

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Room 400, City Hall  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Tuesday, May 14, 2019  
10:23 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT DARRELL L. CLARKE  
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS  
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL  
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB  
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN  
COUNCILMAN WILLIAM K. GREENLEE  
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM  
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON  
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON  
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.  
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH  
COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN  
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

BILLS 190152, 190153, 190154, and 190155  
RESOLUTION 190164

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1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2                    COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Good  
3 morning. This hearing is called to  
4 order. This is the public hearing of the  
5 Committee of the Whole regarding Bill  
6 Nos. 190152, 190153, 190154, 190155, and  
7 Resolution No. 190164.

8                    The bills are:

9                    Bill No. 190152, an ordinance  
10 to adopt a Capital Program for the six  
11 Fiscal Years 2020 to 2025 inclusive.

12                   Bill No. 190153, an ordinance  
13 to adopt a Fiscal 2020 Capital Budget.

14                   Bill No. 190154, an ordinance  
15 adopting the Operating Budget for Fiscal  
16 Year 2020.

17                   Bill No. 190155, an ordinance  
18 amending Chapter 19-1500 of The  
19 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Wage and Net  
20 Profits Tax," by revising certain tax  
21 rates, under certain terms and  
22 conditions.

23                   And Resolution No. 190164,  
24 resolution providing for the approval by  
25 the Council of the City of Philadelphia

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           of a Revised Five Year Financial Plan for  
3           the City of Philadelphia covering Fiscal  
4           Years 2020 through 2024, and  
5           incorporating proposed changes with  
6           respect to Fiscal Year 2019, which is to  
7           be submitted by the Mayor to the  
8           Pennsylvania Intergovernmental  
9           Cooperation Authority pursuant to the  
10          Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement,  
11          authorized by an ordinance of this  
12          Council approved by the Mayor on January  
13          3rd, 1992 (Bill No. 1563-A), by and  
14          between the City and the Authority.

15                   Today we continue the public  
16          hearing of the Committee of the Whole to  
17          consider the bills just read that  
18          constitute proposed operating and capital  
19          spending measures for Fiscal Year 2020, a  
20          Capital Program, and a forward-looking  
21          Capital Plan for Fiscal Year 2020 through  
22          Fiscal Year 2025.

23                   Today we will hear testimony  
24          from the School District of Philadelphia.

25                   Please identify yourselves and

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 proceed. Good morning, everyone.

3 MS. WILKERSON: Good morning.

4 I'm Joyce Wilkerson. I'm President of  
5 the Board of Education.

6 DR. HITE: I'm Bill Hite,  
7 Superintendent of schools.

8 MS. EASLEY: I'm Asmeret  
9 Easley, Early Literacy Lead at Overbrook  
10 Educational Center.

11 MS. IBRAHIM: My name is Doha  
12 Ibrahim and I'm a junior at Abraham  
13 Lincoln High School.

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Good  
15 morning, everyone.

16 Ms. Wilkerson.

17 MS. WILKERSON: I think we want  
18 to begin with a video.

19 (Video played.)

20 MS. WILKERSON: Good morning,  
21 Councilman Greenlee and members of City  
22 Council. Thank you for the opportunity  
23 to testify before you today. Before  
24 proceeding with my written comments,  
25 prepared comments, I want to acknowledge

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           that there are two members in this  
3           Chamber who are going to be questioning  
4           us for the last time who have been  
5           longtime supporters of public education,  
6           Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown and  
7           you, Councilman Greenlee.

8                               (Applause.)

9                               COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
10          you.

11                              MS. WILKERSON: Support goes  
12          back to the early days of  
13          liquor-by-the-drink and some of the other  
14          battles that have been fought in this  
15          Chamber in support of public education,  
16          and I just wanted to acknowledge the  
17          contribution that you've made to the  
18          children in Philadelphia, and we will be  
19          missing you in the coming years. And  
20          so --

21                              COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
22          you. Thank you very much.

23                              MS. WILKERSON: Thank you so  
24          much.

25                              Before I turn it over to

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           Superintendent Hite, I want to  
3           acknowledge my fellow Board members who  
4           are here today and share a few short  
5           remarks on behalf of the Board of  
6           Education. With me this morning are  
7           Board members Julia Danzy, Leticia Egea  
8           Hinton, Mallory Fix-Lopez, Lee Huang, and  
9           Dr. Christopher McGinley.

10                        The FY 2019-2020 Lump Sum  
11           Statement and Five Year Financial Plan  
12           unanimously approved by the Board last  
13           month does not simply reflect an exercise  
14           in dollars and cents. It is a thoughtful  
15           and strategic investment plan that builds  
16           on prior investments and expands to new  
17           ones in the best interests of our  
18           students. It is a statement about what  
19           our School Board and the District  
20           leadership believe is most important to  
21           continue the progress we have made over  
22           the past several years - progress  
23           improving schools across our city,  
24           progress improving student achievement,  
25           progress restoring needed supports for

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           our schools, and progress making  
3           improvements to support safer, cleaner,  
4           and healthier schools for our students.

5                       As the video highlights, our  
6           investment plan is working. While we can  
7           all take pride in the shared  
8           accomplishment, we must acknowledge that  
9           there's much more work to do in order to  
10          provide all our students with the  
11          educational supports and opportunities  
12          they need to thrive.

13                      I thank this City Council for  
14          helping to bring much-needed resources to  
15          our schools and ask that each of you  
16          continue your support for our investment  
17          strategy. Our students deserve nothing  
18          less.

19                      At this time, I'll yield to  
20          Superintendent Hite for his testimony.

21                      DR. HITE: Thank you, Board  
22          President Wilkerson, and good morning,  
23          Councilman Greenlee and City  
24          Councilmembers. I too share in President  
25          Wilkerson's comments about the work that

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           you've done, Councilman Greenlee, and the  
3           work that Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds  
4           Brown has done over the past years to  
5           support our youth, and you will be  
6           missed, and I thank you for all that  
7           you've done on behalf of the children in  
8           our School District.

9                        I appreciate the opportunity to  
10          testify before you this morning.  
11          Yesterday I was in Harrisburg with my  
12          urban superintendent colleagues from  
13          across the state advocating for many  
14          needs of our public schools.

15                       I talked about how  
16          Pennsylvania's urban school districts are  
17          responsible for educating one of every  
18          seven children in our public schools.  
19          And as the largest school district in the  
20          state and one of the largest in the  
21          country, we must lead the way in  
22          graduating students today with the  
23          skills, knowledge, and experiences they  
24          need to be the workers, business owners,  
25          leaders, and entrepreneurs of tomorrow.



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2                   As you saw in the video and as  
3 Board President Wilkerson stated, we are  
4 making steady progress. We have set  
5 clear goals, prioritized investments to  
6 support these goals, and are now seeing  
7 positive outcomes from our efforts.

8                   Early literacy is one of our  
9 anchor goals and an area for targeted  
10 investment, because reading is  
11 foundational for all other learning.  
12 Students who are not skilled readers by  
13 fourth grade are less likely to succeed.  
14 Students who are not skilled -- since  
15 2014, we have provided training for  
16 kindergarten through third grade  
17 teachers, made reading a two-hour part of  
18 every early grade schedule, provided  
19 onsite early literacy coaches in every  
20 school, created leveled libraries in  
21 every K-3 classroom, and modernized 223  
22 early literacy classrooms in 19 schools  
23 with updated technology and furniture.

24                   To share a firsthand  
25 perspective on these investments and how

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           these investments are making a difference  
3           for teachers and students, I'd like to  
4           introduce to you this morning Asmeret  
5           Easley, an Early Literacy Lead at  
6           Overbrook Elementary Educational Center.

7                       MS. EASLEY: Good morning,  
8           Councilman Greenlee and City  
9           Councilmembers. Thank you for the  
10          opportunity to testify before you here  
11          today.

12                       In the words of the late B.B.  
13          King, the beautiful thing about learning  
14          is nobody can take it away from you.

15                       As educators, we are guiding  
16          students in preparation for the real  
17          world. That guidance starts with  
18          literacy. Matching sounds and  
19          identifying words are major milestones in  
20          building a strong foundation that will  
21          allow our students to later acquire more  
22          complex skills.

23                       When I came into the District  
24          three years ago, I didn't have adequate  
25          libraries for the children, guided

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           readers, challenging on-level texts, or  
3           coaches who knew how to move kids  
4           forward. Three years ago, I had a  
5           student in my kindergarten class at  
6           Overbrook Educational Center, OEC,  
7           Khydeem, who would hold books upside  
8           down, could only identify seven out of 26  
9           letters, and didn't have the stamina to  
10          read for five minutes. Fast forward  
11          three years later, we now have the tools  
12          to reach our goal, and that same student,  
13          who couldn't read for more than five  
14          minutes, just sat down for his first  
15          PSSA. As I proctored the exam for over  
16          90 minutes, I saw his focus and his  
17          self-determination, and all the passion  
18          I've had for his learning since K, I now  
19          saw in him.

20                    Veteran teachers who have been  
21          in the District for years have shared  
22          with me their past frustrations with the  
23          lack of continued support and resources  
24          needed to set students up for success.  
25          It felt like an impossible task. But now

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           coaching has provided educators with  
3           ongoing support to maintain motivation  
4           and give them the encouragement they  
5           didn't have before.

6                         In 2015, I attended a week-long  
7           summer institute as part of the early  
8           literacy initiative. I walked away with  
9           new knowledge of the District's early  
10          literacy concepts, strategies to use as  
11          best practices in my classroom, and a  
12          desire to continue growing.

13                        When I stepped back into the  
14          classroom, I was able to use the tools  
15          and resources provided by the District to  
16          help my students master strategies they  
17          need in order to read. At OEC, our  
18          classroom libraries now contain authentic  
19          texts that support students' ability to  
20          learn language and vocabulary through the  
21          exploration of real-world experiences.

22                        Students start learning to  
23          read, but that evolves into them reading  
24          to learn. In K to 3, children are given  
25          the framework and resources, but the work

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           has to continue. We can't stop there.  
3           Literacy is a continuous practice that  
4           does not occur only in stages, but in a  
5           progression.

6                         As a second-year Early Literacy  
7           Lead at OEC, my goal is to train our  
8           K-to-3 teachers to be experts in the work  
9           and to understand the importance of  
10          teaching students instructional  
11          strategies to use independently. We know  
12          this is successful. And now we're taking  
13          what we know works and scaling it in  
14          grades four and five and expanding the  
15          framework to other subjects. The same  
16          skills that students learn in literacy  
17          are cross-curricular with math; for  
18          example, sequencing, which refers to  
19          students' ability to retell events in the  
20          order in which they occurred. It's  
21          taught in literacy when a student is  
22          reading a story, can also be applied in  
23          math when a student is solving a problem  
24          and identifying steps, and in science  
25          when a student is learning about the

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           lifecycle of a butterfly.

3                   As an Early Literacy Lead, I  
4           see the ways in which the District and  
5           schools are taking ownership, my teachers  
6           are taking ownership, and my students are  
7           taking ownership of their learning, and  
8           no one can take that away.

9                   Thank you.

10                   (Applause.)

11                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
12           you.

13                   DR. HITE: Thank you, Asmeret,  
14           and I want to also congratulate you once  
15           again on being one of the members of OEC,  
16           Councilman Jones' OEC. Overbrook  
17           Education Center was announced as one of  
18           the five new Community Schools yesterday.  
19           So, once again, thanks, Asmeret, for your  
20           testimony.

