]
with Ms. Silvia during last summer during the
pandemic and as we know, many of our children within
our communities were allowing the food within our

1
2 kitchens but it really wasn't safe for Ms. Silvia who
3 was an elderly lady who still works in the kitchen.
4 Very hot, she almost had a heat stroke, so I really,
5 really want to focus on the kitchens, especially
6 within my district. So, if you guys could provide
7 any information. If there is any assistance that we
8 could add from the Council to assure that we are
9 giving a safe environment for the workers. We
10 definitely want to do that with you all.

11 My second question, which is very pressing to me
12 is, the infrastructure within our schools. I am
13 really interested in gymnasiums, the auditoriums
14 within schools. I know a lot of schools within our
15 communities don't have them due to the space, due to
16 the zonings, due to how the schools were built. And
17 I do want to know if there are any funding within
18 this budget to address some of those issues within
19 the Bronx schools to add more gymnasiums and
20 auditoriums.

21 As our children are educating themselves
22 throughout the day, it is always important that they
23 have that time where they can take a break to
24 reenergize, to regain their self and engage with
25 their peers in school, which is social skills, it is

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1 something that we are trying to teach our kids every
2 day.

3
4 So, gymnasiums or auditoriums are definitely
5 utilized for that. Something outside of the
6 classroom. So, is there anything within the budget
7 addressing that issue? Especially with schools
8 within the Bronx?

9 KARIN GOLDMARK: Thank you so much. If it is
10 okay President Kubota, I will start and then pass it
11 to you. So, absolutely share your concern around the
12 school food workers and just want to take this moment
13 to give them a shout out because they worked every
14 day this year. Before we were told to wear masks,
15 after, during the pandemic, during the regional
16 enrichment centers, the emergency childcare for
17 essential workers, feeding a million people in New
18 York City a day. I mean, it was just amazing. They
19 stood between hunger and malnutrition and New
20 Yorkers, like soldiers we have never seen before.
21 So, big shout out and definitely deserve to work in
22 conditions that reflect our appreciation of them and
23 working on that moving forward.

24 With respect to your question about gymnasiums
25 and outdoor spaces and a space for leisure activities

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2 and sports and play, we do have the PE for All
3 Initiative, which is to make sure that every
4 building, every school building, where there isn't a
5 gym, does actually get a gym or gets a partnership
6 with the local organization where we rent space, so
7 that children have a place to run, jump and play.

8 And I will let President Kubota build on that.
9 We will follow-up with you and get you the
10 information for how many of those sites are in the
11 Bronx because I don't think we have that information
12 with us. But sometimes President Kubota knows
13 numbers beyond what my wildest expectation, so
14 anything you want to add Nina?

15 NINA KUBOTA: I think of the stand alone gyms
16 that we are building or have built. I believe that
17 there are about five in the Bronx. I don't think
18 specifically in Council Member - in your district in
19 particular. With that said, that's one, that was
20 only one avenue in which we were trying to provide
21 physical education spaces.

22 So, to Deputy Chancellor Goldmark's point, if
23 there are and we can work with you offline about
24 this. If there are one's in your district, we would
25

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1 really like to figure out an alternative source to
2 that.

3
4 I will say that we are building an addition at PS
5 87 in your district and that will have a gymnasium as
6 part of the addition complex. So, you know, the UP,
7 the Universal Physical Education Initiative is not
8 the only way. Not that we are saying we are going to
9 build an addition for every building that may not
10 have a gymnasium but there are alternate means of
11 doing that.

12 In terms of auditoriums, we do provide some
13 auditorium upgrades. Again, while \$19 billion is
14 indeed a lot of money, you know, we have been in
15 terms of our capital investment program really
16 focusing on keeping our buildings water tight. So, I
17 don't know off hand if there are any in your
18 district, any auditorium upgrades. We can certainly
19 get back to you on that but you know -

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

21 NINA KUBOTA: The amount of funding for those
22 other projects is pretty limited. So, happy to work
23 with you offline.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you President
25 Kubota. Thank you Chairs.

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COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will now hear from Council
Member Adams followed by Council Member Gibson.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Thank you so much. Thank
you again to our Chairs, Rosenthal, Treyger, Dromm.
Thank you so much. Thank you to all of our
participants today and your expertise. I do
represent District 28 for those that don't know me.
Deputy Chancellor Goldmark, it's good to see you
again.

KARIN GOLDMARK: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: So, I just want to just to
- I guess more or less make a statement. It's been
so hard you know for our schools out there. I
represent areas of Jamaica. South Ozone Park,
Richmond Hill and Rochdale Village and it's been so
hard. We're talking about devices and I just
remember getting a list from PS160 in my district
this summer.

It was just hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of
deficiencies when it came to getting those devices to
our children. So, I guess I just wanted to hear
again some more reassurance that you know we flipped
the coin on that and that our students will be taken

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2 care of as far as devices are concerned. I also
3 wanted to mention, we've got ongoing projects with
4 SCA. I am so glad to see that we have loosened them
5 up and are moving things around. I remember though
6 having little things and I just want to hear that the
7 little things are taken care of like partitions that
8 work orders were put in for. Partitions for PS48
9 along time ago, so that children from the District 75
10 school would not have any interference from other
11 students when they were in the gym.

12 And just little things like that that I was
13 hearing from the principal that there was really no
14 response back. You know on some little things going
15 on. I think 121 also had some things going on with
16 the gym. No real response though. If I can just get
17 some assurance that some of those little things have
18 been shaken out and again, thank you so much for
19 working with me. And working with District 28 and
20 just making sure that Southeastern Queens you know is
21 taken care of equitably. And I appreciate that.

22 KARIN GOLDMARK: Absolutely and yes, we have been
23 working with Executive Superintendent de Govia who
24 is; I don't know if you've had a chance to meet with
25 her, she is just a tremendous educator, really

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2 excited to be working with her and absolutely
3 partitions, I actually think that may not be an SCA
4 project that maybe a DSF project, so I am going to
5 check on the DOE end about the PS48 project and
6 colleagues, if anybody has a specific information
7 right here right now about that, let me know but most
8 likely we will get back to you, just because it is
9 such a specific question but in general yes, we are
10 moving into this steady state with devices where we
11 will be able to replenish. There are still
12 challenges with that just from supply point of view.
13 And again Lauren Siciliano, who has just done amazing
14 work on this, if there is anything you want to add on
15 that, please feel free.

16 LAUREN SICILIANO: Thank you. Thank you Karin
17 and thank you Council Member for the question and we
18 know how hard it has been this year to make sure that
19 all of our students have devices and how critical
20 that has been. And just, I am thankful for the
21 partnership with the Council.

22 As you hear of schools that are still struggling,
23 do please continue to let us know. We have, of the
24 500,000 iPads we have purchased, we still have about
25 40,000 still available for needs that will continue

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2 to come up over the course of the year. So, we do
3 still have iPads available if there are students that
4 need. And you know, as much as we've made progress
5 this year, as we think ahead to next year, we are
6 looking at what pieces of the process worked this
7 year because of the specific need that we needed to
8 meet and the timeline that we needed to make it, need
9 it.

10 And then for next year, looking at both the
11 500,000 devices, we are also looking at schools have
12 also continued to order a tremendous number of
13 devices through not just through SCA but also through
14 their own school budgets and we expect that school
15 budgets will of course have additional resources next
16 year particularly with the increase of Fair Student
17 Funding. So, we are in a good position to be able to
18 make sure that our students have the devices that
19 they need looking ahead to next year.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Thank you. I just want to
21 throw in before time is out, I heard a couple of
22 instances on the flip side of that as well. Not many
23 but what is the process when students have their own
24 devices and we are giving them devices anyway? I
25 have heard of that too and parents were going, "I'm

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2 trying to give it back." " They are not letting me
3 give it back." So, we had that going on also. Not a
4 lot of it but we did have that going on as well.

5 So, are we managing that better? What's going on
6 with that?

7 LAUREN SICILIANO: Yes, fantastic question.
8 Thank you for asking. So, when students leave DOE,
9 they should return the device -

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

11 LAUREN SICILIANO: They should return the device
12 to their school. If they have a device now that they
13 don't need, we have many ways that families can
14 return the device. First, the easiest thing, call
15 the DIT help desk 718-395-5100 and we will arrange
16 for pickup. You can also drop it off at any UPS
17 location within the tristate area and they will get
18 it back to us free of charge. Or of course, they can
19 return it back to their school.

20 So, all of those are options and uhm, feel free
21 of course to reach out if there are any families that
22 need support.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Thank you so much. I
24 appreciate that. Thank you.

25 LAUREN SICILIANO: Thank you.

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PUBLIC HOUSING 216

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will now hear from Council
3 Member Gibson.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you so much. Good
6 afternoon everyone. Thank you Chairs, thank you
7 Chair Treyger and Chair Rosenthal. I appreciate all
8 of you and to all of my colleagues. Thank you so
9 much President as well as Deputy Chancellor. Thank
10 you for your work and I have been listening a lot to
11 the hearing today and I just had a couple of
12 questions. I don't know if it has been already
13 talked about but definitely want to also add my voice
14 to Chair Treyger in speaking about the cafeteria
15 workers and lunchroom aids and so many of our
16 critical essential workers that have been on the
17 frontlines. A majority of whom are women and women
18 of color. I have visited many of my schools during
19 the pandemic and really saw a lot of the great work.

20 So, when you talk about capital, when you talk
21 about HVAC systems and upgrades to our
22 cafeteria/café's, I also want to make sure we include
23 our kitchens. We need air conditioning, we need
24 proper ventilation, because that's what all of our
25

1 workers are expecting. So, I hope we can continue to
2 have conversations about that.
3

4 I wanted to ask specifically about the school-
5 based health centers. I am a huge proponent of
6 working to address our students social/emotional
7 learning needs, students in temporary housing and
8 really dealing with health and wellness. Certainly
9 on behalf of my district in the Bronx.

10 So, do we have any opportunities in this years
11 budget to expand on the existing school-based health
12 centers? Is there any money allocated and are we
13 working with new providers, our hospitals and
14 healthcare centers? I would like to understand where
15 we are with that because you also know that there is
16 a strong correlation between our school based health
17 centers as well as our guidance counselors bridging
18 the gap and social workers and school nurses. They
19 all work hand and hand together, so I just wanted to
20 understand that.

21 And then, speaking to the digital divide issue,
22 like many of my colleagues, we also family struggle
23 with connectivity, particularly those in temporary
24 housing and being discriminated against by some of
25 these internet companies. Because they were asking

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2 for credit cards and deposits and if you had a
3 delinquent account they discriminated against you.

4 So, we saw a lot in the past year and I know the
5 mayor's made a series of announcements on addressing
6 internet connectivity particularly in shelters and
7 other places and I am grateful for that. I just want
8 to make sure that as it relates to our Reso. A
9 funding, we make sure that we can push along a lot of
10 these projects. Because sometimes they get delayed
11 and I do want to make sure that within the fiscal
12 year, we are able to give our schools the awards that
13 we are providing in our budgets each year.

14 And the last thing I want to mention, I don't
15 know if Council Member Rosenthal mentioned it but I
16 am also a huge fan of scratch kitchens because some
17 of my schools today have ovens. They don't have
18 kitchens where they are preparing meals from scratch
19 and I think that's another creative way to continue
20 to address our students needs by not eating processed
21 food and things of that nature that are not healthy
22 for them. So, I would like to see where we are with
23 that. That's all, thank you. That's a lot.

24 KARIN GOLDMARK: I think I may have missed a
25 couple. Thank you but I am sure you will remind me.

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2 Thank you so much Council Member Gibson. You are
3 always so clear and so passionate and so effective in
4 terms of advocating for schools.

5 So, I hear you on the kitchens. We have talked a
6 lot about it, so I will keep going. You asked about
7 school-based health clinics and actually I remember
8 visiting a school with you where we built a school-
9 based health clinic. I believe that we are currently
10 still at that number 14 of building the school-based
11 health clinics. We have had some challenges with the
12 partnership getting providers because providers want
13 a certain level of foot traffic into the health
14 clinics. So, it is not something that we currently
15 have added funding to in this capital plan. We are
16 not by any means against it and certainly having
17 health clinics has been totally helpful this year.
18 It was, as we are going through, how do we make sure
19 there is a nurse? How do we make sure there is an
20 isolation room? Every building that had a health
21 clinic, we knew exactly that that building would be
22 able to meet the demands of this moment.

23 With respect to safety and public health, you are
24 totally right. It's an amazing program. We are
25 essentially working on doing the ones that we've

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1
2 already committed to doing at this point but happy to
3 discuss with you what would be the next phase of that
4 work.

5 NINA KUBOTA: Can I jump in there?

6 KARIN GOLDMARK: Yeah.

7 NINA KUBOTA: So, since we initiated or the
8 program was initiated about five years ago, we have
9 completed 45 school-based health clinics and four are
10 in process. Actually three in construction in the
11 Bronx and one is in design in the Bronx PS67 Samuel
12 Gompers High School, PSIS 230, 229 and also the one
13 in design is PS-

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

15 NINA KUBOTA: So, we are really excited about
16 this. We do have a little bit of money set aside.
17 It's kind of a little bit off to the side, it's about
18 \$10 million that we have left of the funding and it's
19 a great program. So, I would love to circle back
20 with you but I do want to echo what Karin said in
21 terms of finding providers.

22 Montefiore has been great in the Bronx but you
23 know, we need providers in order to run these
24 centers.

25

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1
2 KARIN GOLDMARK: Uhm, oh gosh, so there were so
3 many. There was -

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: I was also talking about
5 the cafeterias and café's and HVAC, ventilation.

6 KARIN GOLDMARK: Thank you. I was going to try
7 to impress you by remembering all of them but I
8 can't. Yeah, so cafeterias, uh, President Kubota,
9 you want to talk about cafeterias?

10 NINA KUBOTA: So, I think we covered this at
11 great length. The AC program was funded only for
12 classrooms. We have - so there isn't funding for
13 cafeterias but I think more specifically, you were
14 talking about for kitchen workers, which we have
15 talked a lot about. One of the things that we are
16 doing as a stop gap is to install window AC's for
17 these kitchens while we evaluate a large HVAC system.
18 And in fact, John Shea, who is on the line, has
19 already done about ten and has ten more in process.
20 I believe was the number he quoted earlier and is
21 going through an evaluation. Actually School Foods
22 is going through an evaluation of which kitchens have
23 or need this right now.

24 So, that is under review and I believe he did
25 commit to sharing the list once it was available.

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1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay.

3 KARIN GOLDMARK: Yeah, so also you mentioned your
4 voice on the laptop and device equity and you know
5 continuation and refurbishment.

6 Sorry, I may have missed one. You said -

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: No, you got it all.

8 KARIN GOLDMARK: Cafeterias, health clinics -

9 NINA KUBOTA: Scratch kitchens.

10 KARIN GOLDMARK: Scratch, oh, scratch kitchens
11 thank you. That was one that I wanted to talk about
12 because that has a capital and an expense element and
13 I believe and you can correct me if I am wrong but in
14 last years rather devastating budget cuts, the scratch
15 kitchen, the expense side of it was cut
16 unfortunately. Uhm and I do not know if that has
17 been restored yet or not but certainly, would love to
18 work with you on that effort to have freshly cooked
19 food available for students in schools, particularly
20 in the Bronx.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, great. Thank you
22 so much. I look forward to working with all of you.
23 The final thing I will say is it relates to the
24 school-based clinics. I know that with many of the
25 providers, there are minimum enrollment numbers that

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2 we have to fulfill but I think in light of COVID-19,
3 we need to realize a lot of students have been
4 traumatized.

5 So, if it is not to the standards, I think we
6 need to reconsider those guidelines, so that we can
7 accommodate the needs of all students. And really
8 making sure that it's viable and it's productive.

9 So, I would like to work with you guys on that
10 because I really think we need to expand in light of
11 the new announcement on the new Mayor's Office of
12 Community Mental Health.

13 I think that will have a lot of components that
14 are relative to the work that our school-based
15 clinics are doing as well. So, I thank you so much
16 Chairs. Thanks for your time.

17 KARIN GOLDMARK: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, great. Thank you very
19 much and I think this is going to end this portion of
20 the hearing now. But before I let you go; I do also
21 want to say thank you Deputy Chancellor for all the
22 work that you have done. It has been a pleasure to
23 work with you. I remember marching, I think back
24 when I first became Education Chair along with your
25 child and we were marching for CFB funding and I

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1 don't think we ever thought that it would really come
2 through and look how far we have come. So, our
3 marching wasn't in vein and I really appreciate your
4 open and honest relationship with us and the
5 Committee and our friendship as well.

6 So, thank you for everything you have done.
7 President Kubota as well, thank you so much for all
8 the work that you have done. I got to know you
9 through former president Lorraine Grillo of course
10 but it is a pleasure to have you onboard also and
11 thank you for open and honest answers to our
12 questions. We really deeply appreciate it.

13 Of course to everyone else who is on the call.
14 To my Chairs, to Mark Treyger and to Helen Rosenthal
15 as well. Thank you and we are going to proceed in
16 one minute I think, to the next portion of this
17 hearing.

18 So, thank you very much.

19 NINA KUBOTA: Thank you so much.

20 KARIN GOLDMARK: Thank you so much and thanks to
21 all the support staff who have done work including in
22 this hearing.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Absolutely, thank you for all
24 the support staff. Thank you very, very much.
25

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1
2 KARIN GOLDMARK: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: This will conclude this
4 portion of today's hearing. Thank you SCA for being
5 here. We will now move onto the Department of Health
6 and Mental Hygiene. I ask my colleagues who will be
7 joining us for the DOHMH portion of the hearing to
8 remain in this Zoom with your microphone. We are
9 going to go right into DOHMH.

10 So, are our Chairs ready?

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We're just waiting for a few
12 of the Admin from DOHMH to log on.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, then we will take five
14 minutes until they get here. Five minutes and we
15 will be back.

16 [BREAK 4:30:00-4:31:43].

17 DAVE CHOKSHI: Hi there. Are you able to hear me
18 alright?

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Very well, thank you sir.

20 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thank you Sergeant.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: We might as well go ahead and
22 to an audio check for you Dr. Easterling while we
23 wait.

24 DR. TORIAN EASTERLING: Good afternoon Sergeant
25 Hope, can you hear me?

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1 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes, thank you sir.

2 TORIAN EASTERLING: Great.

3 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Miss Harrison? Dr. Harrison?

4 MYLA HARRISON: Good afternoon. Dr. Harrison.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Good afternoon.

6 Dr. Morse?

7 MICHELLE MORSE: Hi, this is Dr. Morse.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good afternoon doc, thank you.

9 MICHELLE MORSE: Good afternoon.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Do we have Dr. Stephens on?

11 Yes, Dr. Stephens.

12 DANIEL STEPHENS: Good afternoon, hi, hello.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Dr. Mr. Jarrah?

14 SAMI JARRAH: Hi Sergeant Hope. Can you hear me?

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes, thank you. Do we have a

16 Miss Francine on? No, okay, thank you.

17 Chair Louis and Chair Levine, are we ready to

18 begin?

19 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Yes I am Sergeant. Ready to

20 go.

21 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Yes.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: All righty, just a second or

23 so and we will start. Chair Dromm? Okay, so begin

24 when you are ready.

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CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I'm ready. Sergeant, did you
have to make an announcement?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: No, we are good to go sir.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: We're good to go, okay. Good
afternoon and welcome to the City Council's sixth day
of hearings on the Mayor's Executive Budget for
Fiscal '22.

My name is Daniel Dromm and I Chair the Finance
Committee. We previously heard from the SCA and now
we will hear from the Department of Health and Mental
Hygiene. We are joined by the Committee on Health
Chaired by my colleague Council Member Mark Levine
and the Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities and
Addiction Chaired by my colleague Council Member
Farah Louis.

We are also joined now by - I will get the list
of Council Members in a moment and I will follow-up
with that. And just bear with me one minute. Okay,
so in the interest of time, I am going to forego an
opening statement but I would like to turn it over to
Chair Levine and Chair Louis for their opening
statements. Chair Levine?

CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Thank you so much Chair
Dromm. Thank you for being an incredible leader for

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2 this Committee. Really grateful for your leadership
3 and I did get the list of our colleagues who are
4 here, so I will just read them out if that makes
5 sense. We've been joined by Council Members Adams,
6 Ampry-Samuel, Ayala, Barron, Brooks-Powers, Diaz,
7 Dinowitz, Feliz, Gibson, Grodenchik, Holden,
8 Koslowitz, Riley and Rosenthal. And I hope I didn't
9 skip anybody.

10 Of course, I am thrilled to be Co-Chairing this
11 hearing with Chair Farah Louis. And again, I am Mark
12 Levine, Chair of the City Council's Health Committee.
13 During today's hearing, we will review the New York
14 City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's \$2.05
15 billion Fiscal 2022 Executive Budget. And I will
16 specifically be focusing on the \$1.25 billion
17 allocation for public health.

18 This is a real moment of optimism for New York
19 City as we have achieved so much in our vaccination
20 efforts with almost half of the city now receiving
21 its first shot. And as the number of new viral virus
22 cases continues to drop on a regular basis. And of
23 course, we are lifted by the federal stimulus plan,
24 which in part, will also be a boost to DOHMH.

1
2 But on this day in which we are marking the end
3 of most restrictions on capacity in public places
4 like restaurants and supermarkets and on this day
5 when in effect the mask mandate indoors has been
6 lifted, we also have to take a moment to observe the
7 continuing challenges and risks for the city.

8 And the flipside of our progress on vaccination
9 is that still today, 52 percent of people in New York
10 City have not gotten yet even their first vaccine
11 dose. And in some neighborhoods, it's even higher.
12 There is tremendous inequality in vaccination still.
13 In some neighborhoods, 70 percent or more of people
14 have not yet received their first dose. And while we
15 have made incredible progress in reducing the
16 transmission of the virus, it is just wonderful to
17 see that graph come down so steadily over recent
18 weeks. Still we are seeing an average over seven
19 days of about 700 new daily cases and if it hadn't
20 been for the year we have just been through, boy we
21 would think that was a very, very high number.

22 So, we are looking at this budget today with an
23 eye to the need to continue to push forward in our
24 fight against this pandemic. But we are also looking
25 at it with the long-term view and the imperative of

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1 finally tackling the health inequality, which has
2 been revealed and exacerbated over this past year.
3 We just cannot ignore it anymore. And so, we need a
4 health budget, a DOHMH budget over the next fiscal
5 year and ultimately beyond which really positions our
6 city to tackle that inequality and does things like
7 expand on the ground public health programming
8 through very successful programs like neighborhood
9 health action centers.
10

11 We need to tackle the documented levels of racial
12 discrimination in the way medical care is still
13 delivered in the city, which we see most painfully in
14 racial inequality and maternal health. But we need
15 to dramatically expand the ranks of on the ground,
16 multilingual, culturally competent public health
17 workers who are out in communities on a permanent
18 basis. We need to make sure that everybody in this
19 city, even if they don't have health insurance, even
20 if they are undocumented, that everybody has access
21 to primary care in a clinic in their neighborhood.

22 These are some of the things we will be looking
23 for in our health budget for FY 2022. I do want to
24 thank the people of the Department of Health and
25 Mental Hygiene for what they've done, what you've

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1 done over the past year. I know so many of you and I
2 am really incredibly grateful for the intensity of
3 your effort, your dedication to the city. Your
4 relentless fight on behalf of public health and
5 taking on this pandemic. I really do feel that the
6 city owes you a debt of gratitude and I am grateful
7 for your efforts and I want to thank you too
8 Commissioner Chokshi for your work, for your
9 leadership and for everything that your department
10 has done over these difficult 15 months.

12 And finally, I want to thank the incredible staff
13 of the City Council specifically these weeks leading
14 up to this hearing has done such great work. Thank
15 you Policy Analyst Anne Balkin, Committee Counsel
16 Harbani Ahuja and Sarah Liss and Finance Analyst
17 Lauren Hunt.

18 And now, I am going to pass it, I think I am
19 going to pass it onto my Co-Chair Chair Louis. So,
20 please take it away.

21 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much Chair
22 Levine. Good afternoon everyone. Thank you Chair
23 Levine and Chair Dromm for your leadership. Happy to
24 be joining you both for today's Executive Budget
25 Hearing today.

1
2 I am Council Member Farah Louis, I am the Chair
3 of the City Council's Committee on Mental Health,
4 Disabilities and Addictions. During today's hearing
5 we will review the New York City Department of Health
6 and Mental Hygiene's \$2.05 billion Fiscal 2022
7 Executive Budget. Specifically the \$620 - sorry,
8 \$647 million allocated for mental health substance
9 abuse and disabilities.

10 In the past few months, we have heard the phrase
11 light at the end of the tunnel. To give hope that
12 the pandemic is drawing a close - that is a
13 resemblance of normally that we will return to. But
14 we will have to also uncover as we emerge from the
15 tunnel and what we are doing to preemptively address
16 the impact and trauma of the last year and a half.

17 The administration has made strides to address
18 the mental health needs from COVID-19 and the long
19 lasting gaps in services for people experiencing
20 serious mental illness. However, we have a lot of
21 questions around the framework, the timeline, the
22 rollout plan and the metrics that will be used to
23 measure the new programs success.

24 Millions of dollars were added to the
25 administration in the last five years and yet New

1
2 Yorkers are still struggling to locate the mental
3 health support services that they need for themselves
4 or their loved ones. We do not see results on the
5 ground level from the large fiscal investments that
6 have made to combat the racial disparities in mental
7 health care. Ensuring the Black and Brown
8 communities have the tools needed to cope with
9 social/emotional challenges.

10 We still believe that the NYPD should not be
11 responding to calls related to mental health crisis.
12 Instead, trained mental health professionals from
13 support and connection centers should be able to
14 respond to these calls. Connect and connect with and
15 assist effected individuals and help restore and
16 provide much needed support.

17 Overdose deaths have dramatically increased in
18 the last year. We lost 1,446 New Yorkers through the
19 third quarter of 2020. Nearly the equivalent of the
20 total lives lost in 2019. We have to address the
21 opioid crisis, expand education and support to save
22 lives in our communities.

23 People with developmental disabilities cannot be
24 overlooked after spending more than a year sheltering
25 in place and unable to meet with their care teams in

1 person to have the ongoing support and integrated
2 support to use technology into their daily routine to
3 keep progressing. We need to learn more about the
4 challenges that they face and how the city plans to
5 support families who may have experienced a setback.
6

7 In this fiscal budget, we need to have a new
8 approach to addressing mental health needs and
9 substance abuse in New York City in real time. As
10 our students and working professionals return to
11 their classrooms and office spaces, after a year of
12 isolation, we need to support their transition.
13 Assess and address any long-term impact of mental
14 health concerns relating or resulting from the COVID-
15 19 pandemic.

16 Summer is not officially here and yet our city
17 has been and seen - sorry, has seen a major spike in
18 violence including hate crimes. When a violent crime
19 or a tragic loss occurs, a team of counselors need to
20 be readily available right away in the community to
21 conduct outreach efforts and lead conversations to
22 help those effected to begin to cope and process the
23 experience.

24 With the subway system resuming 24/7 service, how
25 will the city address the pre-pandemic homelessness

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2 crisis? The mental health amplifiers, mobile crisis
3 teams, neighborhood support programs and other
4 programs will be critical in our city's ongoing
5 efforts to promote universal access to mental
6 healthcare during the COVID-19 recovery.

7 The emotional and physical toll of the COVID-19
8 pandemic has effected New Yorkers in different ways.
9 Particularly immigrants, Asian American Pacific
10 Islander, Black and Brown New Yorkers who worked as
11 frontline essential workers. By recognizing that
12 there are no one size fits all solutions to this, I
13 truly believe that DOHMH is taking the necessary
14 preliminary steps towards addressing the current and
15 potential mental health crisis in innovative ways.

16 I want to ensure that we continue to work
17 together, that we listen to one another. That we
18 collaborate with the experts in the communities who
19 know which services are needed and how the city needs
20 to invest fiscally and expanding the programs that
21 have been proven to strengthen and uplift our
22 families.

23 I am looking forward to today's hearing and
24 getting more details about the plans to address these
25

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1
2 important issues and I thank DOHMH and the whole team
3 for all the work that you've done.

4 I would also like to thank my Committee Staff
5 Policy Analyst Cristy Dwyer, Committee Counsel Sarah
6 Liss and Financial Analyst Lauren Hunt for your
7 support today.

8 Now, I will return to Committee Counsel Stephanie
9 Ruiz to go over procedural matters. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Actually, let me just say
11 that next will be hearing testimony from DOHMH. We
12 are joined by Health Commissioner Dr. Dave Chokshi,
13 he is my constituent. Before DOHMH begins their
14 testimony, I am going to turn it over to our
15 Committee Counsel to over some procedural items and
16 to swear in the witnesses.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chairs. My name is
18 Stephanie Ruiz and I am Counsel to the New York
19 City's Council Committee on Finance. Before we
20 begin, I want to remind everyone that you will be on
21 mute until you are recognized to speak. At which
22 time, you will be unmuted by the Zoom host. If you
23 mute yourself after you have been unmuted, you needed
24 to be unmuted again by the host. Please be aware
25

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2 that there could be a delay in muting and unmuting,
3 so please be patient.

4 During the hearing, if Council Members would like
5 to ask questions, please use the Zoom raise hand
6 function and you will be called on to speak. We will
7 be limiting Council Member questions to five minutes
8 including responses.

9 I will now administer the affirmation to the
10 Administration witnesses including those available
11 for questions and answers.

12 Do you affirm that your testimony will be
13 truthful to the best of your knowledge, information
14 and believe Commissioner Chokshi?

15 DAVE CHOKSHI: I do.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Dr. Torian
17 Easterling?

18 TORIAN EASTERLING: Yes.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Dr. Sami Jarrah?

20 SAMI JARRAH: I do.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Dr. Myla
22 Harrison?

23 MYLA HARRISON: Yes.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Dr. Daniel
25 Stephens?

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1 DANIEL STEPHENS: I do.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. [INAUDIBLE
3 4:52:23].

4 INAUDIBLE: I do.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Commissioner
6 Schiff?

7 CORINNE SCHIFF: Yes.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Dr. Michelle
9 Morse?

10 MICHELLE MORSE: Yes.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Ms. Julie
12 Friesen?

13 JULIE FRIESEN: Yes.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and Ms. Mora
15 Kenley[SP?].

16 MORA KENLEY: Yes.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Commissioner, you
18 may begin when ready.

19 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thank you very much and good
20 afternoon Chairs Dromm, Levine and Louis, and members
21 of the committees. I am Dr. Dave Chokshi,
22 Commissioner of the New York City Department of
23 Health and Mental Hygiene. And as you heard, I am
24 joined today by Dr. Torian Easterling, First Deputy
25

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Commissioner and Chief Equity Officer and Mr. Sami
Jarrah, Deputy Commissioner for Finance, along with
my other wonderful colleagues.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the
Department's Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2022.
Since the Preliminary Budget hearing, the Department
has remained focused on our response to the COVID-19
public health emergency, particularly the city's
Vaccine for All effort.

As I have said many times before, the vaccines
are safe, effective and lifesaving, and I am thrilled
to see the progress that we have made on vaccination.
To date, over 7.6 million doses have been
administered in New York City and over 3.2 million
New Yorkers have been fully vaccinated. We are also
already seeing the positive impact they are having in
preventing serious illness. These trends are
promising and though we remain as cautious and
vigilant as ever, we know vaccines will help to
restore normalcy to life in New York City and end
this devastating pandemic.

Today, all New Yorkers 12 and older are eligible
for a COVID-19 vaccine; no appointment is necessary
at many sites citywide, and New Yorkers can find a

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2 site near them at vaccinefinder.nyc.gov or by calling
3 877-VAX-4-NYC.

4 Since this is a budget hearing, I would be remiss
5 if I did not point out that every dollar dedicated to
6 our vaccination campaign is an investment in the
7 future of New York City and shows how public health
8 and the economy are inherently intertwined.

9 As vaccine supply has increased, we have doubled
10 down to make it easier for New Yorkers to access them
11 and to share information about the vaccines, keeping
12 our laser focus on equity. We are meeting New
13 Yorkers where they are through our homebound program,
14 mobile vaccination buses or at one of the many pop-up
15 vaccination sites at community centers and faith-
16 based organizations.

17 We have located most city-run sites in the 33
18 Taskforce on Racial Inclusion and Equity
19 neighborhoods, and we are working in those
20 communities and others to address vaccine confidence
21 in the voices and languages that people need to hear.

22 Now, before I discuss the Executive Budget, I'd
23 like to provide an update on the State budget and
24 federal activities. During the Preliminary Budget
25 hearing, I expressed significant concern with the

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1
2 Governor's proposed FY22 budget, as it included
3 approximately \$50 million in annual cuts to critical
4 public health funding for New York City. I am very
5 pleased to say that the majority of those cuts were
6 not enacted.

7 Most importantly, New York City's Article 6 rate
8 was not further reduced from 20 percent to 10
9 percent, as Article 6 is a crucial source of funding
10 for public health services, from environmental health
11 to maternal health. However, the rest of the state
12 continues to receive a 36 percent Article 6 match,
13 almost double that of New York City. The State has a
14 responsibility to fund public health in New York City
15 and going forward we must continue to advocate for a
16 full restoration of New York City's Article 6 match
17 and equitable state public health funding. Allow me
18 to repeat, going forward we must continue to advocate
19 for a full restoration of New York City's Article 6
20 match and equitable state public health funding.

21 Overall, this year's state budget maintained
22 state investment in public health in New York City.
23 We thank the State legislature for their support and
24 advocacy in ensuring the proposed cuts from the
25 executive were rejected in the final budget, and we

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are grateful for the support of the Council and
public health partners across the city.

Turning now to the federal level, the American
Rescue Plan has provided billions of dollars of
relief for New York City. The plan also included
much needed funding for public health. I'd like to
thank President Biden and the New York City
Congressional Delegation for their support of the
American Rescue Plan, and for their commitment to the
health and economic recovery of New York City.

I would also like to acknowledge the enhancements
made by the Biden Administration to the Community
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Prevention Block
Grants, which provides about \$151 million in
additional funding to New York State for the next two
years. As our state partners make allocations of
this funding to localities, we encourage them to
allocate a reasonable proportion to New York City to
address the behavioral health needs of New Yorkers.
Funding for public health has been systematically cut
over the last decade, and COVID-19 has demonstrated
the need for renewed investment in the systems that
prepare and respond to public health threats.

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We look forward to our continued partnership with
the Biden Administration and urge them to continue to
prioritize public health investments, including
investments to address mental health and substance
use needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I will now turn to the FY22 Executive Budget.
The Health Department currently has approximately
7,000 employees and an operating budget of \$2.05
billion for FY22, of which \$980 million is City Tax
Levy or CTL. The Executive Budget added \$144 million
of CTL to the Department's FY22 budget. One-time
savings of \$3.5 million in CTL was taken from the
current FY21 budget only, with no impact to out-
years. The additional funding for the Health
Department in the Executive Budget will support
several new initiatives and allow us to expand other
key areas of work. This includes resources for
maternal and child health, and an additional \$1.4
million in CTL for lead poisoning prevention to
support DOHMH's expanded role in inspecting school
facilities as part of our Elevated Blood Lead Level
or EBLL investigations. And new staff who will
contact families to ensure that children who were
previously identified with an EBLL continue to have

access to services, such as health care and
developmental monitoring.

The Executive Budget also makes important
investments in behavioral health services, including
raising awareness of mental health supports at
vaccination sites. In FY22, a \$6.5 million CTL
expansion of HealingNYC will support fentanyl testing
and awareness campaigns, increased harm reduction
outreach and drop-in services, and expanded access to
medications for opioid use disorder. We are seeing
troubling trends in the opioid overdose epidemic, and
we are focusing this investment in neighborhoods and
for the communities that need it most.

And there are further investments to support New
Yorkers with serious mental illness, including \$4
million for clubhouses, and \$22.6 million for new
mobile treatment teams. I'd like to sincerely thank
the Mayor for the resources dedicated to the
Department in the Executive Plan to support public
health for all New Yorkers.

Now is precisely the time to be investing in
public health. I will say it again, now is precisely
the time to be investing in public health. And thank
you to the Speaker, Chairs and members of the

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1
2 committees for your partnership and continued
3 commitment to public health. I want to again
4 acknowledge my leadership team, who are here with me
5 today, and all the Health Department employees for
6 their tireless work and dedication to serving the
7 people of New York City. I will close with a
8 reminder that vaccines are our single greatest weapon
9 in the fight against COVID-19. If you've already
10 been vaccinated, please think about a family member,
11 friend or neighbor who may still be on the fence and
12 share your story with them. We have a chance to not
13 just turn the corner on this pandemic but to crush
14 the COVID curve.

15 And with that, I am happy to take your questions.
16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much Dr.
18 Chokshi. I am very pleased to see you and I want to
19 thank you and all the members of the Department of
20 Health, everything that you have done during this
21 pandemic. It has been quite remarkable and we are
22 very, very grateful for all of your efforts.

23 I also want to compliment you on your recent
24 commercial with all of the folks of color who are
25 asking everyone to get out and get vaccinated. I

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1 think it's a great commercial and I think I see a few
2 familiar faces here on the screen today as well.

3
4 DAVE CHOKSHI: We're -

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I'm sorry?

6 DAVE CHOKSHI: We're all here Chair Dromm. Thank
7 you so much.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Oh yeah, okay, great, great.
9 Let's talk a little bit about diabetes. The city
10 experienced a 356 percent increase in diabetes deaths
11 during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. What
12 is DOHMH's plan to address diabetes in the city? And
13 was any additional funding added in Fiscal '22 in the
14 Executive Budget for diabetes?

15 DAVE CHOKSHI: Well, thanks for this important
16 question Chair Dromm. Diabetes is something that I
17 know both as a public health professional as well as
18 a primary care doctor. It's one of the most
19 insidious diseases that we have to take on from both
20 perspectives and we do it in a range of different
21 ways.

22 You know, first, we focus on prevention as is our
23 charge you know with many of our public health
24 activities, including supporting diabetes prevention
25 programs across the city. Working with primary care

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doctors to ensure that they have the most rigorous
quality of care for patients with diabetes and making
changes to our built environments to support physical
activity, as well as healthier eating.

A lot of that work is supported through our
Center for Health Equity and Community and community
wellness led by Dr. Morse who is also our first ever
Chief Medical Officer to bridge public health and
healthcare delivery as well.

With respect to whether or not there are any
additional investments in the FY22 budget, I am going
to turn to my colleague Mr. Jarrah, who may have more
specific information than I do on that point.

SAMI JARRAH: Thank you Commissioner and thank
you Council Member for the question. The Fiscal Year
'22 budget includes investments in public health
resources in a few ways. The Action Health centers,
have key work where they work with community members
and community-based organizations focused on disease,
uh diabetes prevention. And we also have made
investments in the Fiscal Year '22 Proposed Budget
for school-based programs that focus on upstream
prevention of diabetes.

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CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is there any money in the
budget for those folks who have gained weight, in
terms of weight reduction programs or anything like
that? Folks who are dealing with diabetes.

DAVE CHOKSHI: Thanks for the important question
and you know, you are absolutely right to point it
out. This is a phenomenon. You know, during the
pandemic, the compounding effects of stress, you know
lower rates of physical activity and in some cases,
you know unhealthy eating have led to weight gain you
know over the course of the pandemic.

I believe I am accurate in stating that there are
no new resources specifically you know for you know
for those phenomenon but the programs that I have
mentioned and that Mr. Jarrah pointed out, would be
particularly well tailored to address the needs of
New Yorkers who have gained weight over the pandemic.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, I ask almost because
first of all concerns with diabetes and weight gain
and getting folks out to exercise more and eat
properly but I do think it is phenomenon that we will
see more of due to the pandemic. So, I hope that we
can focus in on that even more as we move down the
road.

1
2 In March, the CDC announced a plan to invest
3 \$2.25 billion over two years to address COVID-19
4 related health disparities and advance health equity
5 among underserved communities. Did DOHMH receive any
6 of this funding and if so, how does the agency plan
7 to use this grant?

8 DAVE CHOKSHI: Yes, thank you so much. I will
9 start briefly. I will turn to Dr. Easterling as well
10 as Mr. Jarrah to fill in a couple of the details
11 here. But just to state briefly, yes, we were
12 excited by this announcement. It is very well
13 aligned with the directions of our department that
14 you know started before the pandemic but have been a
15 real focus in our COVID response as well. And so,
16 these resources will fuel the work that has already
17 been started and allow us to enhance it further. But
18 I will turn to Dr. Easterling and then Mr. Jarrah to
19 say a bit more.