21                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I think  
22           he was going to mention that, yes.

23                   DR. HITE: I thank you as well.

24                   What Asmeret has described is  
25           happening in K-3 literacy classrooms in

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           every school across our district, and  
3           it's paying off. Since 2015, the percent  
4           of eight-year-olds reading on grade level  
5           has increased 3 percentage points, and  
6           the number of third graders scoring at  
7           the lowest level on PSSA assessments has  
8           decreased by 6 percentage points. Our  
9           students' three-year academic growth  
10          rates in literacy are up across every  
11          tested grade level and are outpacing the  
12          state average in nearly all tested grade  
13          levels.

14                    Our FY 2019-2020 investment  
15          plan builds on this success by expanding  
16          our K-3 early literacy model to grades  
17          four and five. We know what investments  
18          in early -- we know what investment in  
19          early literacy achieves, and they are  
20          investments we must be willing to make.

21                    Ensuring every graduate is  
22          ready for a college or career is another  
23          core area of investment. So far, basic  
24          investments to restore more than 1,700  
25          teachers and support staff positions in

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           schools, provide more advanced placement  
3           and dual enrollment opportunities for  
4           students, ensure counselors and nurses  
5           support every school, and add more CTE  
6           programs in high schools have already  
7           helped to increase our high school  
8           graduation rate for three years in a row,  
9           from 74 percent in 2014 to 79 percent in  
10          2018.

11                        To share how SDP's investments  
12           have made a difference in her high school  
13           experience, I now introduce to you a  
14           student from Abraham Lincoln High School,  
15           Doha Ibrahim.

16                        COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Good  
17           morning.

18                        MS. IBRAHIM: Good morning.

19                        Dear President Clarke and  
20           Councilmembers, my name is Doha Ibrahim.  
21           I'm currently a third-year student at  
22           Abraham Lincoln High School where I'm  
23           involved in various organizations,  
24           initiatives, and educational programs  
25           like Philadelphia Futures that allows me



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           to be an active member in our community  
3           and use available resources to maximize  
4           educational opportunities and create a  
5           better future for myself and others.

6                         During the past three years, I  
7           have participated in many school  
8           programs, including career technical  
9           education, also known as CTE. These  
10          programs are key components for providing  
11          a unique environment for students to  
12          develop new skills, make friends and,  
13          most importantly, enhance their learning.

14                        Currently, my high school  
15          offers various CTE programs and  
16          professional services, sciences, and  
17          arts. Each of these CTE academics  
18          include pathways that offer exciting and  
19          relevant classes for students, while  
20          connecting with outside resources and  
21          receive offers for internships during  
22          high school and also post-graduation.

23                        Every student in the CTE  
24          program has a chance in taking the NOCTI  
25          exam to be certified in different areas

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           they study. For instance, I'm enrolled  
3           in the accounting pathway and have been  
4           tax VITA certified, which allows me to  
5           help low-income families in Philadelphia  
6           file their taxes. Furthermore, I  
7           received a certification in Microsoft  
8           Office, which demonstrates to employers  
9           that I have basic computer skills that  
10          can be applied in any office environment.

11                         In addition to all the  
12          wonderful CTE programs this year, Abraham  
13          Lincoln High School has added more than  
14          17 new extracurricular clubs, including  
15          ELL student ambassador, robotics,  
16          cheerleading, anime, and SAT prep. The  
17          result of the increase of programs has  
18          promoted greater classroom attendance and  
19          better behavior among students.  
20          Personally I have worked closely with  
21          other students through -- other students  
22          and school administration to create  
23          special incentive events that take place  
24          through the year -- throughout the year.  
25          Our most successful event is called the

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           95ers where we give out shirts to  
3           students with least 95 percent or better  
4           attendance each marking period. Another  
5           event we implemented is the keystone  
6           block party. This encourages students to  
7           take state exams on time and to encourage  
8           higher level of attendance.

9                        As an ELL student ambassador  
10          president, I'm responsible for welcoming  
11          new non-English-speaking students and  
12          pairing them with an ELL ambassador who  
13          speaks their native language. ELL  
14          ambassadors support the great work of the  
15          District's ELL teachers by answering  
16          students' questions, translating  
17          information, and helping students  
18          navigate around the school and the City.

19                       I am happy that since 2014 the  
20          School District has implemented 32 new  
21          career technical education programs  
22          across the City and added counselors and  
23          nurses in every school. This will help  
24          provide all students with the same kind  
25          of educational opportunities and learning

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           environment that I have experienced. But  
3           this is not enough. We need much more.

4                     The District's 2019-2020  
5           investment plan will further advance  
6           educational opportunities for all kids by  
7           adding 30 new English language learner  
8           teachers, more social emotional support  
9           and career counselors, additional support  
10          for students with special needs, and  
11          increased support for students who may  
12          not be on track to graduate in four  
13          years.

14                     In the past three years, I've  
15          learned that one person can make a big  
16          difference. One idea, one teacher, one  
17          opportunity can make a difference for  
18          students who are striving to reach their  
19          dreams. We need to encourage more  
20          students to explore the endless  
21          possibilities an education can offer.  
22          However, without the proper funding and  
23          support by the City, it will be  
24          impossible for students to succeed.

25                     Thank you for giving me this

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           opportunity to testify today, but before  
3           I end, I would like to remind everyone in  
4           this room that the best schools are not  
5           the ones that teach students how to  
6           memorize the dots. Rather, they are the  
7           ones that provide great learning  
8           opportunities and experiences for  
9           students and then inspire them to connect  
10          the dots to build a strong future.

11                     Thank you.

12                     (Applause.)

13                     DR. HITE: Fantastic. Thank  
14          you so much, Doha.

15                     And I think because there's so  
16          much that we can learn from our students  
17          like Doha and others, and I just  
18          appreciate all that you said in your  
19          testimony this morning. You are a  
20          shining example of the possibility for  
21          every student we serve.

22                     But we know that realizing that  
23          possibility for every student means we  
24          must do more to support the needs of all  
25          of our diverse learners. As Doha

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           indicated, that's why we are recommending  
3           a budget that includes 30 additional  
4           teachers for English language learners,  
5           more dual enrollment course offerings,  
6           ten new college and career readiness  
7           coordinators. We've also increased  
8           supports for students with disabilities  
9           and students who are off track for  
10          graduation. And, finally, it's why we  
11          also included more behavioral health  
12          staff, counselors, and nurses.

13                    A final topic I want to talk  
14                    about is our facilities. The aged  
15                    condition of our schools is not new.  
16                    Half of our buildings are over 70 years  
17                    old, with some more than 120 years old.  
18                    An assessment by expert engineers and  
19                    architects valued the needed updates and  
20                    replacements across our school buildings  
21                    at \$4.5 billion.

22                    However, we should not dwell on  
23                    the magnitude of that estimate. What is  
24                    most important is that we reflect on what  
25                    we have been able to do with our existing

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           resources and determine how best to  
3           provide reasonable, sustainable, annual  
4           funding that will finally resolve  
5           critical operational and environmental  
6           issues in our school buildings.

7                         Since 2014, our Operations  
8           Division has been making steady progress  
9           to support safer, cleaner, and healthier  
10          learning environments for students.  
11          These includes 395 million to renovate  
12          classrooms and modernize basic building  
13          infrastructure; nearly 1 million in  
14          asbestos abatement; 32 high-priority  
15          elementary schools will be made lead-safe  
16          by the first day of school this fall and  
17          an additional 80 elementary schools will  
18          be assessed and stabilized for lead  
19          hazards this summer; 112 new cleaning  
20          positions and more rigorous cleaning  
21          standards that are monitored daily; 882  
22          state-of-the-art hydration stations were  
23          installed across all schools; and we've  
24          placed humidity sensors in 31 schools  
25          targeted in order to monitor and

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 proactively prevent mold.

3 We'll also be expanding next  
4 year at up to 20 schools our guaranteed  
5 energy savings projects to reduce utility  
6 expenses and promote renewable energy  
7 sources.

8 These investments from both our  
9 operating and capital budgets are valued  
10 at over 450 million.

11 While we are fully committed to  
12 these efforts, there is much more we  
13 could do with additional resources to  
14 build on our momentum and put many of our  
15 fundamental high-risk building challenges  
16 in the rear-view mirror.

17 For an additional 75 million,  
18 we can completely repaint and make all of  
19 our schools lead-safe over the next five  
20 years. An additional 40 million would  
21 allow us to remove the risk of harmful  
22 asbestos over the next four years. 140  
23 million of new resources is required to  
24 make the electrical upgrades needed to  
25 support classroom technology and add air



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           conditioners in over 2,000 classrooms.

3                   I'd like to add on that note,  
4           we've also done -- we've completed an  
5           assessment at all of our buildings and  
6           have identified 23 schools that currently  
7           have the electrical capacity to support  
8           air conditioners. As a result of that,  
9           we are purchasing the air conditioners  
10          for all of the classrooms in those 23  
11          schools and plan to complete installation  
12          prior to next year's cleaning season.

13                   (Applause.)

14                   DR. HITE: Absolutely.

15                   The vision we all embrace is  
16          for every student to have access to a  
17          great school close to where they live.  
18          I'm proud to say we are making progress  
19          toward this vision, but there is much  
20          more we must do together to turn this  
21          vision into a reality.

22                   We know that a quality  
23          education requires focus, commitment, and  
24          prioritization by all. It requires  
25          investments and it requires resources.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 We have shown that we are trustworthy and  
3 responsible stewards of public dollars,  
4 and with your help, we have achieved  
5 fiscal stability. We are entering our  
6 fifth consecutive year of balanced  
7 budgets. We've regained our investment  
8 grade credit rating for the first time  
9 since 1977, and we spend the majority of  
10 our dollars on things that are most  
11 important to the success of students.

12 I want to close by stating  
13 clearly for the record that our schools  
14 need every dollar that is being proposed  
15 in the new budget and we need more. I'm  
16 committed to doing my part both here and  
17 in Harrisburg.

18 Now is the time for all of us  
19 to work together to secure the funding  
20 critical to create sweeping improvements  
21 in every school for every child in the  
22 Philadelphia community.

23 And with that, Councilman  
24 Greenlee and Chairwoman Blackwell, I  
25 conclude my remarks.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 Thank you.

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank you  
4 very much. Thank you all.

5 (Applause.)

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: As you  
7 can see, I'm joined up here by our  
8 Education Chair, Councilwoman Jannie  
9 Blackwell.

10 Councilwoman Blackwell.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank  
12 you very much. We're sorry we had  
13 another meeting and we thank our  
14 colleague for getting us started, and we  
15 thank all of you for being here. We are  
16 grateful for your testimony. We hope you  
17 all will wait a minute. Thank you.

18 We're grateful for your  
19 testimony, and as you may know, we're  
20 grateful for all the School Board members  
21 who are here. We're very happy we went  
22 to local control.

23 And let me say that my staff  
24 and many people were listening to the  
25 demonstration outside. I know that David

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           Hardy, I know that Global Leadership with  
3           their principal, I know that Boys' Latin,  
4           I know that -- I'm trying to remember all  
5           the -- Universal schools, I know there  
6           are many charter schools who are  
7           represented who are here, and I know that  
8           they came out to give their demonstration  
9           and to ask and demonstrate for equal  
10          treatment and demonstrate that they be  
11          considered public schools as are  
12          traditional public schools.