20 TORIAN EASTERLING: Thank you Commissioner and
21 thank you so much Chair Dromm. So, you are
22 absolutely right. We are looking at ways that we can
23 continue to expand our work to support community-
24 based and faith-based organizations to support our
25

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1 outreach engagement in neighborhoods that have been
2 disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

3
4 And so, we are building on the work that we have
5 been doing during this pandemic. We have already
6 been supporting a number of organizations through our
7 colleagues in Health + Hospital in test and trace to
8 really support and have CBO's on the ground. We are
9 now bringing on hundreds of more organizations to
10 really support our vaccine outreach engagement
11 through a mix of funding, both from the American
12 Rescue Plan and from foundations as well.

13 And so, we really look forward to really getting
14 this work off the ground particularly over the summer
15 as we are really pushing on our message to get those
16 vaccines.

17 SAMI JARRAH: And finally, I will just add to Dr.
18 Easterling's point. Thank you Chair Dromm for the
19 question. This is very late breaking news. We just
20 received the beginnings of the information on Friday
21 afternoon and look forward to learning more over the
22 coming weeks as we start to get more details about
23 what this funding looks like and what's permissible.

24
25

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1 We are really looking forward to the federal
2 governments investment in these public health
3 workforce.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you very much for
6 that as well. Let me talk a little bit about ending
7 the pandemic. Excuse me, ending the epidemic or ETE.
8 The States ETE Initiative is an action plan to end
9 the HIV epidemic with targets of reducing the
10 estimated number of annual new HIV infections from
11 3,000 to 750. Was the city on target to meeting this
12 metric in 2020?

13 DAVE CHOKSHI: Yes, we were on target for meeting
14 that metric in 2020 and we will be happy to follow-up
15 on the specific numbers of how that trajectory has
16 changed in recent years.

17 But it is you know critically an important part
18 of our planning around taking care of people who are
19 living with HIV and AIDs and I am very proud of the
20 work that the Health Department has done over the
21 last several years in collaboration with our state
22 colleagues on the ETE plan.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Did COVID effect the work
24 that's going on around ETE?

25

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2 DAVE CHOKSHI: Yes, you know as you are well
3 aware, COVID has affected you know all of our work.
4 Very little was spared from the effects of the
5 pandemic. But you know, I will all say for our work
6 in taking care of HIV patients, tuberculosis
7 patients, our sexual health clinics, almost all of
8 those programs were able to pivot in many cases, very
9 rapidly to be able to continue serving the patients
10 and the public who know whom we serve. For example,
11 shifting to telehealth modalities for care when it
12 was needed and ensuring that we were delivering
13 medications in alternative ways and using you know
14 virtual modes of care to be able to continue the
15 services that we have been offering.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay and are there any
17 programs in place to increase - I just want to -
18 okay. Are there any programs in place to increase
19 access to contraceptives, PEP and PREP as we go into
20 the summer with less restrictions?

21 DAVE CHOKSHI: Yes, there are. You know the
22 focus on PEP and PREP as you know sort of the broader
23 approach to taking care of patients with HIV or
24 people who are at risk of HIV and other sexually
25 transmitted infections. That is a cornerstone of it.

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1 I don't have details at my fingertips with respect to
2 the amount of resources dedicated to that but our
3 team will be happy to follow up with you on it.
4 Thanks for asking about these very important health
5 issues that are emblematic of what we'll have to do
6 as we emerge from COVID response.
7

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, now a little bit about
9 mental health for all. DOHMH has made significant
10 investments in Fiscal '21 and the outyears to
11 increase access to mental health. This includes
12 launching the Connect Initiatives, which will serve
13 clients with serious mental issues and mental health
14 issues including using integrated mobile and brick
15 and mortar and treatments. What brick and mortar -
16 what metrics will be used to determine the success of
17 the Connect Initiative in the mental health for all
18 programs.

19 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thank you so much for the
20 question. I will start and turn to Dr. Harrison to
21 elaborate for us. But briefly, you know I will say,
22 allow me to just put it into the perspective of all
23 of the programs that we have to take care of patients
24 with serious mental illness. We have built a
25 continuum over the last several years ranging from

1
2 you know services like NYC Well that are a front door
3 you know for more intensive services all the way to
4 our intensive mobile treatment teams, which offer
5 very high touch, very dedicated linkages of health
6 and social services to take care of some of the most
7 marginalized people whom we care for.

8 Part of the task of building out that spectrum
9 has been making sure that we are right sizing
10 interventions in terms of the intensity of services
11 to the needs of the patients that we are serving and
12 Connect was conceptualized really to fill a gap in
13 that respect where perhaps someone didn't need such
14 intensive services as what we would provide in the
15 IMT's, the Intensive Mobile Treatment teams. But
16 needed a little bit more than what they would be able
17 to get at one of the behavioral health clinics.

18 So, with that introduction, I will turn it to Dr.
19 Harrison with respect to the metric, the performance
20 metrics.

21 MYLA HARRISON: Great, yeah, thank you so much
22 and thank you so much Chair Dromm for that question
23 about additional services that we are creating to
24 meet the needs of New Yorkers who have more extensive
25 mental health needs.

1
2 And you asked specifically about the program that
3 we are calling Connect, which stands for continuous
4 engagement between community and clinic treatment.

5 And we are still in the process of formulating what
6 the program will look like and talking with providers
7 who will be able to do this service.

8 It will be both a step up from clinic services
9 for folks as well as a step down for more intensive
10 mobile treatment services. So, we are in the midst
11 of designing what the service will look like as well
12 as the metrics that we will want to monitor. And
13 again, it's about connections and engagement. So,
14 it's likely we are going to be following those types
15 of measures as we go along.

16 We are also, we have other programs we are adding
17 and again, we really are hoping to engage and connect
18 people with serious mental illness to the services
19 and more services than we've had before.

20 DAVE CHOKSHI: Chair, you are muted.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Why is it
22 necessary to have Connect when we already have
23 Thrive?

24 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thanks, that's an important
25 question. While this is, you know this is all being

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1 coordinated in that continuum, you know that spectrum
2 of services that I described and you know, as with so
3 much that we are doing in the spirit of behavioral
4 health more generally, we coordinate with Thrive now
5 that Mayor's Office of Community Mental Health on
6 this initiative and many others.
7

8 And I will just add to Dr. Harrison's good answer
9 on the metrics. It's a - Connect in particular is an
10 opportunity for us to ensure that we are engaging
11 with the people that we serve but also the providers
12 who are most experienced in caring for those patients
13 in building you know that experience into what are
14 meaningful metrics for the program.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, let me go onto LGBTQ
16 youth. There are studies that have indicated that
17 COVID-19 impacts the mental health and wellbeing of
18 youth, particularly among the LGBTQ and transgender
19 or nonbinary youth. Has DOHMH seen an increase in
20 the need for mental health services among this
21 population and if so, in what ways is the city
22 supporting this community?

23 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thanks for the important question.
24 I don't have any data on that at my fingertips. So,
25 I will turn to Dr. Harrison to see if she does but

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2 what I will say is that you know this is a particular
3 area where we have to again, think about the
4 reverberating effects of the pandemic. Not just you
5 know the fact that many kids have not been going to
6 in-person school with the services you know that that
7 entails but also the fact that uhm, you know social
8 isolation has worsened a preexisting problem.

9 So, you are certainly right to ask the question
10 and I know that it has been an area of focus for us
11 but we will see if Dr. Harrison has more data.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And Dr. Chokshi, just before
13 we go onto Dr. Harrison. You mentioned data. Are
14 you collecting data on LGBT folks in general and
15 youth specifically?

16 DAVE CHOKSHI: I believe so. Let me see if Dr.
17 Harrison has more on that.

18 MYLA HARRISON: Thank you so much for the
19 question. From the perspective of youth and LGBTQ,
20 we have an RFP out right now for a service model for
21 youth prevention for suicide as well as for youth
22 with LGBTQ as you are pointing to a very high risk
23 group of individuals. With information that we have
24 from Youth Risk YRBS, Youth Risk Behavioral
25 Surveillance Surveys. I don't have data at my

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2 fingertips for now or specifically related to COVID
3 but it is something that we are you know absolutely
4 concerned about and are working with providers as
5 well on this really important issue.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well, Dr. Harrison, one of
7 the main reasons I ran for office was to really push
8 agencies into collecting that data. And Dr. Chokshi
9 as well, are you actually collecting data for those
10 people who you come in contact with about their
11 gender identity or their sexual orientation? You
12 know you are both scientists and you know the
13 importance of data and uhm, you know I just want to
14 be sure that you are actually collecting that in a
15 voluntary way so that we can begin to really know who
16 that population is.

17 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thank you. I very much appreciate
18 that question and the answer is yes. We are
19 collecting data on sexual orientation and gender
20 identity systematically. You know, across programs,
21 which is I think the point of your question. Not
22 just talking about mental health needs but you know
23 but for essentially any programmatic service that we
24 offer as well as our broader health surveillance and
25 disease surveillance activities.

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1 So, that – the acronym the [INAUDIBLE 5:19:32],
2
3 you know the [INAUDIBLE 5:19:33] approach is
4 something that has been refined over the last several
5 years at the Health Department and we continue to
6 figure out the best ways to collect that data on a
7 voluntary basis and incorporate it into all our
8 systematic survey tools.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And that data has been
10 collected? Is that something that you can share with
11 us? Because I certainly would like to see numbers.

12 DAVE CHOKSHI: Absolutely. If I may ask, could
13 you give us a little bit more in terms of what it is
14 that you are looking for? Sexual orientation and
15 gender identity data can be associated with a number
16 of different areas, data sets, programs. So, please
17 guide us a bit more and we can speak to what we can
18 here and follow up on the rest.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Sure, I mean, you know one of
20 the things that I've learned having been an activist
21 in the LGBTQ community for many years is how
22 important it is to be out to your doctor and to be
23 able to have confidence that the doctor will treat
24 you appropriately and with respect as well.

1
2 So, you know upon entry into some hospitals,
3 specifically I went to a hospital in Western Nassau
4 County and they hand you a sheet that says, how do
5 you describe yourself? Asian, you know Latino,
6 Black, etc., so forth and so on and included in that
7 list is sexual orientation, gender identity and an
8 opportunity to say and the whole form is voluntary by
9 the way.

10 To say this is how I identify, this is how I want
11 to be treated. And even at NYU Langone, questions
12 about do you have sex with men or do you have sex
13 with women? Things that I think doctors should know
14 eventually but also, data that would give us
15 information about specifically which parts of the
16 community or who in the community it is that we are
17 targeting or providing programming for. So, that's
18 basically what it is that I am looking for. Even
19 within the Department of Education and I actually
20 passed legislation requiring the social service
21 agencies to begin to collect that data.

22 It hasn't been as successful as I would like to
23 have seen it be and I am pushing the Department of
24 Operations on that but certainly for health concerns,

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1
2 it should be definitely part of the data that you are
3 collecting.

4 DAVE CHOKSHI: I agree and thank you for
5 clarifying and for your advocacy on these efforts. I
6 am going to turn to Dr. Easterling who may be able to
7 say a bit more about our data collection in this
8 domain.

9 TORIAN EASTERLING: I do thank Commissioner and
10 thank you so much for raising this critical issue
11 Chair Dromm.

12 I think the way that I would sort of lay this
13 out, we certainly are looking at all of the ways in
14 which we capture our information through our clinical
15 services. And so, as you have already outlined,
16 those are certainly ways, particularly through our
17 sexual health clinic because it does inform the way
18 that we are caring for our patients. And so, we know
19 that our physicians are really thinking
20 intentionally, making sure that we are not only
21 looking at race ethnicity but also gender orientation
22 as the Commissioner has mentioned.

23 We have begun to institutionalize this into some
24 of our other programmatic ways; place-based work and
25 more systematically citywide. But I think what you

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2 are also getting at is how are we informing and
3 influencing sort of the systems more broadly? Our
4 healthcare systems, the partners that we work with
5 and we have certainly developed guidance over the
6 last couple of years to really expand the way that we
7 capture race ethnicity, including ancestry and gender
8 orientation. And we are going to continue to do this
9 work going forward and thinking about ways that we
10 can make sure that the standard minimum is raised to
11 make sure that we are capturing these important
12 metrics.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And I just would like to -
14 before I turn it over to my colleagues, point to
15 Health + Hospitals, which has also been doing that
16 partially because of our advocacy in that direction.
17 But has been making strides in that direction as
18 well.

19 Okay, thank you. I am going to now turn it over
20 to Council - to Mark Levine, to Chair Levine.

21 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Thank you so much Chair
22 Dromm. Thank you for that excellent line of
23 questioning. I want to note that we have been joined
24 by some additional colleagues. Council Members Van
25

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2 Bramer, Diaz, Sr., Gjonaj, Menchaca, Powers and
3 Majority Leader Cumbo.

4 Commissioner Chokshi, we are really grateful that
5 the federal government has provided additional money
6 through the stimulus package and of course, some of
7 this will meet really compelling public health needs,
8 we certainly hope. I hope it will be a way to shore
9 up our staffing for critical public health functions
10 that I know are essential as we are at the later
11 stage of this pandemic and preparing for the longer
12 term fights that I mentioned in my opening statement.
13 But staffing needs in our public health lab and
14 epidemiology, community health workers, uhm, you know
15 the context is that, not unique to New York City but
16 this country has been underfunding public health for
17 a really long time and unfortunately that was all too
18 clear over the past year and I hope that the stimulus
19 money and I think the broader commitment is a way to
20 correct that and to build out amazing public health
21 systems for the long term.

22 Can you talk about what your needs are? What you
23 might hope that extra federal money might be able to
24 help support within the department?

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2 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thank you so much Chair Levine and
3 you said it very well. With respect to the why of
4 why we need additional investment in public health
5 at this critical time.

6 It's both to meet the needs of the here and now
7 but also to prepare for the next pandemic, and also
8 for us to be able to address all of the slower moving
9 health disasters between now and then. And this is
10 our opportunity to it because public health is in a
11 spotlight in a way that is unique. And unfortunately
12 or perhaps fortunately relatively rare you know in
13 this country. And so, it's a chance for us to
14 leverage it.

15 With respect to you know where that funding
16 should be channeled, I think there are some very good
17 steps that have been taken by the federal
18 administration already. And many of them augment the
19 fundamental investments that Mayor de Blasio and his
20 administration have made over the last several years
21 in public health. But you know the core areas that
22 we do need to shore up include investments in
23 addressing behavioral health needs as we have
24 discussed briefly and making sure that our
25 epidemiology services, that includes disease

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2 surveillance, as well as the ways that we respond to
3 emerging disease threats. You mentioned the public
4 health laboratory, which I very much agree with as
5 well. And then thinking about a community-based
6 workforce, which we have seen time and again over the
7 past year has been so needed and so turned to.

8 Whether it was improving access to COVID-19 testing
9 or for all of the efforts that we have had with our
10 COVID vaccination campaign.

11 So, those are the key domains that I hope there
12 will even more investment in, in the coming months.

13 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Well, we hope so to. Please
14 keep us posted on all of that. Along those lines,
15 the Mayor mentioned when I guess when you rolled out
16 the Executive Budget that the test and trace corp.
17 which has now grown to be a large and really
18 important workforce, would be transitioned into a
19 public health corp., which could really be engaged in
20 some of the long-term fights that you and I have both
21 been mentioning here.

22 But what strikes me as an excellent plan because
23 we have this corp. of people who have now gotten real
24 experience in public health and who want to keep
25 their talents on this task.

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1
2 I guess there is \$50 million in the budget for
3 that workforce for FY2022, if I had that number
4 right. I just wanted to get a sense whether that's
5 enough to at least extend this workforce through the
6 end of FY 2022 or whether that amount might force
7 cutbacks in that workforce.

8 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thanks, this is an important
9 question as well and first, let me just say I am also
10 very excited about you know the prospects of a public
11 health corp. Something that is neighborhood based,
12 that addresses all of the needs that you know that we
13 have just talked about. And it will require
14 coordination you know across city government, just as
15 we've done over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.
16 And we will have to continue doing that you know
17 across healthcare partners as well as leveraging you
18 know the resources and the strengths that the Health
19 Department brings to bear for all of those things.

20 So, the money that was included in the Executive
21 Budget is a strong start and we are looking to what I
22 think of as you know brave and blend additional
23 sources of funding again, particularly from the
24 federal government as it becomes available to ensure
25

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2 that the resources are matched to the needs that we
3 have to respond to for New Yorkers.

4 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: So, just to clarify, until
5 now test and trace for reasons that we don't have to
6 litigate it here was managed under Health +
7 Hospitals. But I got to imagine that a public health
8 corp. as a long-term permanent fixture of our public
9 health strategy for the city, would be under the
10 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Is that
11 clearly established and if so, when might that
12 transition happen?

13 DAVE CHOKSHI: There are active discussions about
14 how a public health corp., you know sort of the
15 future state for this neighborhood-based approach
16 that I have been describing, exactly how it will be
17 organized. But I do want to point out, you know sort
18 of from the perspective of a community member. From
19 someone who lives in a neighborhood who has health
20 needs, they are looking for as you well know, you
21 know coordination across not just all aspects of city
22 government but also, the institutions you know that
23 they trust and who have roots in their communities,
24 particularly community-based organizations and faith
25 based organizations.

1
2 So, that's all to say, you know I think the
3 future state of this remains to be worked out in more
4 granular detail but the operating principles will be
5 yes, the health department plays an extremely
6 important role, given the expertise that we have.
7 Given what we are already doing in communities but it
8 will have to span many different aspects and get even
9 further into neighborhoods and in partnership with
10 community-based organizations.

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: And look, you have worked in
12 both Health + Hospitals and obviously now DOHMH. You
13 love both agencies, I love both agencies. They have
14 critical roles. The New York City Department of
15 Health was built to do exactly the kind of work that
16 I imagined the public health corp. would do. It's
17 built to do prevention, to do education, to have deep
18 cultural sensitivity. To work with the diverse
19 communities of this city. I mean, that's kind of the
20 essence of public health work and that is quite
21 clearly a core competency of DOHMH. So, it doesn't
22 sound like there is any imminent action on this, so I
23 guess we don't have to decide it now but just putting
24 the record that I really believe that falls squarely
25 in the wheel house of DOHMH.

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1 I just want to ask about that.

2 DAVE CHOKSHI: [INAUDIBLE 5:32:09].

3 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Okay, thank you. In terms
4 of the Neighborhood Health Action Centers, which I
5 really believe and for those who don't know, these
6 are three wonderful on the ground physical facilities
7 the Department of Health has and there is one in East
8 Harlem, one in the central Bronx and one in
9 Brownville. I don't know if Council Member Ampry-
10 Samuel is still on but I know she knows as well in
11 her district. And this is actually doing everything
12 that I just mentioned. The education, community
13 partnerships, tons of cultural competency prevention
14 and it was necessary pre-pandemic but now, I mean,
15 this has to be the kind of thing we go big on and in
16 my opinion is that it needs to be in a lot more than
17 three neighborhoods. Because there are a lot more
18 than three neighborhoods that were hit very, very
19 hard by this pandemic and we have a lot of work to
20 close equity gaps.

21 Could you just tell us whether the three centers
22 that already exist are now up and running again in
23 their traditional work. Obviously in the pandemic,
24 that got disrupted for understandable reasons. And
25

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2 whether there is any plan to grow this network,
3 particularly in light of the recent exposure of the
4 terrible inequity in health in the city?

5 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thank you so much for this
6 important question as well and we certainly agree on
7 the fundamental importance of neighborhood-based
8 approaches to public health and the neighborhood
9 health action centers are emblematic of that.

10 They are in so many ways you know the backbone of
11 public health infrastructure in the communities that
12 they are located in. At this time, there are no
13 plans to expand you know beyond those three sites at
14 this moment but I think you're absolutely right to
15 point out that we have to as we think about the
16 broader base neighborhood oriented approach, how the
17 model that is encapsulated in neighborhood health
18 action centers can be further expanded.

19 And with respect to the current operations and I
20 will ask my colleague Dr. Morse if she wants to
21 elaborate on this but the way that I would frame it
22 is maybe just a slightly different way than you did
23 Chair Levine, which is that the operations were not
24 so much disrupted but they did have to adjust to the
25 reality of the pandemic and you know what that meant

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1
2 is that for example, we worked with community-based
3 organizations to improve access to testing around one
4 of our neighborhood health action centers.

5 Another one in east Harlem was you know home-
6 based for our vaccination efforts in the
7 neighborhood. And so, time and again, they were able
8 to step up to take on those pressing needs, which is
9 what we should rely upon them to do during a public
10 health emergency. And yes, we are looking forward to
11 the day when we can get back to doing some of the
12 other things that those action centers are
13 responsible for as well.

14 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Yes and they played a
15 critical role over the past year or plus and also, I
16 think Council Member Ayala was on or still is on. Of
17 course, she has the wonderful East Harlem Center
18 there and I believe the Bronx site is located in the
19 district of Council Member Feliz. So, we have people
20 here who can testify to the power of it.

21 Finally, just very quick while I have you here
22 Commissioner, a couple questions on our current
23 urgent fight on vaccination. Could you give us
24 approximately an estimate on how many first dose
25

1 vaccines we are getting weekly now and what that
2 would compare to from our peak a month or so ago?

3
4 DAVE CHOKSHI: Good question Chair Levine. I
5 don't have those numbers at my fingertips. You know
6 perhaps our staff can quickly get them so that we can
7 turn them around to you and the rest of the Council
8 Members. They are significantly lower than they were
9 a month ago, which is in some ways not a surprise.
10 You know we have fewer people who you know who are
11 eligible for a vaccination, as the campaign has
12 proceeded.

13 But in other ways, sort of lays bear the task
14 that we have ahead of us. Many of the people who are
15 early adopters or who are most eager to get
16 vaccinated have been and so, the next phase of our
17 vaccination campaign has to focus on all of the other
18 people and communities who will most benefit from the
19 protection of vaccination. And we have been thinking
20 about this around two major pillars convenience and
21 conversations. Where convenience is about doing
22 everything we possibly can to even further lower
23 access barriers to vaccination.

24 That's why we were so quick to expand access to
25 vaccination sites as walk-ins and are doing a huge

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2 number of mobile efforts and pop up sites and we'll
3 look for other ways to continue to make it as
4 convenient as possible for people to get vaccinated.

5 And then, with respect to conversations, this has
6 really been about partnering with others. Clinicians
7 and nontraditional healers in communities, so that
8 they have conversations with their own patients and
9 then with community-based organizations and faith
10 leaders who are also critically important voices to
11 engender trust in the vaccine and vaccination.

12 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Yes, look, I just don't want
13 in our exuberance that how far we have come on
14 vaccination for us to forget that still, citywide, 52
15 percent of New Yorkers have not been vaccinated. And
16 we can't leave them behind. I know you know that and
17 I know you don't want to leave them behind but I feel
18 this has dropped out of the public consciousness to
19 some extent and in some of our districts, it's a lot
20 more than 50 percent who haven't been vaccinated and
21 the era of waiting for people to come into massive
22 hubs. That's over, that's done. It's got to be all
23 about getting to people where they live, where they
24 worship, where they work, on their block, in their

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2 homes, all of that. And you articulated some of the
3 ways that the city is trying to do that.

4 I would argue we need to do much more in all
5 those fronts but it's a big pivot. And just one
6 specific question on a piece of that. One of kind of
7 mobile vaccination is actually literally mobile on a
8 bus or like a minivan and you know that's how full,
9 because you can park in front of a big building
10 complex where the vaccination rate has been really
11 low. But also, it almost like creates an event.
12 It's like wow, the pink bus is here. It's going to
13 be here for the next three days. We are going to
14 knock all the doors in this big NYCHA development or
15 whatever and it almost like creates excitement.

16 It's not the only solution, there is a lot of
17 others that we need but how many of those pink buses
18 do we have at this point?

19 DAVE CHOKSHI: Uhm, that's a good question Chair
20 Levine. I believe we have three of the buses
21 themselves but we have over 20 mobile vans that are
22 also branded. You know that can create some of that
23 same buzz that you are talking about and I
24 wholeheartedly agree. You know, it's both about the
25 convenience and the narrative of it. If you see it,

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2 you know if we place them in areas where there is
3 high foot traffic, it just makes it easy to get
4 vaccinated rather than having to you know formulate a
5 plan when someone is very busy between multiple jobs
6 and taking care of their family.

7 So, there is the convenience aspect of it but
8 then there is also the sort of you know the snowball
9 effect. One person gets vaccinated there, there go
10 back to their apartment building and they tell their
11 neighbors and so, we have been leveraging that as
12 well.

13 So, I believe I have the numbers right but our
14 team can follow up if I'm - if anything, I may be
15 underestimating the number but I believe we are at
16 about 23, maybe more.

17 CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Look, I can think of three
18 housing developments in my district alone where I
19 would love to have one of those things parked today.
20 So, I think like citywide, we could really use more
21 of them. But I thank you for all your answers and
22 for everything you are doing and I thank Chair Dromm
23 for giving me a little bit of extra time. I am going
24 to wrap up here but thank you so much and I guess
25 I'll pass it off to my colleague Chair Farah Louis.

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1
2 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much Chair
3 Levine. Good afternoon. The city recently launched
4 a comprehensive effort to promote universal access to
5 mental health care during the COVID-19 recovery. So,
6 I just have some quick questions and then I will pass
7 it over to my colleagues.

8 I wanted to talk really quickly about the mobile
9 treatment teams. I wanted to know, have the
10 locations of where the new mobile treatment teams
11 been determined?

12 DAVE CHOKSHI: I will start on this and I will
13 turn to Dr. Harrison. There are you know a number of
14 providers whom we work with in terms of contracting
15 for those mobile treatment teams. And so, I think
16 that you know the brief answer is that we will
17 continue to partner with those existing providers who
18 are able to expand capacity.

19 But then, as you are well aware Chair Louis, you
20 know the physical location of the teams is mobile.
21 We go to where patients are and so, you know we will
22 go to where the need is in that respect. But Dr.
23 Harrison can perhaps elaborate on that.

24 MYLA HARRISON: Yeah, thank you so much for the
25 question. So, we have many kinds of mobile treatment

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1 teams already existing in the city. Over 70 at this
2 point. They are throughout the city. The newer
3 intensive mobile treatment teams are also citywide,
4 so an agency might be in the Bronx, their programs
5 might predominantly serve people in the Bronx but if
6 an individual that is on their team happens to move
7 to Brooklyn, they will continue to serve that
8 individual where ever that person is.
9

10 So, the teams are not necessarily neighborhood
11 specific. So, we already have 11 teams. Again, they
12 are citywide services. We will be expanding 25 more
13 intensive mobile treatment teams. They will be where
14 we need them to be most and if you have neighborhood
15 of concern that you would want to make sure we are
16 focusing on that we are not already aware of, we are
17 happy to hear from you about that.

18 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much Dr.
19 Harrison. So, just a quick question just to
20 piggyback off of that. Has DOHMH thought about
21 deploying them to high needs neighborhoods for the
22 increase that the Mayor just made for these mobile
23 teams? Particularly targeted teams and targeted
24 neighborhoods around the city.
25

1
2 MYLA HARRISON: So, do you want to take that
3 Commissioner?

4 DAVE CHOKSHI: No, please go ahead Dr. Harrison.

5 MYLA HARRISON: So, I think we have lots of
6 services that are also targeted. So, intensive
7 mobile treatment is for somebody who is disconnected
8 from care with serious mental illness or substance
9 use disorders and they are coming to us for a higher
10 level of specialty care. And that's what those
11 intensive mobile treatment teams are for. We have
12 other services, we have our health engagement and
13 assessment teams for instance that are able to focus
14 more at a neighborhood level, where they can do
15 outreach and engagement within communities. And we
16 are doing that right now. We have been focused in
17 communities of highest need, whether it's eastern
18 central Harlem. Whether it is Washington Heights,
19 whether it is Midtown. Those are some of the
20 neighborhoods that we go. We go to neighborhoods in
21 Brooklyn as well and so, we have other means to do
22 some of the outreach.

23 We have support and connection centers up in
24 Harlem at this point. We have service programs for
25 instance in a lot of the same neighborhoods who have

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2 outreach that we are expanding in some of these
3 neighborhoods as well.

4 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I think if that information
5 is communicated to the diverse communities, they will
6 know that they don't need particularly the mobile
7 intensive teams, as opposed to these programs that
8 you guys have. So, thank you for sharing that and I
9 hope we can all work together collaboratively to make
10 sure that information goes out.

11 So, I just want to quickly shift to the mental
12 health amplifiers. How many mental health amplifiers
13 will be hired in the new Fiscal Budget?

14 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thank you for that important
15 question and if you will allow me, I will start just
16 by saying a little bit about the mental health
17 amplifiers, which you are probably aware of but this
18 is a you know, a really exciting initiative that
19 leverages both the physical infrastructure that we
20 have you know through our vaccination sites. With
21 this really unique moment that we're in, in terms of
22 people you know emerging from the grief and stress
23 and trauma of the past year and giving us an
24 opportunity to really you know connect people with
25 services.

1
2 So, the goal of the mental health amplifier
3 program is to leverage that moment. You know I can
4 just tell you my own personal experience at the
5 vaccination sites where I have done the clinical
6 shift getting to sit next to someone during their 15
7 minute observation window. You know, after they have
8 gotten their vaccination, it is a time of reflection
9 you know a time where they are more receptive to a
10 conversation than they might be otherwise and so, we
11 really wanted to leverage that.

12 So, with respect to your question about the
13 number of staff, that is not something that I have at
14 my fingertips but let me see if Dr. Harrison does.

15 MYLA HARRISON: Great, thank you so much for
16 elaborating on the program. Again, the Mental Health
17 Amplifier program is having staff resources like
18 community health workers in the city run vaccine
19 sites. And it's a very recently launched program and
20 we'll be expanding further to some of the Health +
21 Hospital sites. At this point, I don't have staffing
22 numbers but I can tell you that in the couple of
23 weeks of operations, we've had over 20,000 encounters
24 with individuals so far.

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1
2 And we are handing out information about NYC
3 Well. Our call, text and chat line, which is a 24/7
4 crisis line as well. We are giving information about
5 New York Project Hope, which is a crisis counseling
6 line and I can offer that phone number if folks want
7 it, it's 844-863-9314. Again for anybody to access
8 crisis counseling in New York City and we are also
9 giving information out about access to healthcare
10 through NYC Care if folks need help with – because
11 they have trouble with insurance and need help there.
12 So, that's what the teams have been doing so far.

13 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you for that Dr.
14 Harrison. I just wanted to know who is training the
15 mental health amplifiers? What does the training
16 comprise of and how are we measuring success?

17 DAVE CHOKSHI: Go ahead Dr. Harrison.

18 MYLA HARRISON: So, we have folks from the
19 division of Mental Hygiene that are training the team
20 members in what they need to know in terms of
21 encountering folks and we have supervisors for backup
22 if anything, if they have questions along the way.
23 The vaccine sites are responsible for the operations.

24 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Got it. Thank you for that.
25 DOHMH supports programs in our local DOE schools. I

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2 wanted to know if you all can share what these
3 programs are called and what services they provide
4 and how much funding is in the FY22 Executive Budget
5 for those programs?

6 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thanks Chair Louis for the
7 important question. Do you mean specifically what
8 DOHMH supports in schools related to mental health?

9 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Yes, sorry about that.

10 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thank you for clarifying. No
11 problem. Yes, there are a range of different you
12 know services and supports for students. Everything
13 from some of the ways that we support mental health
14 of students through the school nurses that DOHMH
15 provides to you know more specifically dedicated
16 mental health services. So, to say a little bit
17 more, I will turn to Dr. Stephens, our Deputy
18 Commissioner of Family and Child Health.

19 DANIEL STEPHENS: Thank you Commissioner, thank
20 you Chair for that important question. Yes, as you
21 have alluded to, we are really excited about our
22 schools and the return to schools but there are some
23 unprecedented challenges that our students have
24 experienced in this past year.

1
2 So, to the Commissioners good point, we support
3 the school community overall. Be that from our
4 partners through nursing, capacity building with
5 professionals engagement with parents because it
6 takes all of that to try to support the school
7 community.

8 Specifically, we have a school mental health
9 specialist program. These are folks in school
10 communities who support work in the school in both
11 capacity building, in direct groups. The engagement
12 we talked about as well, as well as making sure that
13 we connect expertise and make sure that folks get
14 higher levels of care and connected to those things.

15 But that's you know one piece of an overall
16 offering to the student community and the overall
17 school community. We also coordinate very closely
18 with our colleagues at DOE to make sure that our
19 programs align with and support their efforts as
20 well. Because as mentioned, it takes a lot to
21 support school communities.

22 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: It literally takes a village.

23 DANIEL STEPHENS: It does.

24 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Right, does the mental health
25 specialist, is that particular individual responsible

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2 to track the screenings of these students and the
3 referral process?

4 DANIEL STEPHENS: So, uhm, we do track some of
5 the supports that we offer in terms of the numbers
6 that are engaged in groups but for some of the data
7 and the tracking, we rely on our colleagues at DOE to
8 make sure we are tracking connections and referrals
9 outside. But we are building out our metrics and our
10 data system in partnership with DOE.

11 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Got it, thank you so much for
12 that. And just to add on, as we continue to address
13 the opioid crisis and overdose deaths particularly
14 during this pandemic. In the FY22 Preliminary
15 Budget, DOHMH increased funding for the number
16 naloxone kits. So, we just wanted to know how has
17 the additional funding impacted the rate of overdose
18 deaths?

19 DAVE CHOKSHI: Well thanks for this important
20 question as well and look, you know we have to be
21 very sober and serious about the fact that the opioid
22 epidemic is of great concern, with respect to how it
23 is effecting New Yorkers and the overdose data from
24 2020. As you pointed out in your opening remarks in
25

1 the first three quarters is significantly increased
2 compared to in prior years.

3
4 This is you know paralleling the national trend
5 with respect to opioid overdose deaths increasing and
6 much of it is driven by the fact that fentanyl is
7 more prevalent in the drug supply. And that means
8 that overdoses are unfortunately more likely to
9 occur. The positive news and what we have to
10 continue to be dedicated to is, we do have treatments
11 that work, so we are further expanding our access to
12 medication assisted treatment, particularly
13 buprenorphine programs and lowering access barriers
14 to those programs.

15 We are making sure that people are aware of the
16 presence of fentanyl in the drug supply, so we have a
17 public awareness campaign around fentanyl and we are
18 expanding the distributing of fentanyl test strips as
19 well. And then the final piece is what you are
20 mentioning which is further expanding on the ways in
21 which we have distributed naloxone. And this is
22 really a – you know something that has to be
23 pervasive. So, we partnered with pharmacies, with
24 healthcare providers. We have done a naloxone kit
25 distribution through our heat teams, that you heard

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1 about earlier. The syringe service providers that we
2 partner with also focus on naloxone kit distribution
3 as well. So, we are going to leverage every single
4 channel that we have to you know further ensure that
5 people have ready access to naloxone.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you Commissioner and you
8 mentioned that there were initiatives that's
9 happening right now and in the works to combat
10 overdose and deaths for the rest of fiscal year and I
11 wanted to know if you can share some of those
12 initiatives that will be implemented in Fiscal Year
13 '22?

14 DAVE CHOKSHI: Certainly, I alluded to some of
15 them, you know particularly around what we are doing
16 with fentanyl. You know some of the investments that
17 you have asked about with respect to more intensive
18 treatment options. So, both connect and the
19 intensive mobile treatment teams will address
20 substance use disorders in addition to other
21 behavioral health issues. So, we have covered those
22 major domains and beyond that, we've talked about
23 naloxone as well. Those are the major things that
24 are coming to mind for me but let me see if Dr.
25 Harrison wants to elaborate on any others.

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1
2 MYLA HARRISON: Thank you so much. I would add
3 that we are working with lots of other city agencies
4 as well. We are not doing this effort alone. It is
5 such an intensive effort that alone we will not be
6 successful. So, in addition to working with the
7 providers in the community, such as syringe service
8 providers, where we are increasing outreach for them
9 in the community. We are increasing their drop-in
10 center hours for people to go if they need. And so,
11 there is other ways we are doing it. We are working
12 with our colleagues in the Police Department, in
13 parks, in homeless services and others that are
14 escaping me at the moment but again, it is a really
15 concerted effort that we are engaged in to work on
16 the issue of the overdoes death rates.

17 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you for that Dr.
18 Harrison. I am going to switch over to clubhouses
19 really quickly and ask, how are the locations of the
20 16 clubhouses determined? And is there any plans for
21 expansion in the next fiscal cycle?

22 DAVE CHOKSHI: Certainly, I will just start very
23 briefly and then Dr. Harrison, you know more about
24 this. So, we are working with existing providers of
25 the clubhouse model. Who have been just

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1
2 extraordinary partners in ensuring that they are
3 serving again, you know patients with serious mental
4 illness.

5 So, the expansion, the funded expansion for FY22
6 will be at those same providers. I do think that
7 maybe some of them will be expanding to some
8 additional locations but the bulk of the additional
9 people that are served will be through the same
10 locations but just increasing the volume at those
11 locations.

12 Dr. Harrison, if you want to say more, please do.

13 MYLA HARRISON: Yeah, so just to add that these
14 are as you heard, these are 16 existing clubhouse
15 locations and we are having them expand their
16 membership within the programs and they are - we are
17 working with them closely to find out how they are
18 planning to do that as we enter into this
19 conversation with them.

20 So, we will be able to serve about 3,000 people
21 with serious mental illness that use clubhouses at
22 this point and time. We are going to expand that to
23 about 3,750 and again, clubhouses are places for
24 people with serious mental illness to go to have a
25 work order day, activities. It helps people with

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2 employment, resume's, finding jobs, connections to
3 work and there is work at the clubhouses as well.

4 And it's an evidence based model that we have here in
5 New York City amongst these providers at this point
6 and time.

7 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you Dr. Harrison.

8 Alright, I will yield back to I believe Chair Dromm
9 or Committee Counsel. Thank you.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. If any Council
11 Members have questions for DOHMH, please use Zoom
12 raise hand function and you will be added to the
13 queue. Council Members, please keep your questions
14 to five minutes including answers. Please wait for
15 the Sergeant at Arms to tell you when your time
16 begins. The Sergeant will let you know when your
17 time is up.

18 We will now hear from Council Member Rosenthal.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Just one moment, we are
21 trying to unmute.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you very much.

23 Uhm, Chairs, thank you for an amazing hearing.

24 Commissioner Chokshi, thank you for the amazing job
25 you have done through this horrendous crisis. You

1 have really led – you have risen to the occasion.

2 So, it's a hell of a thing to have to do but thank
3 you for that.

4 I have two very specific questions. First of
5 all, I have the experience of noticing a bus. I
6 think Chair Levine was talking about buses being
7 located and I'm pretty sure it was a bus to give the
8 vaccine. I am not positive; it was a week or so ago.
9 It was in my district and it was absolutely in the
10 wrong spot. And so, I asked the guy who was there
11 sort of what's up with that and you know without
12 getting him into trouble.

13 So, don't get him into trouble. He works for a
14 contracted agency and he had no say and he actually
15 used to work in the area. So, he knows exactly where
16 it should be and before I could finish my sentence,
17 he said, "I know we should be at Broadway and 77th.
18 I don't know what we are doing here."

19 So, I'm wondering just you know and I notice
20 Council Member Levine saying, "you know I know the
21 three buildings in my district, where that bus should
22 go in front of." So, is there – could you just
23 commit to working with local elected's or somehow
24 engaging people in where these buses go.
25

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1
2 DAVE CHOKSHI: Yes, of course.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I mean it is in the
4 center of my district. So, I could see how someone
5 said, oh, let's just put it in the center of her
6 district. Like, no.

7 DAVE CHOKSHI: Yes, I will just very briefly –
8 so, the answer to your question is yes, of course.
9 You know we will do that. We have been doing that
10 but we will seek as much input as possible with
11 respect to the locations and it's really important
12 for the mobile vaccination options as you are well
13 aware.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: This bus was he said
15 ten percent. It was totally underutilized and
16 meanwhile you are paying all this money. We are
17 paying, taxpayers are paying and he got you know,
18 just a couple a day. That's really disheartening
19 given that you know you said 52 percent of the city
20 is not yet vaccinated.

21 And so, my second question about that is uhm, you
22 talked about identifying people in communities who
23 can meet the constituents where they are, which all
24 the national public health experts are talking about,
25 so amazing. Uhm, I was wondering about your public

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2 health education budget and whether or not you could
3 use money to more aggressively answer the specific
4 questions that specific but universal questions, that
5 people seem to have.

6 You know whenever we talk, we always bring up NPR
7 or a New Yorkers, so recently on I think it was Radio
8 Lab, I think. I could get you the thing. I will
9 send it to you. They had a doctor who was you know
10 the main dude in his small community who had a – was
11 on his death bed with COVID. All the community came
12 out to help him. Now he has recovered and he is
13 giving out the shots and only half of his patients
14 are taking them. And so, when patients come in,
15 everything you are describing. Listens, you know
16 picks out each flaw in what they are saying and
17 responds to it.