13                        There's a T-shirt right there,  
14           "respect my child's school," because many  
15           of them still don't feel that we have  
16           equal treatment. So we're still  
17           fighting.

18                                (Applause.)

19                        COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I  
20           think that's -- I see the head of Richard  
21           Allen Prep School. I want to thank him  
22           for also allowing a church to use his  
23           school on Sundays. I was there this past  
24           Sunday at Hickman Temple. Thank you.  
25           That's very kind of you to let them use

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           your church.

3                         And we are grateful for all the  
4           principals, all the schools who are here,  
5           and we have -- we certainly agree with  
6           them, that we really need to find a way  
7           to fund all schools equally, whether  
8           they're charter schools or whether  
9           they're traditional public schools. We  
10          need them in our system. Our parents  
11          want them. Thank you.

12                         (Applause.)

13                         COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And I  
14          know, for example, that Global Leadership  
15          is trying to do a high school. I hope  
16          that, Madam Chair, you'll consider that.  
17          They have Huey School, which is at 52nd  
18          and Pine near me.

19                         (Applause.)

20                         COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: In  
21          addition to the school in Councilman  
22          Jones's area, but we will ignore him for  
23          the moment and we will say that we hope  
24          you give them every consideration.

25                         My charter schools are just

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           excellent, whether it's Richard Allen,  
3           Global, Boys' Latin, and we are so proud  
4           of the work that they do and what they do  
5           to bring our youngsters forward.

6                        So I hope that you will keep  
7           that into consideration. The Chair of  
8           Education says all schools should be  
9           treated equally and --

10                       (Applause.)

11                       COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank  
12           you.

13                       We are also getting ready to  
14           have hearings on a resolution to talk  
15           about our curriculum, as you know. So we  
16           are inviting you to come forward. We'll  
17           talk about my favorite issue that I bring  
18           up every year. That's cursive writing.  
19           And we will talk about -- I know we will  
20           talk also about, with Molefi Asante,  
21           about cultural education, with Bumi  
22           Fernandez from Odunde, who has written  
23           books with another young lady who has  
24           written books. We have people who have a  
25           lot to offer, and we would like them to

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           get a chance to be considered as a part  
3           of our public school curriculum.

4                        So we'll be having a hearing,  
5           and we hope that all of you who are here  
6           will come back to listen to them. And we  
7           always keep an open mind as we try to  
8           move forward in Philadelphia.

9                        So I thank all of you for being  
10          here and for coming, and I'll turn the  
11          mic over.

12                       Let's see. Who is first? I  
13          guess we got to give Councilman Jones. I  
14          still have Global too, just want you to  
15          know that. We'll turn the mic over to  
16          Councilman Jones for questions.

17                       Thank you.

18                       COUNCILMAN JONES: We could  
19          share. Good schools we can share. It's  
20          okay.

21                       COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes.

22                       COUNCILMAN JONES: And I want  
23          to thank you for once again coming to  
24          present your budget. You have become a  
25          familiar fixture, a steady light towards

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           progress. All progress takes time. We  
3           are very conscious of that, but our sense  
4           of urgency in this Chambers is because as  
5           we take our time, time runs out for  
6           certain students. They have to face the  
7           world with the tools that are given by  
8           the education system, and we kind of want  
9           to be anxious in certain ways when we  
10          start to look at school-to-prison  
11          pipelines and issues that are real in  
12          certain communities.

13                        So I want to applaud you on  
14          your progress, but I want to encourage  
15          you in your urgency to fix certain  
16          systemic things as it relates to public  
17          education in the City of Philadelphia.

18                        So with that, I want to say one  
19          of the issues that I'd like you to  
20          address is staffing turnover. How do we  
21          keep good educators, good administrators,  
22          good support staff, maintenance staff in  
23          our system and keep that system moving  
24          forward so that we can produce the best  
25          students that we can in light of some of



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           the turnover both at the teaching level  
3           and at the principal level? Have we  
4           developed a strategy and/or plan to  
5           address that issue?

6                     DR. HITE: Yes. Thank you for  
7           the question, Councilman Jones. We have  
8           a -- so, yes, to answer your question, we  
9           have created a plan in order to address  
10          that issue both at the teacher level and  
11          at the principal level and at multiple  
12          other levels throughout the District  
13          where we have, and we have now a much  
14          higher retention rate as a district than  
15          most districts our size across the  
16          country.

17                    However, a couple of things  
18          that we know are really important. One,  
19          and -- because we ask teachers when they  
20          leave the reason they left, and many will  
21          mention -- in fact, the top response is  
22          they didn't feel supported at their  
23          school. And one of the things that we  
24          want to ensure is that we build systems  
25          to support those individuals in their

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           respective schools. And so with that, we  
3           have an induction for all new teachers.  
4           It includes a week before they start to  
5           teach in the school and they meet monthly  
6           all year long. They are assigned a  
7           mentor, and they work with that mentor on  
8           a regular basis.

9                     In addition, we are also trying  
10          to create environments and climates in  
11          schools where individuals feel valued and  
12          feel that their voices are heard and  
13          provide professional development  
14          opportunities that are responsive to what  
15          they need in order to carry out the types  
16          of lessons that they want to plan in  
17          their classrooms.

18                    And so part of the plan is  
19          training individuals, but another part is  
20          really about creating the climates and  
21          cultures that promote the conditions that  
22          allow individuals to want to remain in  
23          those schools.

24                    We've studied the schools with  
25          the highest retention rates to understand

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           what's happening in those places. We've  
3           also looked at how do we better support  
4           schools with lower retention rates across  
5           the district as well. And what we found  
6           were some similar types of things, that  
7           support structures, voice, the resources  
8           that are needed in the schools in order  
9           to ensure that those individuals have  
10          what they need in order to deliver their  
11          instruction.

12                    COUNCILMAN JONES: So one of  
13           the things about any organization is  
14           consistent leadership. We are blessed to  
15           have a President of this Council that is  
16           consistent. You may not always agree  
17           with that individual leadership style,  
18           but you know every Thursday he's going to  
19           show up and he's going to bang that gavel  
20           and we have a process that we have to  
21           kind of fit into.

22                    In an individual school, I've  
23           learned or I've, at least from an  
24           outsider's point of view, seen how  
25           important a principal can be to set the

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           tone for the respective staff, and  
3           keeping them engaged and then engaging  
4           them with the rank and file is critical  
5           for the students, because if I come to  
6           school every day and you're in my life  
7           sometimes, there's inconsistency.  
8           There's inconsistency in my home life.  
9           There's inconsistency in the neighborhood  
10          I have to travel. The one consistent  
11          thing at times is that principal,  
12          teacher, guidance counselor that is there  
13          that is there for me. And then when I  
14          wake up and go to school and they are not  
15          there, that is like earth-shaking.

16                        So that plan is important, in  
17          my opinion, to develop a culture of  
18          leadership within institutions that  
19          motivate students, and that's the reason  
20          like I see it. And the more we can do  
21          that, I think the better off we will be.

22                        DR. HITE: And just one thing,  
23          if I may add, Councilman Jones, because  
24          you talked about building leaders and  
25          those individuals. I've always had --

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           you can walk into a school and understand  
3           almost immediately about the feel of that  
4           school what the leader is like. And I  
5           want to acknowledge all of our principals  
6           in our schools. They work hard every  
7           single day, but they are the most  
8           important position in that school that  
9           creates the conditions for all of those  
10          things like you described. It's one  
11          reason why we've given principals and  
12          site selection committees at schools more  
13          autonomy to hire individuals that then  
14          fit into what they're trying to  
15          accomplish in their schools. And it is  
16          one of the other things that I meant to  
17          say in terms of the plans that we've  
18          established in order to address that  
19          issue.

20                   COUNCILMAN JONES: So if you  
21          could at some point, maybe in  
22          Councilwoman Blackwell's committee, kind  
23          of give us a sense of how that works. I  
24          know there's some esoteric things and  
25          it's like cheerleader things, but some

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           structural things that you are going to  
3           add to make sure that we don't have young  
4           people that go into teaching and then  
5           wind up in the suburbs. That is a  
6           concerning -- they get their experience  
7           in the heart of the inner city and then  
8           they are valued outside of Philadelphia.  
9           And I'm not saying they're not valued by  
10          you. They find their way, however,  
11          outside of our particular school  
12          district.

13                    And I'm going to yield my time  
14                    at this point, Mr. Chairman, and I'll  
15                    come around the second round.

16                    COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
17                    you, Councilman.

18                    Councilwoman Reynolds Brown.

19                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you,  
20                    Mr. Chairman.

21                    Good morning. Good morning.

22                    DR. HITE: Good morning.

23                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: My mother  
24                    would be very, very disappointed if I did  
25                    not acknowledge your well wishes of

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           Chairwoman Joyce Wilkerson and you, Dr.  
3           Hite. So my response to that is, first,  
4           thank you, and what I will say to you is  
5           that while there's no perfect time to  
6           come to grips with what you want to be  
7           when you grow up, it's the right time for  
8           me after 20 years. And what I also know  
9           is that I don't want to get to the fourth  
10          act of my life and be in a place where I  
11          wish I had or I wish I could have.

12                     And, lastly, I'll say that --  
13          and a couple of my colleagues and my  
14          staff hear me say this often. I do not  
15          want to get to the end of my career as a  
16          working mother and find that I've only  
17          been the length of it. I want to have  
18          lived the width of it as well. And so  
19          with that, the decision. And I'm so in a  
20          good place with that decision, because I  
21          am indeed also ready to pass the baton.

22                     And so with that, speaking of  
23          passing the baton, the School District  
24          was the beneficiary of two of my  
25          staffers, Joe Meade, who is now the Chief

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           of Staff at La Salle, and Haniyyah  
3           Sharpe-Brown. And so I need you to know  
4           for the record that she has been a true  
5           partner, resource, and a champion,  
6           because she came to you with a commitment  
7           to education in the way that we have  
8           addressed it in our office for the last  
9           20 years. And I may not ever get another  
10          chance to say that, so I'm seizing the  
11          moment now. Okay?

12                    To follow up on Councilman  
13          Jones' question -- and let me thank the  
14          two professionals that you brought to  
15          your table to speak today. That's a new  
16          paradigm shift to hear from folks on the  
17          front line who are living and working in  
18          the School District.

19                    I want to follow up on the  
20          career technical education, because  
21          yesterday my staff and I met with the  
22          leadership at the Sheet Metal Workers  
23          Union, and they are ready for a  
24          partnership with the School District,  
25          because from what I gather -- we'll take



1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 a tour in June -- they have a real  
3 training program on site where they want  
4 to link up with the School District.

5 So currently how many career  
6 technical schools do we have right now in  
7 the system?

8 DR. HITE: So we have 113 CTE  
9 programs in 33 schools. Those 33 schools  
10 are neighborhood schools, special  
11 admission schools, and citywide schools  
12 and alternative education schools. And  
13 so we even have CTE programs at the Youth  
14 Center and Pennypack.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: The Youth  
16 Study Center?

17 DR. HITE: Yes, the Youth Study  
18 Center and Pennypack.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. So  
20 that's fine, because we're so accustomed  
21 to having schools, but what you've done  
22 is cast the net wider by having programs.  
23 Is that fair to say?

24 DR. HITE: Yes. And because  
25 those young people at those centers are

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           of school age, we thought it was  
3           important to also establish those  
4           programs at those centers.

5                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Do you  
6           still have the relationship with Fleet,  
7           Fleet Management?

8                    DR. HITE: Yes. Absolutely.

9                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: All right,  
10          then. Let's now go to one concern,  
11          observation made during our one-on-one  
12          meetings, and that's schools that have  
13          contracts with the School District of  
14          Philadelphia. To your finance wizard, if  
15          you can speak to how payment is made to  
16          those schools so that they can function  
17          and -- period. Let's leave it there.

18                   DR. HITE: Great. And I  
19          want -- because you asked a really  
20          important question about partners,  
21          actually that we partner with respect to  
22          individuals who hire students who are out  
23          of the CTE programs, and so I wanted to  
24          acknowledge a couple of those groups --

25                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Please.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 DR. HITE: -- that do that.

3 And we have CTE students who are  
4 currently working at SEPTA, at PT Baler,  
5 Rhodes, the City of Philadelphia Fleet  
6 Management, and several independent auto  
7 dealerships like Pacifico Ford. A lot of  
8 our children work there, students work  
9 there, and Center City Toyota. So those  
10 are direct partnerships for young people  
11 who are working. And then we have  
12 children who do apprenticeships in  
13 multiple other categories, and they are  
14 apprenticeships with Penn Assist is one.  
15 We also have one with finishing trades,  
16 one with our own maintenance and  
17 facilities, 32BJ. And so those are  
18 several of the opportunities that our  
19 young people have out of the CTE program.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You should  
21 know that SEPTA spoke very highly. They  
22 were very proud of their relationship  
23 with the School District when they came  
24 before us. And so would they be in that  
25 contracting category? Because they're

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           not on the charter school side of the  
3           ledger where there's one payment  
4           apparatus. Would they be on the  
5           organizational side where you subcontract  
6           with organizations that provide certain  
7           services?

8                         MR. MONSON: So thank you,  
9           Councilwoman, for the question. Uri  
10          Monson, Chief Financial Officer for the  
11          School District.

12                        The issues you've raised and  
13          we've spoken about, when an invoice hits  
14          our system, we try to pay within 30 days.  
15          The issue is that we do not collect our  
16          invoices currently in a central fashion  
17          through our accounting function. It goes  
18          to program offices for the schools that  
19          you are referring to, and we've had  
20          occasional delays in getting those  
21          invoices through to the finance part of  
22          the system.

23                        We have some informal methods  
24          to track them, which as you have  
25          highlighted, do occasionally fall through

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 the cracks, and that's on us. It should  
3 not be incumbent on the vendor or the  
4 contractor to come after us for paying  
5 the invoices that they have submitted.

6 We're in the process of putting  
7 in a new financial ERP, new financial  
8 system, which will go live July 1st of  
9 2020. As part of that process, we're  
10 reengineering some of our business  
11 processes. One of those is centralizing  
12 our invoicing process. We'll actually be  
13 doing an accounts receivable. What that  
14 will enable us to do is that we'll be  
15 tracking invoices from the time we first  
16 get them, and it's incumbent on us, as it  
17 should be internal to the District, to  
18 track the invoices, making sure that  
19 there are the proper sign-offs from  
20 program offices from the schools who are  
21 being served by the vendors to whom  
22 you're referring, and that way, we can  
23 track to make sure they're being paid in  
24 a timely fashion.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. So

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           will there be some form of orientation or  
3           on-board training or whatever for those  
4           organizations -- for the finance offices  
5           associated with those organizations so  
6           that they know of this new paradigm shift  
7           14 months from now?

8                         MR. MONSON: So once we have  
9           the system set up and all of the pieces,  
10          we want to have what it will actually  
11          look like for vendors. We're actually  
12          going to do vendor training, not just for  
13          that but for actually all vendors who  
14          interact with the District. One of our  
15          goals is to have a vendor self-service so  
16          that all vendors will be able to interact  
17          the system, enter their payment  
18          information, track their bills, their  
19          invoices, and have an entire different  
20          relationship with the District that they  
21          can control as much as we can control.  
22          We think it will be much more positive.

23                         Once the systems are fully  
24          designed, and that's what the process  
25          we're going through now, and we have the

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           interfaces, we'll be able to do training  
3           for all of our vendors who hit our system  
4           in every way, not just the schools to  
5           which you're referring, which we believe  
6           will be a better system, but we're very  
7           cognizant of the training, not only for  
8           our people on the new system across the  
9           board but also for vendors, because it's  
10          a whole new -- procurement is also part  
11          of this, the vendors' management system.  
12          All of that is part of this new ERP.

13                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN:

14          Absolutely. Okay, then. I have to wait  
15          until the next round. Thank you.

16                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
17          you, Councilwoman.

18                   Let me get a couple of quick  
19          questions in here regarding the fund  
20          balance. Mr. Monson, I think you will be  
21          the best person to ask this.

22                   City Council's tolling bill,  
23          which froze the assessments while the  
24          appeals are going on, what's the impact  
25          of that on the fund balance? And are you

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           considering -- I mean, obviously in the  
3           short term, you don't know the money, but  
4           obviously some people are going to lose  
5           their appeal. So how do you factor that  
6           in there?

7                         MR. MONSON: So we have been  
8           tracking the tolling bill, I think you're  
9           referring to, and how all that worked.  
10          So we have put in a -- and what's in the  
11          numbers currently assumes that about \$12  
12          and a half million of real estate taxes  
13          would have not been paid in the current  
14          year, but actually would flow through  
15          into the Fiscal Year '20 year. As we're  
16          getting better numbers from the City of  
17          what's actually happened and we're hoping  
18          in the next two weeks to refine, we've  
19          moved a little bit back, but we're going  
20          to look at really what numbers of how  
21          much is moved over.

22                         For that piece of it, it  
23          doesn't have an overall effect on the  
24          Five Year Plan, because what it means is  
25          assuming that the assumption we have



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           built in on appeals percentage is  
3           accurate -- and that's kind of always a  
4           moving target, but we update it as we  
5           can -- what the delay has meant is that  
6           there were fewer dollars in the current  
7           fiscal year received in '19. The money  
8           would be delayed once all appeals are  
9           heard in the Fiscal Year '20. So what  
10          would happen based on the current Five  
11          Year Plan in front of you and that was  
12          presented to you in the budget books is,  
13          there would be additional revenues  
14          recognized in Fiscal Year '19 and we  
15          would lower the projected revenues for  
16          '20 as it relates to that particular  
17          issue.

18                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: So there  
19          would be more than in --

20                   MR. MONSON: By the end of  
21          Fiscal Year '20, it's actually the same  
22          number. You're basically moving some  
23          revenues that we're expecting in '20 back  
24          to '19. So if it was, for example, \$5  
25          million, you would see \$5 million in

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           revenues expected in '20 reduced,  
3           increased in '19. The fund balance in  
4           '19 goes up, but the end result fund  
5           balance in '20 stays the same, because  
6           you've moved 5 million from one year and  
7           put it in another year.

8                        COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay. I  
9           think I get that. Okay.

10                      And also in your Five Year  
11           Plan, you say there's \$90 million over  
12           four years in reserve for federal cuts.  
13           What federal funding are you talking  
14           about that would be threatened?

15                      MR. MONSON: So in the  
16           President's most recent budget proposal  
17           to Congress, it included cutting the  
18           Title II and Title IV programs. If  
19           you'll recall two years ago in the  
20           President's proposed budget, he proposed  
21           cutting Title II. We put a federal  
22           reserve in at the same time for that same  
23           amount. Title II was saved, but about \$5  
24           million lower.

25                      The goal of the reserve is that

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           if those proposals actually become law,  
3           we want to maintain those programs.  
4           Those programs support a lot of our  
5           teacher training, a lot of the literacy  
6           support we've been doing. So the reserve  
7           allows us to transfer those costs to  
8           operating costs instead of grant costs.

9                        The way the proposal exists, it  
10          wouldn't actually take effect until  
11          Fiscal Year '21. So you don't see the  
12          federal reserve in the Five Year Plan  
13          until Fiscal Year '21. And obviously as  
14          things change, we'll make adjustments  
15          depending on what actually passes, but  
16          that most likely won't happen until  
17          October.

18                       But everything we do in our  
19          budget at the City, state, and federal  
20          level, we assume the Mayor's proposed  
21          budget, the Governor's proposed budget,  
22          and the President's proposed budget until  
23          action is taken on those budgets.

24                       COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: So you're  
25          assuming that they'll all pass until they

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2 don't.

3 MR. MONSON: Correct. I mean,  
4 we feel that's the most appropriate  
5 approach for us to take.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.  
7 But obviously if that's not the case,  
8 then as time goes on, your fund balance  
9 would increase, right, and you wouldn't  
10 be -- I think you have by FY22 you're in  
11 the red a little bit?

12 MR. MONSON: Negative 30  
13 million by FY22, and obviously that would  
14 help us unwind that. And, again, we made  
15 that change this current year when once  
16 the \$5 million came out, we took out  
17 the -- I was actually very happy not to  
18 have it in there. We had to put it back  
19 because of the proposed budget. And we  
20 kind of keep working with proposed  
21 budgets, but obviously if that doesn't  
22 pass even before another budget cycle, we  
23 actually at this time in the quarterly  
24 reports that we put out every quarter  
25 made that adjustment in the current year

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           quarterly reports I think back in the  
3           first quarter for the last one, and we  
4           would do the same thing once there's  
5           action at the federal level.

6                    COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:   And  
7           looking at it from hopefully a positive  
8           aspect, what prospects are there?  You  
9           said last time that those cuts did not  
10          happen, the President's cuts.  What's the  
11          thought process or what's the projection,  
12          if you will?  I know you have to assume  
13          certain things, but also --

14                   MR. MONSON:  So I can't tell  
15          you obviously what's going to happen.

16                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:  Pardon  
17          me?

18                   MR. MONSON:  I can't tell you  
19          what's going to happen.  What I can tell  
20          you is that unlike last time, the House  
21          education proposals not only didn't cut  
22          these programs, but actually increases  
23          funding for Title I, maintains Title II,  
24          and increases Title IV.  Obviously  
25          there's a long road ahead of the

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           negotiations between the federal  
3           legislature and the White House, and  
4           we'll be watching it closely, but there  
5           appears to be more advocacy this time  
6           around.

7                        COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: More  
8           what?

9                        MR. MONSON: More advocacy in  
10          favor of maintaining those programs. So  
11          I'm hopeful we'll end up where we'll be  
12          able to identify the funds and repurpose  
13          them for the investment purposes.

14                      COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: So those  
15          numbers could change and we could --

16                      MR. MONSON: Correct.

17                      COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: -- be in  
18          a better place for FY22 and beyond,  
19          right?

20                      MR. MONSON: Yes.

21                      COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
22          you.

23                      Councilman Domb.

24                      COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,  
25          Mr. Chairman.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 Good morning. I just want to  
3 really commend Chairperson Wilkerson,  
4 Dr. Hite, and CFO Uri Monson on a really  
5 good job, and I just want to -- I don't  
6 have a lot to say, but I wanted to make  
7 sure I said that.