18 And it strikes me that you could be doing you
19 know, there are five misconceptions out there and you
20 could – if you had more money in your public health
21 education budget, you could be flooding the city with
22 these answers and it could be in PSA's, it could be
23 bus shelter posters. It could be flyers left in
24 NYCHA buildings or any other building. You know
25 flyers, great flyers that you know all of us could

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2 put up in our you know, the tall buildings that and
3 with a heat map, you could tell us which the
4 buildings are that are not getting vaccinated. We
5 could really just flood communities with that
6 information. You know especially you could see a
7 little cartoon booklet or a page I mean and I don't
8 mean cartoon to minimize, I just mean simplistic
9 drawings.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

11 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thank you Council Member. I will
12 just make three points in response. First, thank you
13 for always sending me New Yorker and NPR articles
14 because I wouldn't read them otherwise since I don't
15 have as much time these days. So, you are helping to
16 educate me, which I very much appreciate.

17 Second to your question, so absolutely. You
18 know, I will just point out that our wonderful
19 communications team led by Maura Kennelly has done
20 really terrific work to get the intelligence you know
21 behind what you are referring to. Meaning, what are
22 those key questions that remain on peoples minds?
23 How do we take a data driven approach to craft our
24 messages? And so, just in recent days, Dr. Daniel
25 Stephens, who is a pediatrician and is with us, uhm,

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1
2 for the hearing, answered some of the most common
3 questions from parents. Now that adolescents are
4 eligible to be vaccinated.

5 And Dr. Michelle Morse, our Chief Medical
6 Officer, also did a PSA specifically around questions
7 for fertility and pregnancy and breastfeeding. You
8 know, which we have also heard quite a bit about.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: It's really not my
10 question. It's not a question of competence. It's a
11 question of should we double your funding for public
12 health education? I mean, it's often these really
13 small things on the edges that actually fix the
14 problem.

15 DAVE CHOKSHI: I hear you and -

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: You know I went back
17 and read the article that I probably already sent you
18 from the New Yorker back from January, where they
19 explained exactly why this vaccine came about within
20 six days of it coming to America, the U.S. And you
21 know, a one pager that shows, here is the guy. Here
22 is what he did. Boom, your done. I mean this has
23 been in the works for 20, 30 years. Scientists have
24 been studying for this moment.

25

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2 DAVE CHOKSHI: Thanks Council Member and yes, we
3 will have to share with you our This is How Campaign,
4 which addresses I think some of the you know some of
5 the questions that you are alluding to as well.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I don't have a
7 question that you are doing it. My question is, how
8 much more money do you need to flood the airways.
9 Because if you have to share it with me, my district
10 then - I don't watch TV but I listen - I mean, you
11 know, how are you getting? I would like a full
12 detail of how you are getting this messaging out.
13 What your total budget is and I would love to double
14 it. Do you know the budget for it now?

15 DAVE CHOKSHI: We have resources and we can share
16 that with you. You know I am grateful to the Mayor
17 and to this administration who have really invested
18 quite a bit in our communications but certainly there
19 is always more that can be done and I have no doubt
20 that this team in particular will be able to put
21 those resources to good use.

22 The last point I wanted to make is just that as
23 much as we are being thoughtful about the messages,
24 we also you know to your point, from your story, we
25 have to be thoughtful about the messenger as well and

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2 you know it's about arming the family doctor but also
3 you know the pastor. You know -

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: To that point, you sit
5 down with a group of pastors yeah, I think - but I
6 mean, so you sit down with them, show them a draft
7 and they revise it and then you make a thousand
8 copies.

9 Do you know is the public health campaign coming
10 out of the Department of Health Budget or someone
11 else's budget? Another agency budget?

12 DAVE CHOKSHI: No, it's coming out of our budget.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: How big is that
14 budget?

15 DAVE CHOKSHI: Let me turn to Mr. Jarrah who can
16 say more.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I think he needs to be
18 unmuted. Thank you.

19 SAMI JARRAH: Thank you Council Member for the
20 question. Our budget for media is somewhere north of
21 \$140 million and the vast majority of that funding
22 has been focused on the Vaccination Campaign. And it
23 has been you know targeted towards dozens of
24 languages, all sorts of media -
25

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Can I just ask you, is
3 that since \$140 million, give me proportionality. Is
4 that a one - what's your - is that a one time flush
5 of money that ends this fiscal year? Is that over
6 the past 18 months. Is that over the past year? Is
7 that a lot of money or little money? I mean, it's a
8 big city. So, hearing millions doesn't isn't
9 impressive. What would you do with \$114 million
10 more?

11 SAMI JARRAH: Sure, I can say a few words. This
12 is by far dramatically the biggest media campaign
13 we've ever done.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Well, of course. It's
15 a national crisis. That's not the question. I'm
16 sorry.

17 SAMI JARRAH: So, the vast majority of the
18 funding has been spent in the last three to four
19 months on the Vaccination Campaign.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: How much do you have
21 in FY22?

22 SAMI JARRAH: That will take me a minute to find.
23 We can follow-up with that for you though.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Do you think it's \$114
25 million?

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1
2 SAMI JARRAH: I will need to follow-up. I am
3 sure it is not that much but no but we can follow-up.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Do you think it's 50?

5 DAVE CHOKSHI: We can follow-up with you on that
6 Council Member.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I am trying to get a
8 sense of proportionality. I mean, if it is 50 or
9 less, it's just not enough. You've got 52 percent of
10 the city population that's not vaccinated. Thank you
11 Chairs for the extra time and your willingness to let
12 me bring out the importance of this. I appreciate
13 you. And yeah, I would be interested in hearing.
14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you very much Dr.
16 Chokshi and everybody else in the Department of
17 Health. We appreciate you coming in and giving
18 testimony today.

19 Does Chair Levine have a follow-up or Chair
20 Louis?

21 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: No, I don't. Thank you so
22 much Chair Dromm.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. And then I
24 guess with that, I am going to read this statement
25 and again just say thank you for all that you have

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1 done. This will conclude this portion of today's
2 hearing. Thank you DOHMH for being here. We will
3 now move onto the New York City Housing Authority. I
4 ask my colleagues who will be joining us for NYCHA
5 the portion of the hearing to remain in the Zoom with
6 your microphone muted until we are ready to begin and
7 we should be ready to begin shortly.

8 [BREAK 6:11:34-6:12:49]. We are just waiting for
9 everyone to log on. [6:12:51-6:15:42].

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Chair, I am just going to
11 check Chairman Russ's audio.

12 GREG RUSS: Okay, there we go. How about now?

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Sounds good sir, thank you.

14 GREG RUSS: Great, thank you.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Vito Mustaciuolo?

16 VITO MUSTACIUOLO: Yes, I am here.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Ms. Lescott?

18 ANNIKA LESCOTT: Great, hello, I am here. Thank
19 you.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I am ready.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Okay Chair, you may begin.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you very much.

23 Good afternoon and welcome to the City Council's
24 sixth day of hearings on the Mayor's Executive Budget
25

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1
2 for Fiscal 2022. My name is Daniel Dromm and I Chair
3 the Finance Committee. We previously heard from the
4 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and now we
5 will hear from the New York City Housing Authority.
6 We are joined by the Committee on Public Housing,
7 Chaired by my colleague Council Member Alicka Ampry-
8 Samuel. We are also joined by the following Council
9 Members. Just bear with me. Council Members Adams,
10 Ayala, Brooks-Powers, Dinowitz, Gibson, Holden,
11 Louis, Riley, Rosenthal.

12 In the interest of time, I will forego an opening
13 statement but I would like to turn it over to Chair
14 Ampry-Samuel for her statement.

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you Chair Dromm.
16 Good afternoon. I am Council Member Alicka Ampry-
17 Samuel, Chair of the Committee on Public Housing and
18 we are here to conduct the Executive Budget hearing
19 on NYCHA's Fiscal 2022 Executive Budget which
20 includes its Fiscal 2021-2025 City Capital Commitment
21 Plan. And 2022-2031 Ten Year Capital Strategy.
22 Additionally, members of the Committees on Finance
23 and Public Housing will address components of NYCHA's
24 Adopted Five Year operating in capital plans for year
25 2021-2025.

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I would like to first thank my Co-Chair for this
hearing. Council Member Finance Chair Danny Dromm
and the members of the Public Housing Committee.

While Chair of the Public Housing Committee, I
represent the 41st Council District, which is home to
the most densely populated public housing
developments than any other district in New York
City. I am also a proud former NYCHA resident.

NYCHA has operated the largest public housing program
in the nation for over 75 years providing affordable
housing to over 400,000 low and moderate income city
residents and served in nearly 200,000 additional New
Yorkers through its Section 8 program.

I reviewed the video of the budget hearings from
May 16th of 2018, May 7th of 2019 and the Preliminary
Budget of 2020 because there wasn't an Executive
Budget hearing in 2020.

At that time, dating back to 2018, there were 328
developments and now, it's down to 302. In recent
years, the budgetary challenges and funding
shortfalls, facing NYCHA have been front and center
as NYCHA attempts to address the very physical needs
across its aging buildings and pursues strategies to
address structural funding deficits. These efforts

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1
2 have fallen short of providing real improvements that
3 NYCHA residents can see and feel. NYCHA's total
4 revenues for 2021 are approximately \$4.1 billion.
5 And about \$1 billion or 25 percent of NYCHA's fiscal
6 2021 budget is comprised of tenant revenue.

7 In revenue from federal sources account for
8 approximately \$2.4 billion or 58 percent of NYCHA's
9 total revenue. Total other revenue which includes
10 \$248 million in city funds is projected to be about
11 \$684 million in 2021. While the long-term funding
12 challenges for NYCHA cannot be resolved immediately,
13 the city continues to contribute towards addressing
14 NYCHA's numerous programmatic and fiscal needs.

15 The Administration has allocated \$2.9 billion in
16 capital funds between Fiscal Year 2021 and 2025 for
17 roofs and other critical building system
18 improvements. And at the state level, another \$200
19 million is expected to supplement this work. The
20 Council will continue to build our partnerships with
21 NYCHA throughout these changes and we will see new
22 opportunities to strengthen these partnerships and
23 secure additional funding resources for NYCHA
24 operations and repairs.

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I would like to thank NYCHA staff for joining us
today and I look forward to today's hearing and
discussion and as a reminder, during the Executive
Budget hearing cycle, all public testimony is given
during one hearing at the conclusion of this cycle.

So, this year, public testimony will be heard on
Tuesday, May 25th, starting at 10:00 a.m. I would
also like to thank the Council's Finance team
members, Chima, Luke and Nate and I would also like
to acknowledge Audrey Sun, Jose Candi, Ricky and
Chima from the Public Housing Committee and my own
staff Naomi and Everton.

Now, I am going to turn it back to Finance Chair
Danny Dromm. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much Council
Member and Chair. Now, we are going to hear
testimony from NYCHA. We are joined by Greg Ross,
the Chair and Chief Executive Officer of the New York
City Housing Authority. Before NYCHA begins their
testimony, I am going to turn it over to our
Committee Counsel to go over some procedural items
and to swear in the witnesses.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chair. My name is
Stephanie Ruiz and I am Counsel to the New York

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1 City's Council Committee on Finance. Before we
2 begin, I want to remind everyone that you will be on
3 mute until you are recognized to speak. At which
4 time, you will be unmuted by the Zoom host. If you
5 mute yourself after you have been unmuted, you will
6 need to be unmuted again by the host.

7
8 Please be aware that there could be a delay in
9 muting and unmuting, so please be patient. During
10 the hearing, if Council Members would like to ask
11 questions, please use the Zoom raise hand function
12 and you will be called on to speak. We will be
13 limiting Council Member questions to five minutes
14 including responses.

15 I will now administer the affirmation to the
16 administration witnesses including those available
17 for Q&A. Do you affirm that your testimony will be
18 truthful to the best of your knowledge, information
19 and belief. NYCHA Chair and CEO Greg Russ?

20 GREG RUSS: I do.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Mr. Vito
22 Mustaciuolo?

23 VITO MUSTACIUOLO: I do.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Ms. Annika
25 Lescott?

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ANNIKA LESCOTT: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Mr. Russ, you may
begin when ready.

GREG RUSS: Thank you so much. Thanks for the
opportunity to address to the Council today. And
Chairs Alicka Ampry-Samuel and Daniel Dromm, members
of the Committees on Public Housing and Finance,
other distinguished members of the City Council,
NYCHA residents, members of the public, good
afternoon. My name is Greg Russ, I am NYCHA Chair
and CEO and I am joined today by our Chief Operating
Officer Vito Mustaciuolo and our Executive Vice
President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer
Annika Lescott and other members of NYCHA's team.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present
this update on the Authority's financial outlook and
improve our work to transform the Housing Authority
and improve our residents' quality of life. But
first, I want to acknowledge the efforts and
dedication of our finance department. NYCHA was
recently recognized for excellence in financial
reporting by the Government Finance Officers
Association of the United States and Canada. This is
a very important award for the finance people and I

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2 just wanted to make sure that folks had a chance to
3 hear about it and we were very pleased to be
4 recipients.

5 So, during our Preliminary Budget testimony
6 before the Council in March, we presented information
7 about the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic,
8 details on our adopted budget and our funding
9 landscape, the status of our Transformation Plan,
10 progress we've made to deliver better services for
11 residents through the HUD Agreement and our efforts
12 to comprehensively rehabilitate and upgrade our
13 residents' homes.

14 So today, I'd like to follow-up in those areas.
15 On the pandemic, to date, we have spent about \$121
16 million in response to the pandemic, this is on
17 safety measures such as additional sanitation and
18 personal protective equipment.

19 As of the end of April, NYCHA has also
20 experienced rent decreases rent for about 57,000
21 households in public housing and over 5,600 in
22 Section 8, who have lost work or income due to the
23 pandemic. This results in about a \$70 million
24 reduction in rent collection. And together, with the
25

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increased expenses, adds about \$192 million in costs
for the Housing Authority.

Based on Preliminary information, we have this
year with respect to federal operating funds, we
think we may receive more operating subsidy from the
federal government. When we presented our budget
earlier, we were carrying about a \$25 million
operating deficit for 2021 and we believe the
additional subsidy will help us address that deficit
and some of our losses in rent collection. We are
grateful to the representatives in Washington, who
have been advocating for more public housing funding
both operating and capital.

As part of the most recent federal stimulus bill,
we are receiving an additional \$81 million but this
is all in the voucher program, about 5,700 Section 8
vouchers. These are very specific vouchers targeted
to individuals or families who are at risk of
homeless, are homeless, victims of domestic violence
or human trafficking. HUD has established through
the congressional requirements specific rules around
these vouchers and will be working with some of our
other agencies in the city to figure out how to get
this money out into the community.

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We are also incredibly grateful to the city for
their support. We expect to receive about \$257
million in operating funds this year, including \$7
million towards the 1,000 seasonal workers that we
are going to try and hire through Mayor de Blasio's
City Cleanup Corps initiative.

The State has already, has provided an additional
\$200 million in funding this year. We just got that
through the legislature, so we will be working with
them and the Governor's Office on preparing a plan on
how we would use these funds to upgrade our
properties. Our outlook on expenses has not changed.
We are hiring to meet our budgeted staffing levels.
And to help address the massive demands of our aging
buildings.

We continue to implement elements of our
Transformation Plan, this envisions potential
operational and organizational changes, some of which
are underway already that will improve customer
service and responsiveness to conditions at our
developments, ensure that our large construction
projects are completed in a timely manner, and
promote accountability through property management
performance metrics. The plan's initiatives will

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enable us to better manage our properties better use
our limited funding and improve services to our
residents.

Our Neighborhood Model, which creates smaller
property management portfolios, brings decision
making and resources to the developments. It is a
critical piece of our reform efforts. As part of our
work to strengthen property-based budgeting, this
month we are rolling out a new training for property
managers and some resident leaders on budget concepts
and processes. Last month, NYCHA's Board approved
changes outlined in the Transformation Plan that
strengthen the management of our organization by
promoting a more effective and accountable leadership
team. This involves the creation of new Board
committees which empower Board Members to guide the
development of policy and provide oversights in the
areas of audit and finance, operating, compliance,
and capital, resident and community affairs, and
governance.

The changes also establish the title of Chief
Operating Officer, formerly known as the General
Manager. As part of our work to streamline executive
leadership, we are also creating a position called

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Chief Asset and Capital Management Officer, who will
oversee both real estate and capital projects. This
position is posted and we are actively recruiting.

We are also doing streamlining in our business
processes. We are revamping the annual review
process for residents and we are on the threshold of
initiating our pilot to improve the Alternative Work
Schedule program. We recently established a Resident
Roundtable to provide residents with ongoing
opportunities to give input into the Transformation
Plan. Our progress is driven, in part, by 18 working
groups formed as part of the Transformation Plan.
This includes taking on such issues like work order
reform, I mentioned AWS, closing work tickets, lease
enforcement, property-based budgeting, procurement
and more.

Residents will participate in several of those
working groups and all those groups include
representatives from HUD, the Southern District and
the Monitor's team. We will continue to engage our
stakeholders and partners to incorporate feedback as
we bring the transformation strategies to life. The
next steps are to develop the first part of our
Implementation by September 21st and a second part by

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June of '22. This does not mean that we are waiting
to those times to start the reforms. This is the
times that we are reporting the implementation plan
back to HUD in the southern district.

These are major changes that will dramatically
strengthen the organization. They build on some of
the other advancements we've made to better serve our
residents. We made the Transformation Plan public.
We opened it for public comment last December and we
receive concurrence from HUD and the southern
district in March. We are trying to launch the
Blueprint for Change proposal to enable NYCHA to
overcome its complex capital funding challenges and
renovate every building and every apartment in our
portfolio. We continue to work to upgrade our
residents' homes using PACT and RAD. And we are
making progress in critical and impactful work to
achieve compliance with the HUD Agreement, bringing
down the time it takes to resolve elevator and heat
outages as well as the number of heat outages,
installing roof fans at our developments to help
combat mold. Completing over 90,000 XRF lead paint
inspections at our apartments and establishing a new

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program TEMPO, to bring faster repairs and abatement
to the homes where children under six live or visit.

While we transform our organization, we also need
to transform our buildings. Our buildings have over
\$40 billion in major repair needs and the needs grow
at the rate of about one billion dollars a year. It
is impossible to keep up with the demands of the
deteriorating properties through government funding
alone.

Addressing the issues driven by the condition of
our buildings, leaks, mold and failing systems is
costly. And we are already spending more than we
receive for the basic operation and maintenance of
our developments. Instead, we want to invest in our
properties with sustainable, realistic models that
brings them total renovations and the upgrades they
desperately need, instead of Helter to Skelter or
stop-gap repair solutions.

With our PACT preservation initiative, we are
bringing comprehensive repairs and upgrades to at
least 62,000 apartments while safeguarding resident
rights and protections. To date, over 9,500
apartments are currently in construction or have been
renovated through PACT at 50 developments across the

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city. This represents nearly \$1.8 billion in capital
improvements, like brand-new kitchens and baths,
upgraded building systems including elevators and
boilers, improved grounds and common areas, that's
playgrounds and security systems.

Another 6,500 apartments at 11 sites are slated
to begin comprehensive repairs and upgrades by the
end of this year. And we are meeting with an
additional 38 sites looking to raise another \$2.1
billion in major repair needs. Together with PACT
and the Blueprint , the Preservation Trust, these
proposals will ensure that all our residents have the
buildings and apartments they deserve, regardless of
the funding we receive from DC.

These preservation initiatives will enable us to
transform half-century-old buildings that have
suffered from decades of disinvestment. The need for
a new direction is clear. We owe it to our current
residents, and to the future generations, to invest
in our properties now. The HUD Agreement and the
Transformation Plan are critical to the success of
our organization and our residents' quality of life.
But they come with a price tag and this stretches our
already limited financial resources and these

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1
2 commitments did not come with any additional or
3 dedicated federal funding.

4 To address the more than \$40 billion in capital
5 needs and deliver to residents the homes they
6 deserve, we must continue pursuing innovative
7 solutions like the Blueprint. The Blueprint Trust
8 model for example, can access additional federal
9 subsidy that is currently not available to NYCHA.
10 And through procurement enhancements it can deliver
11 high-quality repairs and improvements faster. Even
12 if NYCHA receives some or all of the capital funding
13 we need from the Biden Administration, the Trust can
14 be used to more effectively deploy that funding and
15 access additional federal subsidies to more fully
16 rehabilitate every single one of our properties.

17 We believe we cannot wait for the federal budget
18 to improve. With your support, we can take actions
19 now that will enable the Authority to better serve
20 residents today and for the generations to come.
21 That includes the creation of the Public Trust, as a
22 partner with NYCHA to serve as an effective steward
23 of our properties.