8 MS. WILKERSON: We can leave  
9 now.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: You can leave  
11 now.

12 But all the information you're  
13 sharing with us is positive. It's  
14 heading in the right direction. While  
15 we're not at the end of the road here,  
16 but you're on the right path. And I'm  
17 very impressed that you regained your  
18 investment grade rating. That's great.  
19 Since 1977? That's unbelievable. And  
20 I'm impressed with the students who were  
21 here today. I'm impressed with the  
22 scores. I'm impressed with the high  
23 school graduation rates. While it could  
24 all be better -- I think, Dr. Hite, you  
25 shared a number with me, I think it was,

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           last week. What is the actual high  
3           school graduation rates? There were two  
4           different numbers, if I recall.

5                     DR. HITE: Yeah. Two different  
6           numbers, Councilman Domb. So one number  
7           represents the number of students who  
8           enter the ninth grade and graduate four  
9           years later and enters the District  
10          comprehensive schools. That number is 79  
11          percent. There's another group of  
12          students who represent any young person  
13          or young adult or adult who is working  
14          towards a high school diploma. Those are  
15          individuals who may be in alternative  
16          education programs, left the system, now  
17          have come back. They may have been  
18          system involved, foster care, or through  
19          the justice system, who are coming back.  
20          When we throw in all the numbers  
21          together, that number is 69 percent of  
22          those individuals that graduated.

23                     COUNCILMAN DOMB: But if we  
24          were talking -- if you were having an  
25          interview with the press right now and



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           they asked what are your high school  
3           graduation rates, what would that number  
4           be?

5                     DR. HITE: I would say 79  
6           percent. And then I would also say, and  
7           when we include everyone, that number  
8           would be 69.

9                     COUNCILMAN DOMB: What was the  
10          number six years ago?

11                    DR. HITE: Oh, shoot.

12                    COUNCILMAN DOMB: Or five years  
13          ago.

14                    DR. HITE: Yeah. So I believe  
15          that it was 54, 55 percent just before I  
16          arrived here in Philadelphia. It's been  
17          increasing over a period, and we're proud  
18          of that increase.

19                    COUNCILMAN DOMB: That's very  
20          impressive. Thank you.

21                    I have a couple of quick  
22          questions. Vaux High School, which I  
23          love that high school. I know it's a new  
24          high school at 2300 Master, where I think  
25          it's only the ninth and tenth grade so

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           far. But this is the high school where  
3           you're trying to connect students into  
4           possible business opportunities or  
5           business or jobs one day a week or  
6           whatever. Are we planning on doing more  
7           of that type of relationship? Because  
8           last night I watched the mayoral debate,  
9           and some of the comments on the mayoral  
10          debate, I don't know if they're -- I  
11          think they sounded like good ideas -- is  
12          that we need to engage what jobs are  
13          needed in Philadelphia with the school  
14          system to have that connectivity.

15                   DR. HITE: Yes. And thank you  
16          for the question. And we are -- number  
17          one, yes, we're trying, but we want  
18          programs that are responding to what  
19          industry is communicating as the needs of  
20          their young people. That program is a  
21          new program. It was a contract approach  
22          and it is in partnership with the  
23          organization called Big Picture, also the  
24          PFT and the School District, and we  
25          wanted to create an opportunity to reopen

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           Vaux -- and PHA is also providing a lot  
3           of support to the facilities  
4           improvements, and it provides -- all of  
5           those young people will have internship  
6           opportunities as a part of their high  
7           school experience.

8                         And so, yes. The answer is,  
9           yes, we are trying to do more with  
10          schools like that and create partnerships  
11          like that, but we also are constantly  
12          evaluating our career and technical  
13          education programs to make sure they're  
14          also responsive to what industry is  
15          telling us they need.

16                        COUNCILMAN DOMB: And I was at  
17          Randolph I think last Thursday or Friday  
18          and actually took another -- I've been  
19          there several times. But I think it's  
20          Joe Williams who is the teacher in the  
21          welding class. That guy is amazing, by  
22          the way. They're doing a major  
23          renovation there of that whole welding  
24          program, like \$2 and a half million  
25          renovation. I mean, PGW hires our

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2 graduates, so they're making good  
3 salaries.

4                   Is there an opportunity for  
5 more schools? I know we have Dobbins and  
6 we have George Washington has a culinary  
7 program also, so does Dobbins. Is there  
8 an opportunity for more schools like  
9 Randolph?

10                   DR. HITE: Yes. And you  
11 mentioned a tremendous teacher who is in  
12 that program, and as a matter of fact, I  
13 think something was said about SEPTA  
14 earlier, and SEPTA's only female welder  
15 who is on the regional rail system came  
16 out of that program and right out of high  
17 school, by the way. But yes is the  
18 answer to your question, and we want to  
19 use the expertise of Mr. Williams and  
20 others to help other teachers who are  
21 also teaching those programs in other  
22 places.

23                   We have a welding program also  
24 at Ben Franklin and at several of the  
25 other schools. I think Swenson has one

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           as well, and several of the other  
3           schools, and those young people also have  
4           the same opportunities, but it's  
5           Mr. Williams' approach with his young  
6           people that really makes a difference.

7                        COUNCILMAN DOMB: And I just  
8           want to reiterate, I now visited I think  
9           54, 56 schools, and I would say 95 to 97  
10          percent of them are doing a really good  
11          job. But that's not news, so they don't  
12          get the credit. The principals are  
13          really good. The teachers are doing a  
14          great job. Students are learning.  
15          That's my observation walking through the  
16          schools. And I think we need to do more  
17          marketing to the public about the quality  
18          of the education that you are delivering.  
19          So thank you for that.

20                       I have no further questions,  
21          but thank you very much.

22                       Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23                       COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
24          you, Councilman.

25                       Councilwoman Bass.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Good afternoon -- or good  
5 morning.

6 DR. HITE: Good morning.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: How are  
8 you? It's been a long morning. Thank  
9 you so much for being here, and I just  
10 want to echo the sentiments of my  
11 colleagues in saying that the School  
12 District and the work you do is just so  
13 vitally important to our city, and I  
14 really appreciate you and your entire  
15 team, the work that is done. And we've  
16 been constantly working to try to find  
17 additional resources, try to find ways to  
18 do things differently, trying to stretch  
19 every nickel that we have to be helpful  
20 and to put resources in.

21 I did have a couple of  
22 questions, and I want to start actually  
23 on the physical building issues. And the  
24 first question that I have -- and just  
25 keeping in mind that I'm a School

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           District kid. I went to M. Hall Stanton,  
3           which was closed. I think it's reopened  
4           now as a charter maybe or something. I'm  
5           not sure. But I went to M. Hall Stanton,  
6           which was closed, and then I went to John  
7           Greenleaf Whittier Elementary, which was  
8           closed and is closed, and then I went to  
9           E. Washington Rhodes Middle School, which  
10          was closed and then opened and then  
11          closed and opened again. And then I went  
12          to Parkway where I graduated from high  
13          school.

14                   And so I mention all of that  
15          because it's always a concern about  
16          school closings. It's always something  
17          that there's a rumor going around that  
18          this school is going to be closing or  
19          that school is going to be closing. And  
20          we took a direct hit I think in the  
21          Eighth District last time around with  
22          school closings. And so I wanted to ask  
23          you on the record if there are any plans  
24          to close any schools in the City of  
25          Philadelphia that you can see in the

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 foreseeable future.

3 DR. HITE: It is no immediate  
4 plan to close any schools in the City of  
5 Philadelphia. However, Councilwoman --

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Uh-oh.

7 DR. HITE: No, no, no. Wait.  
8 This is a good however.

9 However, we are going to be  
10 engaging with the City Planning Office a  
11 citywide look at all of our inventories  
12 of school buildings, of City properties,  
13 and it really is to look both at the  
14 needs of the facilities, the condition of  
15 the facilities, the utilization of those  
16 facilities and what it will take to  
17 either make the repairs necessary or  
18 replace that facility with one that is  
19 better. And that's going to occur in  
20 every geographical area of the City.  
21 We're going to start that process soon in  
22 three areas. I don't think one is in  
23 your area. The three areas are the  
24 Northeast, the Kensington area, and then  
25 Center City South.



1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I would  
3 argue, I guess as every District  
4 Councilmember probably is supposed to be  
5 arguing for their district, but as a  
6 District Councilmember and, as I said,  
7 because we took such a significant hit  
8 last time in terms of closing,  
9 particularly with the closing of  
10 Germantown High School and with the  
11 closing of Ada Lewis a few years before  
12 that and other changes that were made, I  
13 think that the Eighth District and  
14 particularly in Germantown, that there  
15 really should be a much more robust  
16 effort by the School District to kind of  
17 right some of the wrongs that were done.

18 So I do think that Germantown  
19 should be at the very front end of any  
20 assessments that are done in terms of how  
21 we're looking at our schools and how  
22 we're serving our population.

23 DR. HITE: Yeah. I appreciate  
24 the point, Councilwoman, and the reason  
25 we are starting in some of the other

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           areas is because of the population shifts  
3           that are occurring and the number --

4                        COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I  
5           understand.

6                        DR. HITE: -- of school-aged  
7           children who now are in the Northeast,  
8           which is requiring us to make some pretty  
9           significant changes to -- that may  
10          require pretty significant changes to  
11          boundaries to how we think about new  
12          schools that are being constructed. The  
13          population shifts that are also in some  
14          of the areas of the City that have now  
15          created immediate needs for additional  
16          classroom spaces and then looking at an  
17          area of the City that has some of both of  
18          those things. I mean, so -- and then our  
19          capacity to do that in a way that is  
20          effective. And as I indicated, we're  
21          going to be doing it in each of the  
22          geographical areas. We just started in  
23          these three, and then it will move to the  
24          other areas.

25                       COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well, I

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           understand. We all know that population  
3           has really shifted eastward in the City,  
4           and so when the last redistricting was  
5           done, pretty much all of the districts  
6           that were sort of west of Broad Street  
7           all shifted eastward to some degree, but  
8           at the same time, we can't, in my  
9           opinion, we can't just say, okay, well,  
10          we know where the population is and there  
11          is an overpopulation situation going on  
12          with the schools in the Northeast and in  
13          certain areas and looking at Center City,  
14          but at the same time, we can't just  
15          forget what was left behind and the  
16          damage that was done in terms of what was  
17          left behind.

18                        So I do think that we have to  
19                        figure out how we go back and address  
20                        that at the same time that we address  
21                        what's happening moving forward. So it's  
22                        not just because -- and these are not  
23                        your words, they're mine, but it's almost  
24                        like, all right, we just got to move  
25                        forward. And I understand moving

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           forward, but you can't move forward  
3           without looking backwards in terms of  
4           what has happened and what the  
5           repercussions were to a particular  
6           neighborhood.

7                       MS. WILKERSON: I think the  
8           Board fully supports this process.  
9           Schools have a very special role in  
10          communities, and so it's not just a  
11          population shift issue. We have this  
12          conversation with Dr. Hite all the time.  
13          And so we're excited about the process  
14          that the Superintendent has laid out,  
15          because we think we'll have those kinds  
16          of conversations about not just catchment  
17          areas but the role of schools in  
18          neighborhoods. That's why Planning  
19          Commission is so important.

20                      As charters arise in  
21          neighborhoods, it also causes challenges  
22          for the District planning in the years  
23          coming forward. And so we hope all of  
24          that will be part of the discussion that  
25          we have and are excited about it, because

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           we recognize how important schools are in  
3           communities.

4                    COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. So  
5           I'll take that as a yes, y'all are going  
6           to add Germantown into that first  
7           grouping of looking at what we're doing  
8           move forward and how we're going to  
9           address education. That's a yes, right?