24 Thank you so much. We are happy to answer
25 questions you may have. We look forward to keeping

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you updated on our work to create a stronger NYCHA
for our residents. That concludes my statement.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you Chair Russ. Let me
just say that we have been joined by Council Member
Diaz, Sr., Gjonaj, Salamanca and Van Bramer. Very
good. Let me just go to my questions now. New needs
in the Executive Budget. Federal funds of \$20
million were added in the Fiscal 2022 Executive
Budget and labeled as disaster relief outyear balance
in the documents provided by OMB. Could you please
elaborate on the purpose of this funding and describe
the programs that will be funded?

GREG RUSS: Sure, thank you so much. This
funding is for site restoration that was not covered
by the FEMA, Sandy recovery and it is at those
construction sites. These funds will be used to
replace trees that were removed, restore the sites
after our work to build things like new boiler plants
or to raise critical equipment off the ground.

So, we have 35 NYCHA developments damaged by
Sandy that are now receiving FEMA money. 20 of them
are going to be receiving heat and hot water systems
and 210 buildings will also receive full load
emergency backup. So, the funding that you mentioned

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1
2 in your question would be used at these properties to
3 finish off that work.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay thank you Chair.

5 Federal funds of \$7 million in Fiscal '21 and \$16.7
6 million in Fiscal '22 were added into the Executive
7 Budget to fund NYCHA's cleanup corp. This is part of
8 the largest citywide program to hire 10,000 New
9 Yorkers to conduct sanitation work. Will these
10 workers be employed by NYCHA and how many have been
11 hired to date? And how many will be hired in total?

12 GREG RUSS: So, we are shooting to hire about
13 1,072 individuals. We have just started that
14 process. In fact, I think this week it has just
15 gotten off the ground. And they will be six month
16 assignment temporary workers that will assist with
17 outdoor green space, playground maintenance. They
18 will support some of the tenant association work.
19 They will be in the buildings cleaning among other
20 activities.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And will they be paid or
22 employed directly by NYCHA?

23 GREG RUSS: That's my understanding. Vito is
24 that correct? They would be six month temporary
25 workers?

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VITO MUSTACIUOLO: That's correct. Right, the
Clean Corp program is a six month program. They are
being processed by NYCHA. So, they will be on our
payroll but we are receiving funds for that program.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you and what's
the process for prioritizing developments and how
will staff be allocated across the developments?

GREG RUSS: I am going to start and then I am
going to let uh, Vito finish up but we are looking as
I said, for various roles across everything from
grounds to playground maintenance but I will let Vito
address what we are thinking about in terms of
employment.

VITO MUSTACIUOLO: So, for our developments, we
are looking to deploy about 880 of the total number.
And as the Chair indicated, that would be for upkeep
and support on the grounds. So, they would be
working side by side with our caretakers, as well as
doing interior work on such as floor maintenance.
There are 50 assigned for the playground unit. 100
for pasture waste management, 100 for resident
engagement.

So, what we did was we took the same formula that
we used for the caretakers and we used that formula

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to equalize and divide up the staff in the Clean
Corp, so they are disbursed accordingly. So, that
one development gets more of their share.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. Let me talk
a little bit about the smoke free program. Can you
provide us with an update on the Smoke Free
Initiative and the amount of funding dedicated to
this program?

GREG RUSS: Sure, we started Smoke Free policy in
July of 2018. This was part of a just kind of doing
the right thing health-wise but also, because HUD had
begun to really facilitate this kind of thing. And
the policy was implemented and in consultation with
an advisory group on smoking and health and in 2020,
NYCHA has also recruited and hired a Smoke Free NYCHA
Liaison to provide support to developments and begin
to get the message out.

We have approximately one million five committed
from the tobacco tax revenue that goes to this
program and it also involves us partnering with other
organizations to get the word out, get the signage
and get folks awareness raised about the issues
around smoking and where it is prohibited under the
new policy.

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CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And director, what measures
are being used to evaluate the progress of the
initiative?

GREG RUSS: So, we have several. I mean some of
them are pretty basic. Making sure there is signage
at each of the properties to remind people about the
policy. The volume of reported violations or
informal conference required, we'd be looking at that
and any additional enforcement actions that might be
subsequent to that.

We have had fairly good support on the policy and
would likely in the future try to measure the
resident awareness of this and we also now can look
at the outreach from the Smoke Free Liaison team as
measurable interaction with our communities.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. And NYCHA
received a rollover of unspent federal funding in
Fiscal '21 totaling \$2.6 million. This funding comes
from the lower Manhattan Development Corp to fund
security and safety upgrades at developments in lower
Manhattan. Could you please provide an update on the
work being done at these locations and a timeline on
when the work will be completed?

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1 GREG RUSS: Sure. So, as of now, we have 45
2 Allen Baruch Addition, Gompers, Hernandez, Steward
3 Park Extension, Lower East Side, Vladeck One and Two
4 and also, a separate item for Vladeck Two. These are
5 Local Law 11 restoration work as well as exterior
6 lighting and some new exterior compactors at some
7 locations and some grounds improvements and play
8 areas.
9

10 The fiscal work for these funds was completed for
11 the most part prior to December 2019, with the
12 exception of Vladeck One and Two and that was
13 completed in January of 2020.

14 Of the \$2.6 million we received, we spent about
15 \$1.6. So, it came in under budget and unspent funds
16 are going to be reallocated to new properties in a
17 new scope that would include Smith, Rutgers,
18 LaGuardia and LaGuardia addition and two bridges to
19 finish off the funding that we received through that.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Let's just talk a
21 little bit about capital. The Executive Ten Year
22 Capital Strategy provides \$2.9 billion for NYCHA in
23 support of its capital program goals from '22 to '31.
24 When compared to the Preliminary Ten Year Capital
25 Strategy, there is an \$850,000 increase in Fiscal '22

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1
2 for housing upgrades. Can you please explain what
3 upgrades the \$850,000 will fund?

4 GREG RUSS: Yes, uhm, I am going to ask our CFO
5 if she could kind of address where that \$850,000
6 would be spent. Here we go.

7 ANNIKA LESCOTT: Hi, good afternoon. Thank you
8 for that question. So, the \$850,000 will support
9 four projects. Marcy Community Center tech upgrades,
10 Lincoln Community Center, ADA bathroom upgrades,
11 Jefferson Education Playground renovation and White
12 Houses Playground renovation.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. As part of
14 the Borough-based Jails Initiative, an associated
15 budget reallocation, \$25.9 million was transferred to
16 NYCHA for community center reconstruction. New
17 lighting, security cameras and upgraded accessible
18 play equipment at Millbrook, Mitchel, Mott Haven and
19 Patterson Houses. How much of this funding has been
20 committed?

21 GREG RUSS: So, for those sites and locations,
22 design is scheduled to begin this year and the
23 timeline for completion of the projects is May of
24 2024. That's - so we are at the beginning of this.

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And when you say that we are
3 at the beginning of it, are those funds actually
4 committed?

5 GREG RUSS: Uh, Annika, would we consider them at
6 committed at this point?

7 ANNIKA LESCOTT: I don't believe so.

8 GREG RUSS: Yeah, we are still in design. They
9 won't be committed until we get a contract.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And you said, you think you
11 are going to get a contract when?

12 GREG RUSS: Well, we will do design this year and
13 then we would go out for the vendors. I don't have a
14 date but we could provide one after I talk to the
15 design people. I could give you a better answer.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Uhm, according to the
17 ten-year capital strategy, NYCHA as committed \$930
18 million for weather proofing buildings against water
19 damage to prevent mold growth in the Executive
20 Capital Commitment plan committed \$740 million to
21 roof related work. How much of this funding has been
22 committed to remediation projects?

23 GREG RUSS: So, this is a really important source
24 of funding for us because it address the roofs. We
25 have received about \$583 million and have obligated

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2 about \$428 million towards roof replacements and
3 continue to obligate every fiscal year. We have
4 prioritize the locations based on the physical needs
5 assessment and the number of work order tickets for
6 example from leaks.

7 Generally speaking, these projects take about a
8 design time of about 12 months, construction three to
9 four months and for each building, it's somewhere
10 between \$1.8 to \$2.4 million. So, we have been
11 spending against that and continue to roll those out
12 every year.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, does this funding include
14 mold remediation?

15 GREG RUSS: Uhm, it includes weather proofing to
16 prevent water from penetrating. Vito, does it
17 include other items besides the roof or is it the
18 roofs only?

19 VITO MUSTACIUOLO: Uh, Chair, I'm going to have
20 to double check. I believe it only includes roofs,
21 but as you indicated that is a major source of water
22 penetration. So, directly, it will address both
23 conditions. But we will check and see if it goes
24 further than the roofs.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yeah, I just was curious
3 because once the roof is done of course obviously
4 than the mold needs to be remediated.

5 VITO MUSTACIUOLO: It's definitely one of the
6 contributing factors.

7 GREG RUSS: Yes, yeah.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: But is there money to do the
9 mold remediation?

10 GREG RUSS: Well, that's coming through a variety
11 of sources. We have the larger capital action plan
12 includes some of that. In addition, there is a lot
13 federal money on the mold remediation that we are
14 spending and we have the mold teams set up as well,
15 the mold busters.

16 So, I would say that this funding addresses one
17 cause of mold and we have other sources of funds to
18 address the actual remediation.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So, Director, for me, like I
20 live in a private residence, when we have a roof leak
21 or something like that, they have to fix the roof
22 first and then they go and they do the mold
23 remediation. Is that what we can expect to see here
24 as well. The roof will be fixed and then a short
25

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1
2 time after that, mold remediation would be addressed
3 in that same building?

4 GREG RUSS: It is possible but I would caution
5 with NYCHA the one thing that often happens for us is
6 in addition to the roofs, we have the piping and
7 riser issues. So, we can't go in and remediate and
8 we do but that isn't going to be a guarantee because
9 of the leaks and the waste line and the supply lines
10 that we're going to have a building that's going to
11 be mold free.

12 A lot of times, we can see tickets right up the
13 stack, and this is one of the reasons why some of
14 this work is beginning to push us into the capital
15 repairs that we need. But we will remediate where we
16 can, yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And on the roof repairs, is
18 there a guarantee on those, a timeline in terms of
19 how long that repair is expected to last?

20 GREG RUSS: I believe there is but I would defer
21 to Vito if he knows exactly what the warrantee issues
22 are or information.

23 VITO MUSTACIUOLO: Yeah, my apologies, I don't
24 know the number of years that the warrantee covers.
25 But we do capture that information and just put it

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1 into our database. So, we do know when a roof is
2 still covered under warrantee. What we don't want is
3 for staff to go up to the roof and make a repair or
4 to do any work that might reach the warrantee. So,
5 we do capture that information. It's right in our
6 database and we could certainly get back to you with
7 the duration of the warrantee's.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, I mean, I just
10 purchased a small little house and I got a 15 year
11 warrantee on it. So, hopefully -

12 GREG RUSS: Congratulations.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I know NYCHA gets the same
14 warrantee or more.

15 VITO MUSTACIUOLO: Okay, so sorry Chair, it's a
16 30-year warrantee.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Oh boy, yeah. Okay, thank
18 you very much for that and what's the average amount
19 of time and funding it takes to waterproof a single
20 location?

21 GREG RUSS: I think it does vary depending on the
22 location and building height. We see a range from
23 about \$1.8 to \$2.4 million per building.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay and time?
25

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1
2 GREG RUSS: Uhm, about three to four months in
3 terms of work. I don't know Vito did you want to add
4 anything to that for your side?

5 VITO MUSTACIUOLO: No

6 GREG RUSS: Okay.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, alright, thank you very
8 much. I am going to turn it over to Chair Ampry-
9 Samuel as she has questions and then we will do
10 Council Member questions. Thank you again.

11 GREG RUSS: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you, thank you,
13 thank you. I just want to jump back to federal
14 funding. The Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic
15 Security known as the CARES Act, signed into law in
16 March 2020 provided approximately \$12 billion
17 nationally to HUD for community development and
18 housing programs. Can NYCHA provide details on how
19 much federal stimulus money it has received to date?
20 Through which programs? And how the funding is being
21 utilized?

22 GREG RUSS: Sure, I am going to ask our CFO if
23 she could just give us a summary in those areas.

24 ANNIKA LESCOTT: Thank you. Thank you for the
25 question. So, NYCHA received \$150 million in CARES

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Act public housing operating funds and \$37 million in
CARES Act Section 8 administrative fees.

This flexible funding source can be used to
support COVID response effort as well as our normal
programmatic expenses. The deadline has been
updated, so all funds must be spent by December 31st
of 2021. In terms of expenditures, through April
2021, NYCHA has spent \$121 million in CARES Act
public housing funds and close to \$3 million in CARES
ACT Section 8 funds. And we anticipate that we will
meet all the expenditure deadlines.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay and that's \$121
million out of the \$150?

ANNIKA LESCOTT: That's correct.

GREG RUSS: Right.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, thank you.

ANNIKA LESCOTT: And it might be worth mentioning
because you were talking about stimulus, the Chair
mentioned in his testimony but we also received an
allocation of emergency housing trace vouchers from
the American Rescue Plan. And that award is worth
\$81.3 million.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And how will you
utilize that?

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2 ANNIKA LESCOTT: So, those funds are for specific
3 populations. So, those that are homeless, at risk of
4 homelessness, domestic violence and Chair Russ, I
5 don't know if you want to give some more context to
6 that.

7 GREG RUSS: Yeah, Council Member, the way that
8 Congress passed this is really very targeted. So, we
9 have at risk families described. These have to be
10 tenant-based vouchers for example. We have to work
11 with continuum of care and other providers around
12 this. So, we are still, we just got the award letter
13 from HUD this week in fact. So, we will developing
14 plans to you know focus on how we get those vouchers
15 out into the community.

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay and is that
17 related to at all the dispersion of the \$5 billion in
18 the American Recovery funding for the temporary
19 voucher? The temporary housing vouchers or is this
20 something different?

21 GREG RUSS: I think this is separate. I think
22 there is two separate pots.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay.

24 GREG RUSS: One in the first bill, one in the
25 second.

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1
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay.

3 ANNIKA LESCOTT: That's correct.

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, alright, to my
5 question. So, we mentioned in the Preliminary Budget
6 that NYCHA stated that HUD had 60 days to develop a
7 formula that would determine how to disperse \$5
8 billion in the American Recovery Act Funding for
9 temporary housing vouchers. So, I just wanted to get
10 an update on how much of this funding will be
11 allocated to NYCHA? And what are the conditions for
12 this funding? And this came out during the
13 Preliminary Budget hearing. And so, I just wanted
14 get information on that and if you could clarify the
15 two different ones?

16 GREG RUSS: Sure, Annika, do you have anything we
17 could get to to the question with this on. I am not
18 -

19 ANNIKA LESCOTT: So, the bill that included the
20 \$5 billion is the American Rescue Plan and that's the
21 bill for which we received the \$81.3 million in
22 emergency vouchers. But there is two pots of money.

23 GREG RUSS: But the first pot, the one that was
24 passed, is that the one for the sort of emergency
25 housing vouchers? Do you know? And Council Member,

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2 there is a separate path for these emergency housing
3 vouchers that's being developed in conjunction with
4 the state. But rather than give you - let me check
5 on that because I believe we had hope that we would
6 be direct recipients but we may not and I can send
7 you a clarification on both of these.

8 So, your you know, but let me check on that first
9 pot.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, okay.

11 GREG RUSS: Yeah, yeah, sorry but we're still
12 threading some of this through ourselves as it
13 unfolds.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay and just
15 understand that there is you know funding coming from
16 so many different pots.

17 GREG RUSS: Right, right, yeah.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And that some of it
19 goes from the federal government to the state and how
20 do you do that with a separate formula -

21 GREG RUSS: Yes, yes, exactly.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, it gets quite
23 confusing. NYCHA reported that as of the close of
24 the 2020 calendar year, it spent almost 70 percent of
25 its total \$3.2 billion earmarked for Sandy recovery

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1 projects. Additionally, the Authority would finish
2 all Hurricane Sandy related capital projects by 2023.

3 What is the total federal investment in NYCHA for
4 Hurricane Sandy recovery? And well, I'll stop there.

5 GREG RUSS: Okay. I am going to ask the CFO if
6 she could give us a number.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Just the total federal
8 investment.

9 ANNIKA LESCOTT: I am going to look for that. I
10 will get back to you shortly. I am sorry, I know
11 that we have that here.

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay and so, while you
13 are looking for that, you cited that 25 projects that
14 are nearing completion, projected to be completed by
15 the end of 2021. Does NYCHA still think that these
16 projects will be completed by the end of this year?
17 And what work remains to be done or on both sides?

18 GREG RUSS: As far as I know, we are still on
19 schedule. Uhm, and uh, uh, I would like, because
20 it's such a large number of properties, I would like
21 to give you a site by site response to that question,
22 which I do not have for you today but we can follow
23 it up.
24

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CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, okay, because
that had been completed already, so like out of the
25?

GREG RUSS: I know we are actively working at
most of those properties Council Member. I don't
want to say that we've got — we had substantial work
completed at a number of sites but I would actually
need to talk to the project managers to give you a
good answer.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, alright, so I am
going to jump into some questions related to state
funding. The 2022 State Enacted Budget passed last
month includes \$200 million for NYCHA. However, this
funding is only offered to NYCHA on a reimbursement
basis and to be done jointly with the state dormitory
authority making it possibly very difficult for NYCHA
to access these funds. How is NYCHA engaging with
the state to best access this funding stream and had
any projects been identified for this years \$200
million?

GREG RUSS: So, we just at this legislative
session got word on the \$200. So, the process will
be, we will have to propose a plan to the governor's
office and to the State Department of Budget and we

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2 hope to have that plan completed sometime next month
3 and submit it. We are thinking, we don't have it
4 nailed down yet, we are thinking we would spend it on
5 one of the compliance areas but once we have the plan
6 completed, we would like to share it with you and we
7 can show you where that \$200 million is going. Of
8 course, it's still subject to state review but we
9 could provide more information once we fix on which
10 compliance area we intend to work on.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Let me just jump in here
12 Chair Ampry-Samuel, if you don't mind for a moment.
13 This is something that's been a little bit of a pet
14 peeve of mine, is that the state, you know the
15 governor has fancy - you know, we are putting \$200
16 million into NYCHA. It never really materializes and
17 often times they point the finger at NYCHA to say
18 that they have never been able to draw it down. Are
19 we confident that we are going to be able draw this
20 down? Can you just go a little bit further on that
21 for me?

22 GREG RUSS: Yes, I think we are. I think some of
23 the issues in some of the past allocation have been
24 coming up with a plan and negotiating that. I think
25 that's been difficult at times and I am not saying

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1
2 that the state – the state has a right to ask their
3 questions. And I think we just went through a longer
4 process though with the \$450 million that was
5 approved for elevators and heat plants. And that
6 took on a more complicated set of issues because it
7 also involved, we had to have the Federal Monitor
8 involved. We had to come up with the kind of an
9 action plan for that and I think we are in Design
10 Build for that. We are really hopeful that by the
11 end of this year we will be awarding some contracts.
12 But that took longer to navigate I think than
13 typically. We believe that what was approved this
14 year is going to be a little easier to access. We
15 are likely going to propose maybe just one compliance
16 area. So, you know it's going to be spent this way
17 or over here and then that might make it a little
18 cleaner for us.

19 So, that's our thought now. We think we will be
20 able to access it more readily than perhaps some of
21 the more complicated grants we have received.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you Chair Ampry-
23 Samuel. Thank you.

24

25

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CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Can you just clarify
what you mean by compliance areas for those that do
not know.

GREG RUSS: Oh sure, we would be putting it into
lead, mold, pest waste, elevators, heat, one of those
areas that defined in the HUD agreement.

And Council Member, to your other question on the
Sandy, we are on schedule and that there are three
sites that are going to go into 22 and four sites of
the work is going to go into 23. And what we can
give you is kind of the laundry list of that.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, that means that
there would be about 18 projects that will be
completed by the end of the year?

GREG RUSS: Hmm, hmm.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Just doing my quick
math.

GREG RUSS: Yeah, doing the quick math, yes, yes
ma'am.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, okay, thank you,
thank you, thank you. So, I just want to jump to my
last set of questions before I turn it over to my
colleagues. RAD Pack conversions. Another major
program that NYCHA is pursuing in order to stabilize

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2 in the school conditions within its portfolio is the
3 rental assistance demonstration or permanent
4 affordability commitment together packed, so RAD
5 Pack.

6 The program aims to convert the funding stream of
7 an estimated 62,000 NYCHA units from public housing
8 operating funds known as section 9 to Section 8
9 funding. As part of the Department of Housing and
10 Preservations ten year capital plan, \$300 million is
11 allocated to NYCHA in Fiscal 2022 for RAD
12 transactions. Can you please provide us with an
13 update on the transaction for the upcoming new
14 bundles of units scheduled for 2021? And what is the
15 timeline for the transaction? And to date, how many
16 units have been converted under NYCHA's
17 Administration of the RAD program across the bundles
18 and developments.

19 GREG RUSS: Sure, so under the RAD, we have
20 converted about 9,517 units. That's eight bundles,
21 50 developments. To date, those conversions have
22 raised \$1.76 billion in capital improvements based on
23 the 20 year need across those developments.

24 And we're planning to convert another 6,500 units
25 in 2021. And working with those properties to keep

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2 that on schedule for this year. And there will be
3 additional rounds probably a request for expression
4 of interest later in this year, we'll put another one
5 of those documents out but that would be for
6 conversions that would likely occur next year.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, with everything
8 you just said, how - just can you explain how that
9 \$1.76 billion that came in; how is that actually
10 utilized to bring down your total estimated capital
11 need? Because we hear that you know \$40 billion you
12 know a few years ago was \$17 billion but with these
13 conversions, the capital repair needs continue to
14 increase.

15 GREG RUSS: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: But you made these
17 conversions and you received funding. Can you
18 explain why that need is not decreasing as opposed to
19 increasing?

20 GREG RUSS: So, uhm, first, these properties have
21 received substantial improvement. Let's be clear
22 about that. These are new kitchens and baths, new
23 systems and that kind of thing. But one of the
24 things is, every property that's not been converted
25 is waiting and still counting of course. This does

eat into the 40 but keep in mind the 40 is also
increasing at about \$1 billion a year.

So, as the properties deteriorate and the needs
are recalculated, we are eating into some of them.
We are not taking a big enough bite I guess maybe is
the easiest way to say that. So, it does have an
impact. It certainly benefits each property but
because for example when we think about the other
110,000 properties, those needs are significant and
obviously we have planned to try to address that but
those rates of increase PNA in my view kind of, as
long as we are decreasing the physical needs, but
that doesn't stop the other properties from making
higher demands.

So, there is offset. I am not going to tell you
that it doesn't help. It does help tremendously. It
eats into that \$40 billion but maybe not at a fast
enough rate that we would like to see. Obviously,
we're confined by the process to do the resident
engagement, get the thing set up and do it correctly.
So, it makes it dead but not perhaps as big of one as
we would wish.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, thank you so
much. Chair Dromm, I am going to stop there because

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I know that you know our colleagues have their hands
raised.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If any Council Members have
questions for NYCHA, please use the Zoom raise hand
function and you will be added to the queue. Council
Members, please keep your questions to five minutes
including answers. Also, please wait for the
Sergeant at Arms to tell you when your time begins.
The Sergeant will then let you know when your time is
up.

We will now hear from Council Member Rosenthal.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much.

Hey Chair, how are you doing?

GREG RUSS: Good Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Good, I am double
zooming so sorry, if I unmute at the wrong place at
the wrong time.

GREG RUSS: I am filled with admiration that you
could even consider that.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I know, I do it all
the time. I really am curious about the – I am now
the Chair of the Committee, the Subcommittee on the
Capital Budget. And I would like to have a better

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1 understanding of what you have in your commitment
2 plan for this fiscal year and how much you plan to
3 spend in this fiscal year? And what your commitment
4 plan is for next year?
5

6 GREG RUSS: For capital spending?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Yes.

8 GREG RUSS: Okay, I am going to ask Annika if she
9 could go ahead and give us the numbers that we have
10 proposed there.

11 ANNIKA LESCOTT: Sorry, I had a hard time getting
12 off mute. Uhm, okay, so in terms of the OMB
13 Executive Plan, there is \$1.6 billion in total city
14 capital committed to NYCHA. And that is both Borough
15 President, Council and Mayoral and that's for the
16 upcoming year.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Sorry, just to be,
18 let's just uhm, so let me just be clear. So, I want
19 to know what's the capital for this fiscal year and
20 how much have you spent this year, FY21?

21 ANNIKA LESCOTT: Okay, so for FY21 our capital
22 commitment rate is five percent of the —

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: No, that's not what I
24 asked. What's your total capital plan? What's the
25 dollar amount?

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2 ANNIKA LESCOTT: For city capital? So, I guess I
3 am trying to understand.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: You can put them all
5 together. No need to separate. Don't make it more
6 complicated.

7 GREG RUSS: Okay, I say the capital project
8 budget estimated this for '21 is \$2.2 billion.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay and how much have
10 you spent by the end of the year?

11 GREG RUSS: So, I don't have uh, I know we are
12 spending somewhere around.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Is that the five
14 percent?

15 GREG RUSS: Well, it's no, no, because the
16 capital comes from three different sources, so the
17 federal capital, we always spend in terms of the two
18 years to obligate, four years to expend and we burned
19 through about -

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I mean, that a good
21 first question. Do you spend all the capital money
22 you get each year?

23 GREG RUSS: Not all of it, no.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Why not?
25

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2 GREG RUSS: Well, the federal capital allows two
3 years just to sign a contract.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Do you spend all of it
5 within the two years you are allowed?

6 GREG RUSS: Yes, yes.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Is there ever any
8 remaining?

9 GREG RUSS: We have a really good track record on
10 two years.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay, so let's put
12 aside the capital. Let's set aside federal. So, now
13 we are left with what? City and state?

14 GREG RUSS: Yes, city funding. Of course we have
15 the \$450 million that we are going to be spending
16 towards boilers and elevators that's been in design
17 build. And we will probably -

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: If you could just do
19 so the - so, what's the spend rate on your capital
20 commitment plan for FY21 excluding federal?

21 GREG RUSS: About \$60 million to \$70 million a
22 month, each month.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: What's your universe?

24 GREG RUSS: Against some of the numbers I was
25 just describing.

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1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Alright, I don't mean
3 - maybe I am not paying attention because I really am
4 double zooming. So, Fiscal Year '21, your total
5 nonfederal is how much?

6 GREG RUSS: We have all the state funding that
7 has been obligated in future and that's in desi- So,
8 it's in design and we have been drawing down for
9 design funds but we haven't spent the capital
10 portions of that.

11 So, we plan to - I hope they have that under
12 contract by the end of the year.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: This should be such a
14 simple answer. I don't know how to ask the question
15 to make it simple. Let's exclude state, let's
16 exclude federal and just talk about city. Is that -
17 maybe that's faster and easier.

18 GREG RUSS: Okay. You know, city funding this
19 year, Annika, do you have a number for our city funds
20 this year?

21 ANNIKA LESCOTT: Yes, so the number that I quoted
22 previously, \$1.6 billion.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: \$1.6 billion is in the
24 commitment plan.

25 ANNIKA LESCOTT: City capital.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Right and then FY22?

3 ANNIKA LESCOTT: Sorry, one second. \$1.6 billion
4 in FY 2021 and the FY 2022 number is sorry, I don't
5 want to misspeak here. I'm sorry, and the FY 2022
6 number is \$402.8 million and that is city capital.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Uh huh.

8 ANNIKA LESCOTT: On the expense side -

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So, in FY '21, how
10 much have you spent of the \$1.6 billion?

11 ANNIKA LESCOTT: So, we have only committed five
12 percent of that amount.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Got it and by the end
14 of this year, how much will you have committed? Is
15 that gonna stay at five?

16 ANNIKA LESCOTT: I think the commitment rate will
17 stay at five. So, in that \$1.6 billion that I
18 mentioned is \$750 million. That was for the HUD FDNY
19 agreement and we were not allowed to spend those
20 funds without an approved city capital action plan.
21 That plan was recently approved and so, now we can
22 begin to spend down those funds.

23 So, the \$1.6 billion in FY 2021, there is \$750
24 million that could not be spent prior to the action
25 plan. So, that commitment rate is -

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1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So, of the \$9.3
3 billion left, what was your spend rate for that?

4 GREG RUSS: I think we'll have to -

5 ANNIKA LESCOTT: \$80 million.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Sorry?

7 ANNIKA LESCOTT: \$80 million.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: \$80 million of roughly
9 \$900 million?

10 ANNIKA LESCOTT: That's correct.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Got it and then are
12 you planning and I don't know when you would reflect
13 this. I just don't really know the NYCHA budget so
14 well. So, when are you planning on reflecting that?
15 When would you move the I guess \$750 over to '22?

16 ANNIKA LESCOTT: So, the fund would roll into the
17 next fiscal year if we don't spend them. And so, we
18 anticipate that the majority of those funds will roll
19 into the next city fiscal year 2022. At which point
20 we will begin to spend in accordance with the capital
21 action plan.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Well, you also have
23 the \$900 million which is now \$800 million. So, you
24 will have \$800 and then plus the \$750, two, five,
25 twelve, nineteen, so, \$1.9 billion. What's your

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1 expectation for spend of next years capital plan now
2 that all the pauses have been lifted?

3
4 ANNIKA LESCOTT: So, I think we can get back to
5 you on a firm answer. Capital projects as you know,
6 are on longer time horizons and the city doesn't
7 allow this to outlay in accordance with how we
8 actually think we are going to spend.

9 So, every year whatever you don't spend just
10 rolls with you to the very next year.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Chair, is that
12 something that you - it sounds like there are some
13 hiccups with the city. I am not going to spend the
14 time now delving into it but have you been able to
15 figure those out? These sound like management
16 hurdles that you could - this is why you are here you
17 know.

18 GREG RUSS: So, in - we are working on it. And
19 here, I will just say this. The easiest money that
20 we get to spend is federal money. The benchmarks are
21 clear. The requirements for the spend are clear.
22 The definitions are clear. When we combine with
23 other sources, there are particular things and some
24 of this has to do with just how the money is
25

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provided. The state has its requirements. The city
has its.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So, learning about the
city requirements, like what can we do to help you
learn the city requirement and get over?

GREG RUSS: Well, one of the things I would like
to do is come back to you with the exact numbers and
the burn rate that we talked about. Because - uhm,
and then we can show you some of the things that we
do encounter and I think that's a longer conversation
I can give you today.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I am happy to meet
about it and I certainly -

GREG RUSS: No, I would like to as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Don't want to take the
Chairs times.

GREG RUSS: No, no, no, it's fine.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I mean you have been
here for a really long time now and I just am
surprised to hear that you still - that there would
still be hurdles. I mean, my expectation with NYCHA
always is a big eye roll right. This hurdle, that
hurdle, that hurdle but given your roll you know to
help us get over all those hurdles - I'm just

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wondering when you expect to be able to get a
commitment, a spend rate that's higher than five
percent for city money. Do you think next year you
will be able to spend the whole \$1.9 billion?

GREG RUSS: I can't answer that we would do that.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Do you need more
staff? Do you need better systems? Do you need
clarity from OMB?

GREG RUSS: Uh, I think we are spending this
money as fast as we can. I think we're spending it -

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: No, no, no, you are
spending five percent. So, spending as fast as you
can gets us -

GREG RUSS: But Council Member, some of the
design time on this alone is 12 months.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I'm can't - I'm not in
your job. I don't know what the right answer is. I
just spoke to the SCA about a project in our district
where design time is two weeks to a month. Then they
are going to put it out to bid. That will take six
weeks by law and then they can start construction.
So, design takes 12 months. Wow.

GREG RUSS: Or it could take longer. These are
very -

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Do you want to talk
3 about - I mean, I guess in our meeting, I would like
4 you to come back with your analysis of why it takes
5 12 months and what you have been doing with the
6 city's help or the federal help to expedite. I mean,
7 before you came, was it 24 months and now it is down
8 to 12? And let me tell you, I have all empathy for
9 you. You know when I started seven years ago, Mitch
10 Silver said there were 70, seven zero steps in order
11 to get a project from money in the budget to ribbon
12 cutting, seven zero. 70 steps, years and upon his
13 departure, I think he saved you know two months. So,
14 I get it. This is thorny but he had a dedicated team
15 who specialized in cutting through red tape and
16 bureaucracy to fix this. Do you have one of those
17 teams?

18 GREG RUSS: Yes.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: How big is it?

20 GREG RUSS: It could spine into capital but if we
21 want to do something that's really revolutionary,
22 then we should let the city funds be spent in
23 accordance with the federal rules.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay, you are above my
25 pay grade.

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1
2 GREG RUSS: No, no -

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I mean, I don't know
4 details and you know -

5 GREG RUSS: I'm just saying that I'm just saying
6 that each time we get a source of funding, there is a
7 different set of rules.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: You know, welcome to
9 government. You know that. You know that already.
10 I deal with nonprofits all the time who get a
11 different amount of money to pay their social workers
12 that they have to deal with.

13 GREG RUSS: No, I understand that.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: It comes with the
15 territory.

16 GREG RUSS: But if you are asking a question,
17 what can we do to expedite capital.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: No, I asked what have
19 you done since you expedite?

20 GREG RUSS: And that I can give you when we have
21 our chance to talk. I can give you the specific
22 things that we are looking at. The specific things
23 that we tried. You've got to remember too, that the
24 bulk of the capital projects that we are dealing with
25

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2 now, we are moratorium. I mean, they were not able
3 to spend -

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: That only explains - I
5 mean, the whole city had that. Again -

6 GREG RUSS: But -

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay, I am going to
8 move on. Thank you very. By the way Vito, thank you
9 so much for your help the other day. You know how
10 much the tenant leaders love you. I got to see that.
11 I didn't realize how much they appreciate you but
12 you know, the fact that you are there for them, like
13 that I've never seen. That doesn't happen on my
14 NYCHA walk throughs and so, I know I am broken record
15 but thank goodness you agreed to stay at NYCHA and
16 thank you. Thank you on behalf of the tenants in my
17 district for all this amazing work. You are really a
18 breath. Thank you.

19 I was going to say a breath of fresh air but you
20 have been there, so I can't say it's fresh air but
21 you are extraordinary. Thank you.

22 VITO MUSTACIUOLO: I appreciate that. Thank you.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you Chairs.

24 GREG RUSS: Sure.

25

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1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you very much.

3 Chair Russ, thank you very much for coming in. We
4 have no further questions. Chair Ampry-Samuel, did
5 you want to ask any further questions?

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I actually have
7 several more questions.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Oh, okay. I am so sorry.

9 GREG RUSS: Council Member, that's good.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I didn't see any Council
11 Members raise their hands. I apologize to you.

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I didn't want to go
13 through all of my questions and I see that some of
14 the other Council Members logged off who had their
15 hands raised. Uhm, so just jumping right into it.

16 The administration and I [BACKGROUND NOISE
17 7:20:57]. There is construction clearly.

18 GREG RUSS: That's alright. We've been there.

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I am trying to yell
20 over it.

21 GREG RUSS: Yeah, yeah.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: The de Blasio
23 Administration announced several recent initiatives
24 that attempt to close the digital divide and connect
25 more NYCHA residents to broadband internet access.

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1 The pandemic underscored the fact that broadband
2 internet access is not a luxury but essential. And
3 as we are moving towards this budget negotiation, I
4 have to ask about Fiscal 2021 Budgets Adoption. As
5 part of last years budget adoption. There was a
6 reallocation or they redirected \$537 million from the
7 NYPD Capital Budget to NYCHA to expand broadband and
8 to community centers.
9

10 Fiscal 2021 Adopted Budget redirected \$87 million
11 in those capital funds to do it to extend new
12 internet service to 200,000 NYCHA residents that was
13 supposed to extend to service in 84 NYCHA
14 developments.

15 And so, since that was a commitment from last
16 years adopted budget, I would like to know what is
17 happening or you know, can you provide us with an
18 update of that funding for 84 NYCHA development that
19 were supposed to receive internet access?

20 GREG RUSS: So, we have kind of two rounds of
21 broadband. And the first is last year we had an RFP
22 that was released last summer and there was no
23 funding attached to that one but we are working with
24 six vendors who came through that pipeline to get
25 licensing agreements in place.

1 We have five of the six have a licensing
2 agreement and these five are now actually working
3 towards deploying the technology at the developments.
4 And uhm, we have both public area Wi-Fi and in unit
5 Wi-Fi at select developments. I could share those
6 names with you but one, it would impact 6,400
7 residents on the public area Wi-Fi and the other is
8 24,000 resident on the in unit Wi-Fi. So, from last
9 year, that has started.

10 This year, we had the city's broadband RFP which
11 had the funding attached to it that you described.
12 And that just came out in April and under that plan,
13 there is - once the proposals are received, there
14 will be a screening on the city side and then there
15 will be vendors coming to, over to the NYCHA's side
16 and we would begin to identify which projects,
17 properties and activities.

18 There is three areas of activity in the city RFP
19 and some of that is infrastructure. And then, once
20 they pass those projects along to us, we'll enter
21 into the license agreement and start implementation.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: What's the timeline on
23 that?
24

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1
2 GREG RUSS: Well, Council Member, we expect to
3 start getting referrals through the RFP process you
4 know, maybe in the next couple of months after they
5 are evaluated. So, over summer we would begin I hope
6 to begin to get contractors in place.

7 That's our you know, that's our best estimate.
8 We got to get the licensing agreements, scope of work
9 and that kind of thing, so we understand exactly what
10 we are getting.

11 But it will take a little time to both get
12 through the selection process and get the vendor in
13 place.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, another piece of
15 the \$537 million that was removed from NYPD for NYCHA
16 residents was \$22 million in capital funds for the
17 renovation of Monroe Houses, Sheepshead Bay Houses,
18 Wagner and a community center at Ocean Bay. And this
19 is for NYCHA community centers.

20 So, can you speak to what's happening and an
21 update related to that funding that was removed from
22 NYPD budget to NYCHA for these community centers.

23 GREG RUSS: Uhm, do either Vito or Annika have an
24 update that we can share? I think that - are they in
25

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1 design? I think that they are in design but I just
2 want to confirm.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Uh, waiting for – there we
5 go.

6 ANNIKA LESCOTT: Thank you. The projects are in
7 the planning phase and we can provide an update as
8 they move along to let you know the timeline for
9 completion.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: What does that mean
11 the planning phase?

12 ANNIKA LESCOTT: I'm sorry.

13 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: When did you start
14 planning?

15 ANNIKA LESCOTT: This fiscal year.

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, for NYCHA's fiscal
17 year, so in January you started planning or?

18 ANNIKA LESCOTT: We started in the city's Fiscal
19 Year 2021, planning the projects.

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, alright, moving
21 on. Can you speak briefly on a revenue coming in for
22 Bill to Preserve. Under the Bill to Preserve NYCHA
23 2.0, the city will replace the existing half market,
24 half rate, the half market rate, half affordable 50-
25 50 program at NYCHA sites to 70-30. What is the

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2 status of the Bill to Preserve Initiative at your
3 largest site Chelsey Houses? And what is the
4 estimated timeframe for the release of the RFP? And
5 will NYCHA adopt the working group model to the other
6 potential sites under this initiative for Wyckoff
7 Gardens, homes and LaGuardia?

8 GREG RUSS: So, we issued a substantially revised
9 RFP based on the working group. The RFP took the
10 working group recommendations and for the first time,
11 actually includes a resident evaluation component for
12 selection. So, we are very encouraged that we are
13 able to offer this as a result of the process that
14 went on there.

15 Uhm, that RFP is I think still open, so I don't
16 have - I haven't gotten proposals yet to get a sense
17 of what will happen there in Chelsea but it does
18 include obviously the kinds of potential infill that
19 we talked about with the working group. They of
20 course opted to do infill on selected locations.
21 They opted not to do any kind of demolition to any
22 public housing, so we are kind of interested to see
23 what the development community says about that.

24 The parts of the working group I think that are
25 significant, are making sure that the resident rights

1
2 are protected. We delved into that quite a bit,
3 right down to the house rules in fact.

4 So, we took a lot of material out of that and are
5 bringing that into the RAD PACT that we are doing
6 going forward. So, I just think that some of that
7 has been tremendously helpful in terms of resident
8 engagement, making sure that the rights are buttoned
9 up and so forth.

10 I wouldn't represent that we can use the entire
11 working group process exactly as we did in the
12 Chelsea model, but we are going to take a lot of that
13 forward to do resident engagement with PACT and RAD.
14 I would have to - I don't have a number on the
15 largest Bill to Preserve, so I am not sure I can give
16 you that today.