10                   DR. HITE: Those were Joyce's  
11           words, not mine.

12                   COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I'm going  
13           to take it as a yes.

14                   MS. WILKERSON: We will have  
15           additional conversation. I'll talk with  
16           you about that.

17                   COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.  
18           We'll count it as a yes until we talk,  
19           and then afterwards, we'll get a formal  
20           yes, is my hope.

21                   I just have one other question  
22           on -- actually, two other questions on  
23           the physical -- can I --

24                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: How about  
25           why don't you throw one in?

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. I'll  
3 throw one in and I'll come back.

4 If we could talk about the  
5 School District and developers. So I'm  
6 just going back to the closure again of  
7 Germantown High School, and my question  
8 specifically is, does the School District  
9 write anything similar to a developer's  
10 agreement when it sells buildings to  
11 developers? And once again I'm reminded  
12 of Germantown High School in my district,  
13 which sat vacant for years now because  
14 the entity that the School District sold  
15 it to then sold it to another entity, and  
16 up until about a week ago, that entity  
17 left the community and my office in the  
18 dark.

19 People just assume that Cindy  
20 Bass or City Council owns School District  
21 property, which of course we do not, but  
22 there still is the perception that  
23 somehow the City of Philadelphia, City  
24 Council, my office, that we somehow had a  
25 hand in this transaction, which, in my

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           opinion, just really went wrong with the  
3           way it was handled.

4                        So I just wanted to know in  
5           terms of when you sell a property to a  
6           developer, what are the parameters? What  
7           are the rules? How do you lay that out  
8           so that a community is protected against  
9           a developer who may or may not be in  
10          touch with the community and what the  
11          community wants and needs? And I'll ask  
12          that question and also about Ada Lewis,  
13          which again has been vacant for many  
14          moons now and has not been sold.

15                      MS. WILKERSON: I think the  
16          Board has been engaged in this issue  
17          through its Finance and Facilities  
18          Committee, and one of the things that we  
19          understand is that when we abandon  
20          properties, things can go horribly wrong  
21          if we're not more proactive. And I can't  
22          address what happened at Germantown. I  
23          wasn't there. You know, I read the  
24          public accounts.

25                      I think our path going forward

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           is in evidence at the Pepper School in  
3           Eastwick where we slowed up the process.  
4           We've worked with the City Planning  
5           Commission and the community to come up  
6           with a plan that both addresses the needs  
7           to dispose of the property but also the  
8           community's vision for what it wants. It  
9           was probably a year-long process, and  
10          what was developed is now reflected in  
11          the redevelopment agreement. The  
12          property is being actually disposed of by  
13          the Redevelopment Authority. I think  
14          this is a much more constructive approach  
15          to this position.

16                         These are large properties  
17          that, if it becomes rental housing, can  
18          have a huge impact on a neighborhood if  
19          it just sits. If it's turned into  
20          commercial development, it's a huge  
21          impact.

22                         So I think that process that  
23          we're now using in Eastwick is probably  
24          the process that we ought to adopt going  
25          forward, because it reflects the



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           appropriate level of input from the  
3           community.

4                   COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

5                   MS. WILKERSON: And it's  
6           recorded in a document that can be  
7           enforceable.

8                   COUNCILWOMAN BASS: All right.

9           Well, I'm glad to hear that there's a  
10          process that's being followed now and  
11          that's in the works.

12                   Ada Lewis?

13                   MS. WILKERSON: Well, it hasn't  
14          been adopted as formal Board policy.  
15          Perhaps that is something we do need to  
16          make Board policy, but it's a much more  
17          constructive approach to disposition.

18                   COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. And  
19          Ada Lewis?

20                   MS. WILKERSON: I don't have  
21          the specifics on Ada Lewis, but I would  
22          look --

23                   DR. HITE: So Ada Lewis is  
24          still a surplus property, and it hasn't  
25          been -- there's no contract with anyone

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           to do that, because we also -- we also  
3           want to follow the same process that the  
4           Board President described in terms of the  
5           disposition of that property.

6                    MS. WILKERSON: There's certain  
7           isolated properties -- I don't want to  
8           mislead you -- where schools have been  
9           requested by a school, for example, but  
10          we're conscious of the fact that we need  
11          to consult with the community in those  
12          dispositions.

13                   COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.  
14          Well, we're certainly open to having  
15          those conversations and facilitating the  
16          conversation with the community to make  
17          that happen.

18                   I'll come back around.

19                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
20          you, Councilwoman.

21                   Councilwoman Gym.

22                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you  
23          very much, Mr. Chairman.

24                   And good morning. First of  
25          all, welcome, Dr. Hite and Mr. Monson. I

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           just wanted to say that it's really  
3           refreshing to have Dr. Wilkerson join us  
4           as Chair -- Ms. Wilkerson join us -- I  
5           know we try to elevate you all the time.

6                        MS. WILKERSON:  Everybody else  
7           is doctor on the Board.

8                        COUNCILWOMAN GYM:  It's a  
9           professor thing.

10                      To have you join us as Chair of  
11           our local School Board for our very first  
12           budget hearing.  So it's been really  
13           wonderful to have you.

14                      And I just also want to thank  
15           you because last week, three School Board  
16           members joined us here in Chambers for  
17           our hearing on some of the community's  
18           priorities.  We had a chance to listen to  
19           a really diverse group of young people,  
20           immigrant groups, educators, parents who  
21           are really talking about how this first  
22           local budget has a chance to really  
23           prioritize community-based needs that  
24           have a chance to bridge that trust level  
25           that we need with our communities and our

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           schools. So I want to thank you all for  
3           that especially.

4                   MS. WILKERSON: Well, thank  
5           you. Public engagement is a huge part of  
6           what this Board wants to accomplish. We  
7           have a committee that is focused on  
8           community engagement. So they've been  
9           meeting out in the community. We make an  
10          effort to attend meetings to which we're  
11          invited. We can't go to all of them, but  
12          appreciate the recognition for the work  
13          that we're putting in.

14                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you.  
15          And I think, you know, I'm really looking  
16          forward to having a hard look at some of  
17          the accomplishments and challenges we've  
18          been able to do. We've certainly come a  
19          long way since the Corbett budget cuts.  
20          We've come a long way from some of the  
21          decisions that were made that I think  
22          were talked about earlier under the state  
23          takeover, but this is an important time  
24          for us.

25                   So one of the areas that I

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           think we want to take a hard look at is  
3           around vacancies. This is one of the  
4           most important areas around the School  
5           District. My understanding is that as of  
6           March 26th, the District had about 158  
7           teaching vacancies impacting at least  
8           13,000 students. Most of them are  
9           concentrated in schools that have very  
10          high-risk students and vulnerable  
11          students.

12                         For example, as you know,  
13          Harding Elementary is typically at the  
14          top of the list with six vacancies for  
15          just under 800 students. But they also  
16          run the gamut. I mean, obviously I think  
17          we're concerned because some of the  
18          vacancies hit some essential teaching  
19          areas, including middle year's English,  
20          health and phys ed, math, science.

21                         At West Philadelphia we've got  
22          five vacancies, four of which are in  
23          essential teaching areas such as Spanish,  
24          biology, and English and just under 500  
25          students.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 And, look, this is not just a  
3 Philadelphia problem, but it is our  
4 problem nonetheless, and I'm committed to  
5 seeing us try to figure out how we can be  
6 helpful to move it forward and what the  
7 District is looking at.

8 So 40 percent of our schools  
9 have vacancies. That means 94 school  
10 buildings with vacant positions that has  
11 a deep impact on prep periods, on all the  
12 teachers in the building. A lot of  
13 these -- a quarter of these are in  
14 elementary ed, which is an important  
15 area, but most folks don't also know that  
16 16 percent are also in special education.  
17 So these are really important areas for  
18 us to pay attention to.

19 So can you tell me for the  
20 schools that are hit hardest by teacher  
21 vacancies, are there any additional  
22 resources that the District is putting  
23 efforts into? For example, is there  
24 tutoring? Are there additional  
25 enrichment components, any supplemental

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           material, other types of staffing that we  
3           can do to support those schools?

4                     DR. HITE: Yeah. So thank you,  
5           Councilwoman, for the question. A couple  
6           of points. One is, yes, to answer the  
7           final -- the last question. There are  
8           additional resources that we've put in  
9           schools this year as we started the  
10          school year. We identified the schools  
11          that carried the largest number of  
12          vacancies in the prior year and we  
13          actually hired more individuals than the  
14          individuals needed to fill those roles.  
15          And so some of the schools that you  
16          mentioned actually had what were called  
17          surplus individuals at those schools so  
18          that they could immediately fill a  
19          position if that position went vacant.

20                    I also want to make the point  
21          that, yes, there are that number of  
22          vacancies that you mentioned, but it  
23          doesn't necessarily mean that there's not  
24          a person with the students. And so  
25          several of those vacancies have been

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           filled with long-term substitutes. And  
3           while that individual may not be  
4           certified in that content area, they do  
5           have a certification to be in front of  
6           students.

7                     The other point I think is  
8           really important, because you're right,  
9           it's not just a problem here in  
10          Philadelphia, but we are really focused  
11          on the schools that are not included in  
12          the 150 of the 224 schools that we have  
13          that have zero vacancies. And so we are  
14          focused on all of those others to ensure  
15          that they have what they need, in  
16          addition to the work that we're doing now  
17          to recruit for those positions.

18                    There are also -- there's a lot  
19          of work that's happening with respect to  
20          special education, because that is an  
21          area where we are -- nationally we're  
22          challenged in terms of who is available  
23          to go into those positions. We're doing  
24          work to certify individuals that live and  
25          work in our communities to do that



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           through a teacher -- increasing the  
3           teacher residency program. The same  
4           holds true for languages as well and some  
5           of the math and sciences. So one --

6                    COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Are there  
7           any other options? I mean, so I know  
8           that we're going to -- on the front end,  
9           we have the teacher surpluses and efforts  
10          that we're certainly going to work on to  
11          staff schools, but on the back end, now  
12          that we're into April, May, June or even  
13          starting as early as January, knowing  
14          that these schools have so many  
15          vacancies, some of them, and knowing the  
16          impact, what are the plans for the  
17          students in those schools so that they  
18          can be assured that they will have a full  
19          opportunity? I mean, is there a need to  
20          do additional tutoring or any other  
21          staffing or supports, some kind of --  
22          especially if they don't have -- if  
23          they're on a daily substitute or  
24          something along those lines?

25                   DR. HITE: Yeah. So with those

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           young people, the thing that's important  
3           is, are they getting the content, are  
4           they having access to the content in  
5           order to be proficient in the areas that  
6           they are actually -- in the courses that  
7           they're enrolled in. One of the reasons  
8           we expanded the opportunities over the  
9           summer is to ensure that young people or  
10          families that feel as if their children  
11          haven't been -- haven't had all of the  
12          content knowledge will have that  
13          opportunity over the summer.

14                         There are tutoring  
15          opportunities available. We do have  
16          out-of-school-time opportunities  
17          available at multiple schools in order to  
18          do this work.

19                         But I want to go back to the  
20          point I made earlier. In many of the  
21          schools that are carrying vacancies, we  
22          have individuals who are in front of  
23          young people using lesson plans that were  
24          developed by a certified teacher, and  
25          that is our attempt to ensure that the

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           children have access to that information.  
3                    COUNCILWOMAN GYM: You know,  
4           we'll move on, and I'll come back to it.  
5           My concern is just around -- depending on  
6           the substitute, certainly long-term subs  
7           have a lot more stability. Daily subs  
8           definitely do not, even if they have a  
9           full lesson plan, and it contributes a  
10          lot to the climate. And so to some  
11          extent, I'm looking for like some type of  
12          reparations for these kids that have such  
13          a -- we went through this in 2016 when we  
14          had a number of children have to go to  
15          summer school mandatorily because we  
16          simply didn't have effective subs at that  
17          point. But I still remain deeply  
18          concerned that these young people deserve  
19          some kind of support and reparations for  
20          not having full-time teachers, especially  
21          because the demands on them are the same.  
22          So I'm concerned about the climate. I  
23          think it all feeds into one another. The  
24          climate starts to go awry, academics, and  
25          then it's difficult for the existing

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           teachers to stay, which is what I think  
3           we see as a cycle. So that's why I'm  
4           pushing to see like whether there's an  
5           infusion now as the school year is  
6           clearly underway and we're not filling  
7           these vacancies.

8                     DR. HITE: We are also able to  
9           see on a student-by-student basis where  
10          they are with respect to where they  
11          should be at a given point in the year,  
12          and the way we try to target our either  
13          enrichment opportunities or intervention  
14          opportunities are based on who falls into  
15          those categories. And we have some  
16          children that haven't had a vacancy all  
17          year who have fallen into that category  
18          and some who have had long-term  
19          substitutes and who don't fall into that  
20          category.

21                    So we try to make sure that  
22          those resources or the supports are  
23          targeted in response to what those  
24          children need, and it becomes a part of  
25          how we analyze data both at the District

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           level, at the school level, and even at  
3           the classroom level.

4                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
5           you.

6                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you  
7           and --

8                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:  
9           Councilwoman?

10                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: We'll come  
11           back again for my next round. I just  
12           wanted to just quickly say that the  
13           Inquirer story about churn has a lot to  
14           do with like school climate overall, not  
15           just like hyper individualized focus on  
16           students. But we'll come back to that.

17                   Thank you.

18                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
19           you, Councilwoman.

20                   Councilman Green.

21                   COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,  
22           Mr. Chair.

23                   Good morning. I apologize for  
24           my tardiness this morning. I actually  
25           had to chair a Gas Commission hearing

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           that started at 10 o'clock this morning.  
3           But I wanted to talk about, Dr. Hite, in  
4           your testimony, I believe it's Page 2 of  
5           your testimony, you made reference to  
6           traveling to Harrisburg yesterday with  
7           urban superintendents advocating for the  
8           needs of public schools. Who did you  
9           meet with when you made that advocacy?  
10          And you talked about we must lead the way  
11          and you're talking about the School  
12          District being the largest district in  
13          the Commonwealth, and my concern is that  
14          over the past number of years, at the  
15          local level here in the City of  
16          Philadelphia, we've put a significant  
17          amount of resources into last year during  
18          the Five Year Plan. In this year's  
19          budget, the Mayor has proposed another  
20          significant good amount of resources, and  
21          I'm sure that's happening at the local  
22          level all across the Commonwealth because  
23          of the lack of a following, from my  
24          perspective, of the State Constitution,  
25          and there's litigation to address that

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           that will be taken up and is in the  
3           process of being taken up at the Supreme  
4           Court level.

5                        So my question is, when you  
6           went to Harrisburg, was it just -- you  
7           made reference to urban superintendents,  
8           but this a Commonwealth issue, and so one  
9           of the things I've been harping on is  
10          that it should not just be urban school  
11          districts but also the legislative and  
12          executive branch of those urban  
13          districts, but also rural and suburban,  
14          because this is a Commonwealth issue.  
15          And considering we are the largest school  
16          district in the Commonwealth, we should  
17          be taking that lead.

18                       DR. HITE: Yeah. Thank you.  
19          Thank you for the question. And so there  
20          were a group of, I want to say, a dozen  
21          superintendents from the Commonwealth.  
22          What we wanted to do was get the urban  
23          districts in and around the Commonwealth  
24          that aren't necessarily in cities but  
25          they also have large urban populations

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           given their context. And so I'll just  
3           name some of the districts that were  
4           there. We had representation from around  
5           the Commonwealth. York was represented,  
6           Bethlehem, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh,  
7           Philadelphia naturally, Pottstown. I  
8           want to say Southeast Delco was there as  
9           well and -- Erie was not there. They are  
10          a member of the team, but they were not  
11          there. And what we were trying to do  
12          was -- and then each of the  
13          superintendents had met with his or her  
14          members of the Legislature to really talk  
15          about the three reasons we were there.

16                       Reason number one was to  
17          address funding PlanCon, and many of the  
18          districts have similar experiences to  
19          ours around many of the environmental  
20          issues in the schools. And so we as a  
21          group of superintendents were calling for  
22          funding the mechanism that already exists  
23          that would also allow districts to  
24          address many of their aged facility  
25          issues.



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2                   The second one was around  
3           ensuring that more money comes through  
4           the basic education formula and that it  
5           is -- that's a fairer approach given the  
6           concentrations of poverty in the cities  
7           like ours and that more money comes  
8           through that.

9                   The third issue was around two  
10           things associated. One thing associated  
11           with charters. One was accountability  
12           and the other was special education and  
13           how those funds are sent to charters  
14           regardless of the need or the need of the  
15           child and wanted to make sure that that  
16           then became a part of the conversation.

17                   It was two issues of charters.  
18           That was one. The others were cyber  
19           charters as it relates to cyber. And  
20           those were issues that we all talked  
21           about. And then once each of us met with  
22           our respective delegations, we then had a  
23           press conference and then walked through  
24           those points.

25                   And so that was the advocacy

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           that was happening yesterday and that  
3           each of -- in each of the represented  
4           districts and their cities or counties,  
5           there was media there from those  
6           representative districts and their  
7           Representatives also stood with us during  
8           the press conference in support of that  
9           advocacy effort. So that was yesterday's  
10          day in Harrisburg.

11                   MS. WILKERSON: In addition,  
12          the School Board has participated with  
13          PSBA, the Pennsylvania School Board  
14          Association, and we had two other Board  
15          members who were there. We joined over  
16          250 board members from across the  
17          Commonwealth on the 29th of April  
18          lobbying around the same issues, adequate  
19          school funding, PlanCon, and also trying  
20          to get a handle on the cyber charter  
21          issue.

22                   So I think -- and what was  
23          interesting is, this year it was a much,  
24          much larger number of school districts  
25          represented. It was almost twice the

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           size that it had been in some previous  
3           years. And so we see a growing concern  
4           across the Commonwealth around these  
5           issues and a real move towards  
6           organizing.

7                    COUNCILMAN GREEN: Was there  
8           any outreach to any of the executive  
9           branches or legislative branches of those  
10          jurisdictions that you talked about, as  
11          well as the business community, either  
12          through the Greater Philadelphia Chamber  
13          of Commerce or statewide?

14                   DR. HITE: Not as a part of  
15          yesterday, but work moving forward will  
16          have direct outreach to those groups.  
17          Yesterday, however, did include outreach  
18          to the Representatives from those  
19          respective areas and the Representatives  
20          from those respective areas across party  
21          lines and are individuals that we're  
22          going to advocate to help us on those  
23          issues, particularly around the three  
24          issues that we talked about.

25                   COUNCILMAN GREEN: The reason I

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           keep raising this issue, because I think  
3           we need to be bolder. This is an issue  
4           that impacts education not just in urban  
5           districts but in the entire Commonwealth,  
6           and we need to impress upon, especially  
7           members of the General Assembly, this is  
8           an issue that's going to impact us a  
9           Commonwealth being at the lead of other  
10          states or not. And I think that's not a  
11          message -- I have not seen any cohesive  
12          message regarding education in the  
13          Commonwealth of Pennsylvania from all  
14          sectors and how this impacts not just  
15          children in urban environments like  
16          Philadelphia, but it impacts the entire  
17          Commonwealth and the issue that there's  
18          not a cohesive conversation.

19                        For example, I serve as Second  
20          Vice President for the Pennsylvania  
21          Municipal League. I've talked with other  
22          colleagues in both small cities and  
23          medium-sized cities across the  
24          Commonwealth, and we've been talking  
25          about how the burden of education is

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           coming down at the local level when it  
3           should be funded at a much higher level  
4           just based on State Constitution. But  
5           it's not a consistent message around  
6           that.

7                         And the reason why I keep  
8           bringing this issue up is because at some  
9           point in the future, the Supreme Court  
10          will decide the William Penn versus the  
11          Pennsylvania Department of Education  
12          litigation and there needs to be a push  
13          toward the General Assembly in reference  
14          to funding, and it needs to come not just  
15          from school districts in Philadelphia or  
16          Allegheny County or Erie or York or  
17          Reading or Harrisburg, Allentown. It  
18          needs to be a statewide perspective for  
19          the future of the Commonwealth, and I  
20          don't see that consistent message. And  
21          my concern is, we're going to lose that  
22          opportunity if we don't start galvanizing  
23          that type of perspective from all  
24          parties, because this is not just an  
25          education issue. It's an economic

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           development issue for our Commonwealth  
3           and, more importantly, for the City of  
4           Philadelphia.

5                     DR. HITE: And that was the  
6           consistent message yesterday as we all  
7           talked about those three areas. The  
8           reason we picked those three areas,  
9           Councilman, is because of the way funds  
10          are distributed in the Commonwealth. I  
11          mean, it's not the fairest system in the  
12          world. And because we had to also agree  
13          as school districts on the things on  
14          which we could all then come together on.  
15          Pittsburgh was in a very different place  
16          on fair funding, because they are a  
17          beneficiary of the current structure.  
18          They actually get more monies for  
19          students because of the hold harmless  
20          provision. And that's why we talked  
21          about more money through the funding  
22          formula, facilities, and the cyber  
23          charter issue, because we had to first  
24          come to agreement as the 12 or 13 school  
25          districts on the things on which we would

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           advocate as a group. Because multiple  
3           individuals are advocating to continue  
4           the structure that is in place now  
5           because they're beneficiaries of more  
6           revenue given the hold harmless provision  
7           and how our funds are distributed in the  
8           Commonwealth.

9                   COUNCILMAN GREEN: My time is  
10           up, but I have some additional questions.

11                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
12           you, Councilman.

13                   We're about to go into a second  
14           round. Councilwoman Reynolds Brown will  
15           be first, but let me just ask one  
16           question. I just have one question that  
17           I know is important to the Council  
18           President I just wanted to get in. It  
19           deals with energy costs. Mr. Monson, you  
20           might be the person to answer these.

21                   FY19, 44.7 million was  
22           allocated for the School District's  
23           utility costs, and a lot of those costs  
24           were through energy buying and  
25           negotiating rates ahead of time. We're

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           told that local experts are projecting  
3           that if the School District's energy more  
4           closely mirrored the City's own Energy  
5           Office, the School District could  
6           conservatively save at least 20 percent  
7           of those annual costs, which would be  
8           about an estimated \$9 million per year.  
9           Do you agree with that assessment and are  
10          you willing to explore a partnership with  
11          the Energy Office?