17 But I could give you those numbers for anything
18 that we have done and any of the air rights that we
19 might have sold. To my knowledge, we really haven't
20 been in a situation where we have had a substantial
21 impact yet on those elements. So, but I can share it
22 with you. I can get it from real estate and provide
23 it to you.

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1
2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, so my next
3 question was related to the Transfer to Preserve.

4 So, you haven't received any -

5 GREG RUSS: We have - on Transfer to Preserve we
6 have. We have done two or three but I don't want to
7 misspeak on the total revenue raised, but I could
8 provide that for you. So, yeah.

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay.

10 GREG RUSS: Most of those were development rights
11 or small parcel transfers but we do have some income
12 from that.

13 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Uhm, so you do have
14 some income from that. Can you share that with us
15 now?

16 GREG RUSS: I, I, if one of the staff could give
17 me a number, I'd be glad to but I don't, I don't want
18 to recall - I know there is two or three transactions
19 and I don't have the total at my fingertips.

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, so which
21 developments? Let's just start there.

22 GREG RUSS: Uhm, I would need to check on which
23 developments.

24 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, is Ingersoll one
25 of them?

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1
2 GREG RUSS: Uh, yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And Ingersoll?

4 GREG RUSS: Yeah, Ingersoll is one and what, what
5 - we have completed two air right transfers.

6 Ingersoll in Brooklyn and Hops Court Manhattan, they
7 have generated about \$27 million. Thank you staff.

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: \$27 million each or
9 \$27 -

10 GREG RUSS: Total.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Total okay, okay.

12 Okay, so moving onto pest and waste management. In
13 January 2021, the NYCHA Monitor approved a corrective
14 action plan, outlining requirements and milestones
15 that NYCHA must meet related to waste management and
16 pest control.

17 Under the plan, NYCHA will better coordinate and
18 handle pests and waste incidents by targeting the
19 root causes of infestations and waste incidents. Has
20 NYCHA been responding to work order requests related
21 to pests during the pandemic and has there been major
22 changes in response times? And how many work orders
23 are currently open for pest remediation across the
24 NYCHA portfolio and what is the time it takes to
25 remediate these conditions?

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1
2 GREG RUSS: I'm going to go to ask if Vito could
3 give us an update on what we are doing with the pests
4 and wastes.

5 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And if you can also
6 just speak to the cost associated. The capital cost
7 and operating cost associated.

8 GREG RUSS: Okay, okay.

9 VITO MUSTACIUOLO: Sure and I will ask Annika to
10 assist me with the dollars. With respect to per the
11 pandemic, we were still responding to severe cases of
12 infestation and conditions such as rats. We did
13 suspend temporarily some of the minor responses to
14 rodents and pests. We have since recently did the
15 Work Order Guidance and it is back to business as
16 usual as of May 1st.

17 We have received a number of funding streams to
18 deal with pest and waste management and so, if I can
19 just talk briefly about you know the \$47 million that
20 we have spent in dealing with infrastructure issues.
21 Such as replacement of interior, exterior compactors,
22 bulk crushers, rats labs. That project is about 75
23 percent complete. We in fact just met this week with
24 the Monitor and his team. They are making a number
25

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2 of suggestions with their outside experts as how we
3 can improve.

4 We are going to continue to work on that such as
5 door sweeps. We have installed 8,000 door sweeps as
6 a preventative measure. They have pointed out some
7 of the deficiencies and so we are correcting. With
8 respect to integrated pest management, we need to
9 improve. All of that work is underway. It's a major
10 undertaking but we are closely again with the
11 monitor, with the outside experts that the monitor
12 has on their staff and we're going to continue to
13 make improvements.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: You mentioned \$47
15 million. You said that's the cost or?

16 VITO MUSTACIUOLO: Yeah, so we had spent \$47
17 million or actually I should say 75 percent of that
18 has already been spent. I believe and Annika, please
19 correct me if I am wrong, but that was the money
20 provided by the Mayor's Office through the
21 Neighborhood Rat Reduction program.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, you received — so
23 \$47 million was allocated — uhm, the allocation to —

24 VITO MUSTACIUOLO: That's one of the allocations
25 that we received.

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CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And you spent 75
percent of the \$47 million?

VITO MUSTACIUOLO: 75 percent of the work has
been completed. Annika, is that correct of the
dollars?

ANNIKA LESCOTT: You are correct on the total
dollars. You are correct on the total dollars of the
\$47 million. We'd have to get back to you on exactly
how much has been spent as of today.

VITO MUSTACIUOLO: Okay, in addition to that,
we've also gone out and purchased items such as two
electric rear loader garbage trucks, which we paid
for out of our budget. And through some of
allocations that we received from elected officials,
we also purchased six wall electric vehicles to help
move some of the waste around some of our smaller
developments.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay and as of the
2021 Adopted Budget, what is the contracted value for
third party vendors to do this specific work?

VITO MUSTACIUOLO: Uh, we're going to have to -

ANNIKA LESCOTT: Okay.

VITO MUSTACIUOLO: Do have that Annika?

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ANNIKA LESCOTT: Yes, I do. So, the third party
vendors to complete all the work with regard to the
pillars is \$138 million. That's \$52 million in the
specific departmental budgets in addition to \$86
million that really just covers heating and elevator
repairs.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, that's for all -
so, you're talking about the agreement now. All of
the total -

ANNIKA LESCOTT: All of the pillar areas. The
third party vendors for all of the pillar areas.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, I was just
talking about the pest and waste management.

GREG RUSS: I think we'd have to break that down
for you but we could.

ANNIKA LESCOTT: We do. Yes, we would. I have
the total for pest and waste. There is \$36 million
in operating dollars and there is \$16 million in
capital dollars for a total of \$52 million for 2021.
NYCHA Fiscal 2021. So, calendar year, the way that
our budget is adopted but we could get you the
specific amount that's just for contracts for pest
and waste.

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CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay and I am going to
have the same question related to lead-based paint.

GREG RUSS: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: As well, so I will
need to know that. So, in January 2021, the NYCHA
Monitor approved the visual action plan before
improving lead compliance and abatement. Uhm, NYCHA
has completed more than 60,000 XRF inspections and
has attempted to inspect an addition 10,000
apartments presumed to have lead paint hazards. How
many NYCHA units to date have tested positive for
lead? How many visual assessments have been
conducted? And again, how much funding is allocated
to address the lead paint hazards in the NYCHA's five
year operating and capital plans and I had the same
question about the vendors.

GREG RUSS: Sure, Vito, can you start?

VITO MUSTACIUOLO: Sure, I can start on the XRF
Initiative. So, the total universe is approximately
134,000 apartments that we expected to have the test.
To date, we have attempted a little over 140,000. We
have completed or accessed 91,887. We do look at the
results that have come back. To date, we have
received 66,000 results, actually 66,600. What we

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1 are seeing as of today is encouraging. We are seeing
2 32 percent of those are testing positive and 68
3 percent are testing negative. That's the
4 encouragement that we seeing 68 percent of the units
5 that have tested negative.
6

7 Obviously with the positives, we are putting them
8 into different buckets because what we want to do is
9 abate the positive. Alright, so we're looking to see
10 where we could do abatement when there is only one or
11 two components that tested positive or apartments
12 where you might have multiple components that test
13 positive. We have to look at a better approach.
14 Abatement might not be feasible in the short-term.
15 That might require additional work. As for the
16 visuals, we completed our visuals in 2020. There
17 were 38,000 attempts and we actually completed
18 33,000. We did have some access issues but we had
19 about an 86 percent completion rate.

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, thank you and
21 it's just always helpful to know - to have an idea as
22 to what's happening with the third party contracts.

23 GREG RUSS: Sure.

24 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Yeah.
25

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1
2 GREG RUSS: Yeah, we can get you that Council
3 Member. We just didn't, we had totals but didn't
4 break it by contract versus labor, so.

5 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, uhm, and my last
6 question. So, you know we're always talking about
7 revenue was coming in and we know that there has been
8 a struggle with this pandemic and families being able
9 to pay their rent. What is NYCHA's plan for tenant
10 assessments for when the statewide eviction
11 moratorium is lifted in August?

12 GREG RUSS: So, I'm gonna, I'll just start with a
13 little bit. So, we have been as I said in the
14 testimony, reducing rents at a pretty significant
15 rate. The last time I checked with staff, they told
16 me that we were processing interims starting last
17 March through this year at about double the rate we
18 would normally do. So, we have been reducing the
19 rent charge and that has helped a significant number
20 of households. In addition to those, we are also
21 processing annual recertifications that would be -
22 have the potential to reduce rent as well.

23 So, having said that, we do have arears however
24 and our thinking, Annika, do you have the numbers on
25

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1 the rent, just to give a sense of what we're looking
2 at?

3
4 ANNIKA LESCOTT: Absolutely. So, as you
5 mentioned in the testimony, our rent loss from the
6 beginning of the crisis through April is around \$70
7 million. Of course, much of that was born in the
8 last fiscal year.

9 \$66 million in the prior fiscal year and \$4
10 million in this current year. We are seeing some
11 signs that's it's rebounding but it continues to be a
12 challenge for us.

13 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, thank you so
14 much. Chair Dromm, that is the end of my questions.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you Chair Ampry-Samuel.
16 I just want to apologize again to you. I misread my
17 text message and I thought it said that we were
18 ending. Anyway, I do see one last Council Member
19 Carlos Menchaca who is here. So, Council Member
20 Menchaca.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Yes, thank you and
23 thank you Chair Dromm and Ampry-Samuel. I'm just
24 trying to get my notes here. If this was already
25 asked, please just let me know.

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1
2 GREG RUSS: Sure.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: But NYCHA still
4 receives significant funding from Section 9 federal
5 subsidy.

6 GREG RUSS: Yes.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: What is the authority
8 doing to maximize the Section 9 federal subsidy?

9 GREG RUSS: So, that's a very interesting
10 question Council Member because the Section 9 subsidy
11 comes to all housing authorities under a formula.
12 Congress, there have been two formula's. One that
13 goes all the way back to 1976, which Congress
14 replaced with an updated formula in the early 2000's.
15 So, that formula has a couple of key indicators.

16 For example, Annika gave the number on our rental
17 decline. Well, HUD can adjust sort of what they
18 think the rent collections are going to be based on
19 extraordinary circumstances. So, that's one factor.

20 So, most of it, I would say though, we have a
21 formula amount and that's what we get. We can do
22 some things inside that amount to bring more
23 resources to us. For example, an energy performance
24 contract, where we cut down on our utility expenses.
25 HUD will let us share some of that savings. I think

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up to 75 percent but the other 25 goes back to the
feds but we can keep that.

So, there are some initiatives inside this budget
and I don't want to get too much in the weeds but it
is weedy. There are some things inside there that we
can do. We can also occasionally get in
appropriations bills, additional money that comes to
us through Section 9. Sometimes under an emergency
basis. Sometimes it's part of the capital program.
I think we got a lead grant recently that would give
us a little extra money towards lead abatement.

So, uhm, it is possible to work with it but I
would never represent to you that we have a lot of
room in that formula. You know, that's kind of, we
can kind of work around the margins but the base
amount calculations do kind of run through the
numbers.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay, I might want to
just follow up with you or your staff after that.

GREG RUSS: Yeah, we'd be glad to.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay, there is an
alarmingly high rate of public housing tenants
without an up-to-date lease. In Red Hook west for
example, in November of 2020, 24 percent of the

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1 household had a past due lease recertification. Is
2 NYCHA losing out on that section of federal subsidy
3 when tenants are without a lease? And what steps are
4 you taking at NYCHA to take this - well, just to
5 bring improvements to the compliance and support to
6 tenants so that they can be certified?
7

8 GREG RUSS: So, we are revamping the entire
9 recertification process. We just have been testing
10 it. We tested a couple sites. We are trying to make
11 it as simple as possible to your point about how the
12 process works. We are not actually losing subsidy at
13 this point. HUD does give you some time to recover
14 from a lapsed recert. We don't get a penalty right
15 away.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Is that 100 percent?

17 GREG RUSS: You know I would have to go back and
18 look. I don't think it's - that is an index that HUD
19 looks at but I don't think we've been penalized in
20 the way we are talking about here to a significant
21 degree.

22 So, we have a chance to rebound and we're hopeful
23 that this summer we're going to have a completely
24 redone business model for the recerts. Much simpler,
25 much more straight forward and we think that's going

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2 to really contribute to us getting more of them done
3 timely. And one of the things that happened, HUD did
4 wave a number of requirements because of COVID. And
5 we think we have a good chance of getting them to
6 make it permanent.

7 So, for example, if you said, well, I have a
8 change of something you know and we said, well you
9 are going to need a birth certificate. You could
10 photograph, you know like we do in other ways.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Yeah.

12 GREG RUSS: So, we've got some options to make
13 this easier to do so we don't get so far behind at
14 some of the locations, yeah.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Uh, is there time for
16 one more question Chairs? Or I can stop.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Very quick.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay, very quick. The
19 state is pushing a NYCHA Employee Accountability Act.
20 I don't know if you are tracking that in the state.

21 GREG RUSS: Yeah, yeah.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: We are proposing a
23 resolution to support that, which would essentially
24 allow for us to rethink how repair tickets connect to
25 rebate. And so, can you just - I have a lot of

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1 questions on this but this is the quick version of
2 how are you thinking about that? Are you preparing
3 for that to kind of move through? How will that
4 impact NYCHA?
5

6 GREG RUSS: Uh, we, uh, we met with the sponsor
7 yesterday but I have -

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Good.

9 GREG RUSS: Yeah, so we are talking and I don't
10 have a debrief from staff yet but we could give that,
11 give you a sense of that. But we are meeting and we
12 are following it. We are starting to estimate the
13 cost impacts of something like that and are beginning
14 to share that information but I could have Brian
15 Honan circle back and we could give you an update as
16 a follow-up to this question.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you.

18 ANNIKA LESCOTT: So, Greg just to follow-up on
19 your point about the cost impact so far. As it is
20 written, we think the bill could cost NYCHA upwards
21 of \$22 million per year in terms of the you know the
22 tenant of the bill. And so, that's something that
23 the Chair mentioned we met with the sponsor about.

24 And that has a significant impact for us. So you
25 know, I know \$22 million doesn't seem like a very

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1 large number when we are talking about a budget of \$4
2 billion but you know, that, when you look at it, that
3 could be something like a loss of 25 percent of our
4 monthly public housing rental revenue.
5

6 So, you know when you take that number—

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: [INAUDIBLE 7:48:40].

8 ANNIKA LESCOTT: I'm sorry?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Just to clarify that.

10 \$22 million would essentially go back to tenants who
11 have been in apartments with no utility — a downed —

12 GREG RUSS: Like a gas outage?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Yeah.

14 ANNIKA LESCOTT: It covers gas, electricity and
15 heat, hot water, you are correct.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: People who are having
17 to buy — maybe the electricity is down. Their food
18 rots and you know so, it's back into the hands of
19 tenants.

20 GREG RUSS: Yes.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay. Happy to talk
22 more about this later.

23 GREG RUSS: No, we could because the one thing
24 about rental, the rental income is important because
25 we spend it in that — literally in that month. HUD

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is estimating its payments on it. They give us a
payment each month and the combined amount. Rental
income plus subsidies, what we get to spend. So, it
has a very immediate impact, which is why we're so
sensitive to it but we will talk about it.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay, thank you. Thank
you Chairs.

GREG RUSS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Uhm, okay, I
think we're good. Am I right Counsel?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Uh, yes, that's correct
Chair. There is no more Council Members that have
raised their hands for questions.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, a whole bunch of texts
are coming in. Anyway, Commissioner, uh Commissioner
- uh Chair, thank you very much. This will conclude
today's hearing. Thank you to all the agencies for
being here today.

Before we close, I would like to remind the
Finance Committee members that we will be meeting
remotely again tomorrow at 10 a.m. and we will hear
from the Department of Finance, the Department of
Information Technology and Telecommunications and the

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Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department
of Corrections.

Very busy day tomorrow and Friday and Monday as
well. As a reminder to the public, the Committee
will be holding a remote hearing for public testimony
on the Executive Budget on Tuesday May 25th at 10
a.m. If you would like to testify at that hearing,
please register at www.council.nyc.gov/testify and
information about how to access the Zoom meeting will
be emailed to you. You may also submit written
testimony through the registration website or by
emailing testimony at council.nyc.gov.

Chair Russ, thank you again for being here.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I, I, I just wanted to
wait, real quick, uhm -

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Council Member Barron
actually has her hand raised and so, I didn't want to
close out because I looked over and I see her hand is
raised.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Oh, I see her, okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you. I came in, I
was out all day but I did come in at the end of this

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1 hearing and I just had to ask this question of the
2 Chairman.

3
4 And it's about RAD and Pack. We feel that our
5 housing developments, one of which was just added to
6 this package about six months ago without any prior
7 notice. We feel that this is being forced for the
8 residents that are there. They have been [INAUDIBLE
9 7:51:43] to ask that people are coming in
10 unannounced. That they don't know why people are
11 coming. People are coming representing NYCHA but in
12 fact are working on behalf LNM and we want to
13 represent our residents.

14 We did send you a letter and we expressed what
15 they said to us in terms of their concerns about
16 COVID and having perhaps unnecessary exposure. You
17 said you would suspend those kinds of interactions
18 but our residents have told us that they have
19 resumed.

20 So, we're very much concerned about that and
21 we're very much concerned about this apparent rush to
22 push these folks who are still very much confused
23 about what may and may not be a part of the RAD Pack
24 program. So, we are asking again, that you let these
25 private persons know that they are not to come. We

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1 had a meeting earlier this week also because it's a
2 continuing problem. We are asking that you again
3 have them know that this is suspended and they are
4 not to come and forcing themselves onto people during
5 this time.
6

7 And the other question that we have is, do you
8 understand that there is this great possibility that
9 we can get a sizable contribution allocation from the
10 federal government, which could help alleviate this
11 economic crisis that we're in and in fact keep public
12 housing public?

13 GREG RUSS: I do understand that. We do. In
14 fact, even with RAD, NYCHA is the owner. NYCHA is
15 not out of the picture even in the RAD deal.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So, does that mean you
17 are going to move the lead in the paint since you are
18 still the owner? Because you went to court to avoid
19 that.

20 GREG RUSS: No, no, actually Council Member we
21 did not go to court to avoid it. But we will yes, we
22 are fully bound to comply with the requirements of
23 the HUD agreement and with the Bias Consent Decree
24 under these properties. No one is trying to use RAD
25

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2 as a way to sort of get out of school or something
3 like that.

4 Uhm, and uhm, I would say that we're - this is
5 the first time there has actually been discussions in
6 congress about any kind of money that reflects the
7 actual capital need for the public housing program.

8 So, I think thinking about it sort of together if
9 I could, that's a great thing but we don't have a
10 number yet. We don't know the formula. We don't
11 know which of the competing bills will prevail. We
12 are hopeful that we will get something out of this
13 administration because the stars seem to be lining up
14 in a good way.

15 But I would represent that we feel we want to
16 continue to act to raise this capital in case what we
17 get from Washington doesn't meet our expectations or
18 we need to supplement it. So, I don't want to be -
19 I'm not trying to down play it but I am just trying
20 to maybe be realistic. We have potential but we're
21 not sure when that potential is going be realized.
22 And we would like to be in a position - we are
23 starting to plan for it. We're starting to think
24 about well, if we did get a slug of money, whether it
25

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1 is through the blueprint or from Washington, how
2 would we queue up substantial capital work.
3

4 And then to your concerns about the properties
5 that you mentioned, we did suspend those interactions
6 and as the COVID restrictions are being changed, we
7 are looking at resuming but I will ask staff what's
8 going on at that property and then we can circle back
9 if we need to follow-up with you. I'd be glad to do
10 that.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You are on mute Council
12 Member.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you so much and we
14 do want to say that we do want to acknowledge that
15 we're finally getting the community center renovated
16 at Unity Plaza after about ten years of waiting. So,
17 we are appreciative of that and looking forward to
18 move forward with that expeditiously to get that
19 resolved.

20 GREG RUSS: Great.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you to the Chairs.
22 Thank you so much for allowing me to get my question
23 in. Thank you.

24 GREG RUSS: Thank you Council Member.
25

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CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Absolutely. Again, thank you
to Chair Russ for coming in. Thank you my Co-Chair
Chair Ampry-Samuel as well and to all of the members
who have joined us. I have already read the closing
statement and I will say that this hearing is
adjourned at 5:03 p.m. in the afternoon. Thank you
[GAVEL]

GREG RUSS: Thank you everyone. Thank you staff.

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 July 14, 2021