12                       MR. MONSON: So we do have  
13           conversations -- in fact, we have a  
14           meeting scheduled, both myself and Chief  
15           Operating Officer, with the Energy Office  
16           to look at those opportunities as they  
17           exist. A lot of our costs do not exactly  
18           kind of flow in the same way. I have to  
19           look and see where they're getting their  
20           estimates, what they're basing their  
21           numbers on, that 20 percent number. But  
22           we continue to have those meetings.

23                       I will also point out that we  
24           are working very hard on our ESCO  
25           projects and our GISO (ph) projects. We



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           have a pilot that we've done in three  
3           schools. We have the next project, which  
4           we've finalized the buildings. We're  
5           finalizing the actual projects over the  
6           next month, which will be in 20 schools  
7           across the City, and those all should  
8           reduce energy costs.

9                        Most importantly, we don't  
10          assume those costs in the budget. So any  
11          savings we get from those we'll be able  
12          to turn into additional facilities  
13          investments, which we obviously have need  
14          for. But we're always looking for  
15          opportunities to either lock in contract  
16          costs that will keep our prices low, work  
17          with the Energy Office, any other experts  
18          we can to help us, as well as ways that  
19          we can just reduce our energy footprint  
20          overall, because obviously the less we're  
21          using, the less we'll spend no matter  
22          what.

23                        COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And if  
24          you could keep the Council President and  
25          Council generally informed about those

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           discussions with the Energy Office. I'm  
3           sure you appreciate that.

4                       MR. MONSON: Of course.

5                       COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
6           you.

7                       Councilwoman Bass.

8                       COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,  
9           Mr. Chairman.

10                      You know, I forgot earlier in  
11           my remarks to acknowledge Councilwoman  
12           Blackwell, who is the Chair of the  
13           Education Committee here in City Council,  
14           and I know that she stepped out, but I  
15           did want to acknowledge her and thank her  
16           as well for her just years of extensive  
17           knowledge and support. And I would say  
18           among City Council, no one has done more  
19           over the years for the School District of  
20           Philadelphia and for the children of  
21           Philadelphia than Councilwoman Jannie  
22           Blackwell.

23                      So I did want to acknowledge  
24           her, and I forgot to make those remarks  
25           when I first spoke, so I did want to

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           circle back and say that, because I think  
3           it's really important to acknowledge who  
4           has been really working hard on this for  
5           many, many moons.

6                        I also wanted to go back to my  
7           questions in terms of the School  
8           District, the buildings, and the physical  
9           condition of our schools, and I wanted to  
10          ask how many surplus buildings? You  
11          mentioned Ada Lewis as a surplus  
12          building. How many of those surplus  
13          buildings are in the School District's  
14          inventory right now?

15                      DR. HITE: We have 14 surplus  
16          properties.

17                      COUNCILWOMAN BASS: 14?

18                      DR. HITE: Yeah. Four of the  
19          properties are listed with brokers and  
20          being marketed for sale. Two properties  
21          are listed with the Philadelphia  
22          Redevelopment Authority to sell along  
23          with City-owned parcels. One property is  
24          retained for use, and seven properties  
25          are surplus and not listed.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Why are  
3 they not listed?

4 DR. HITE: We're holding them  
5 in our inventory to see if in fact there  
6 are enrollment shifts. Then we may need  
7 to use those properties for other  
8 school-related uses.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Can you say  
10 which properties those are that are not  
11 listed that you might need to utilize in  
12 the future?

13 DR. HITE: I don't have that,  
14 but I can get that for you.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I think  
16 that will be helpful. And also for the  
17 ones that are listed with brokers, who is  
18 with PRA. Do you know which one was  
19 retained for use? I'm assuming that's  
20 retained for use by the School District  
21 of Philadelphia?

22 DR. HITE: Yes. Yes.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And so if  
24 we could find out what's happening --

25 DR. HITE: Okay.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: -- with  
3 these properties. And I'm assuming that  
4 Ada Lewis is one of the four that's  
5 listed with a broker?

6 DR. HITE: Yes.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. And  
8 so that's the 14. Out of how many School  
9 District buildings are owned by the  
10 District?

11 DR. HITE: Let me get that for  
12 you, Councilwoman. I'll get that for  
13 you.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. If  
15 you could let us know. It's good just to  
16 put it into context how many school  
17 buildings the District actually owns.  
18 And so we know that 14 of those are  
19 considered to be surplus.

20 DR. HITE: I just confirmed,  
21 it's 300.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: 300?

23 DR. HITE: Yes.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Even?

25 DR. HITE: Even, yes.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Now, based  
3 on the previous questions that we had in  
4 terms of addressing these surplus  
5 buildings and you said that the plan was  
6 to sort of make a reassessment so that  
7 you have a good idea of what to do in  
8 certain neighborhoods, what we need, and  
9 based on that answer, I have a question  
10 in terms of the School District students  
11 that have gone through the District's  
12 building trades program since it was  
13 implemented last year.

14 There was an article last year  
15 about the success of the Philadelphia  
16 School District's hiring program for  
17 plumbers, electricians, and apprentices  
18 through the School District of  
19 Philadelphia, that we were actually  
20 running this program and putting these  
21 young folks to work. So I just wanted to  
22 ask you to comment on that, what's  
23 happening with that program now, are  
24 those folks being geared up and prepared  
25 so that if there is an opportunity to

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           build a new school building, that we can  
3           employ some of these same young people  
4           that have been trained through the School  
5           District? Is that a part of the plan?

6                     DR. HITE: It's a part of the  
7           plan to move toward that. We have a lot  
8           of work to do in order to get to that.  
9           We try to -- we explored that,  
10          Councilwoman Bass, I think a year or two  
11          ago and ran into some requirements around  
12          some of the certifications and  
13          backgrounds of students. They also had  
14          to be of a certain age, which created  
15          some of the challenges.

16                    We have -- I think I talked  
17          earlier about we created an  
18          apprenticeship program with our own 32BJ  
19          in the School District of Philadelphia.  
20          I think that's the program you were  
21          talking about.

22                    COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yes.

23                    DR. HITE: And those are  
24          steamfitters, plumbers, electrical, and  
25          HVAC, and those individuals are young

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           people who come out of our CTE programs  
3           who are paid to learn those skills and  
4           then they are hired on us in one of those  
5           positions. I think that's the article  
6           you were talking about.

7                        COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yes.

8                        DR. HITE: Now we have 22 slots  
9           available. It started with five or six.  
10          We have now 22 slots. We also have  
11          females in the program --

12                       COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Wonderful.

13                       DR. HITE: -- as well. And we  
14          have, as you may imagine, a significant  
15          interest now by our students in that  
16          program.

17                       And so it's using unique  
18          opportunities like that to fill slots  
19          that are vacant that are in the District,  
20          using young people who have come through  
21          those programs for us. So we're really  
22          excited about that and have talked with  
23          other labor unions on how we can do that  
24          inside of those other unions,  
25          particularly ones we work with.



1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So what's  
3 the status of the program? Because early  
4 on in my question you seemed to suggest  
5 that the program was not --

6 DR. HITE: Well, that's  
7 different than constructing new -- I'm  
8 sorry. I may have misinterpreted your  
9 question.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

11 DR. HITE: I thought your  
12 question was if in fact we are doing like  
13 new school construction, those young  
14 people are working on the construction  
15 sites. The distinction here is, these  
16 young people in the program I just  
17 described would actually become the  
18 plumbers, the HVAC installers, the  
19 carpenters, the steamfitters in the  
20 School District of Philadelphia  
21 maintaining our properties.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. But  
23 there could be two opportunities then if  
24 you look at it as two different tracks.  
25 So there could be one track for those who

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 are repairing, working internally --

3 DR. HITE: Yes.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: -- to

5 repair existing facilities, which we know

6 need a lot of repair, and then for

7 additional needs in areas, I'm saying if

8 we're in the Northeast, which has a

9 population boom when it comes to the

10 School District, and that maybe those

11 young folks would actually have the

12 ability to do the building on those

13 sites.

14 I just want to make sure that

15 we're looking out for our kids when

16 they're graduating or preparing to

17 graduate or getting close to that mark so

18 that we don't have them hanging around.

19 I was at an event just

20 recently, and outside of the event there

21 were people, young people, hanging around

22 a take-out restaurant on a warm Saturday

23 night. And so when someone asked them,

24 why are you just hanging out here -- I

25 mean, it was like a ton of young people

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           and 18, 19, 20-year-olds. And they said,  
3           well, we don't have any place to go.  
4           This is where we hang. This is kind of  
5           our thing. And so as the gentleman was  
6           talking to him, he said, well, what do  
7           you want to do? You don't want to hang  
8           out here all the time. What do you want  
9           to do?

10                         He said, well, I'd love to  
11           build a house, but I don't know where to  
12           get started. I don't know how to get  
13           started.

14                         And so, again, if the School  
15           District is offering an option for our  
16           kids, this is a pathway to touch them,  
17           find them, get them geared up so they're  
18           not hanging out in front of the take-out  
19           restaurant, which as a matter of fact,  
20           unfortunately someone was just -- a  
21           homicide occurred outside of that  
22           location just recently.

23                         But we want to make sure all of  
24           our kids are safe and they have  
25           opportunities and they have things to do,

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           and I think that the School District just  
3           has a big role in that, particularly as  
4           they get older and are moving forward.

5                     DR. HITE: Sorry. I  
6           misunderstood your question too.

7                     COUNCILWOMAN BASS: That's  
8           okay.

9                     DR. HITE: So I started wrong.  
10                    So we have 80 students all  
11           total in apprenticeship types of programs  
12           over the last three years. Thirty-six of  
13           them were on the Penn Assist project.  
14           That's the project building the new  
15           facility. That was in partnership with  
16           building trades. I talked about the  
17           students in the School District  
18           facilities. We also have what's called a  
19           School District Urban Tech program.  
20           Those are young people who actually work  
21           on the technology, do the wiring and do  
22           that in our facilities. And so we have  
23           that program. And then we have the  
24           Finishing Trades Institute, which I've  
25           talked about before. About 25 young

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 people are in that program as well.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. The  
4 more we can expand it, the better.

5 So thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
6 I'll come back.

7 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
8 you. Thank you, Councilwoman.

9 Councilwoman Reynolds Brown.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you,  
11 thank you, thank you.

12 STEM -- recently I learned that  
13 Overbrook High School -- so let me do it  
14 differently. Tell us where we are with  
15 STEM in high schools and, more  
16 specifically, where we are with chemistry  
17 teachers in high schools, which we know  
18 matters if young people want to pursue  
19 STEM. Although really you have to touch  
20 young people's lives in fourth, fifth,  
21 and sixth grades that can have the  
22 credits required for STEM programs in  
23 college. So where are we in the system?

24 DR. HITE: Councilwoman  
25 Reynolds Brown, I'm going to have Malika

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           Savoy-Brooks, our Academic Support --  
3           Chief of Academic Support, she's coming  
4           up to respond to the question.

5                        COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.  
6                        (Witness approached witness  
7           table.)

8                        DR. HITE: I'm just making sure  
9           the Board President is coming back.

10                      DR. SAVOY-BROOKS: Good  
11           morning.

12                      COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good  
13           afternoon. Pull the mic closely so we  
14           can hear you.

15                      DR. SAVOY-BROOKS: Good  
16           morning. Malika Savoy-Brooks, Chief  
17           Academic Officer for the School District  
18           of Philadelphia.

19                      We are currently -- this is our  
20           first year of having the high school  
21           institute to provide professional  
22           development and content support regarding  
23           English, math, science, and social  
24           studies. We are in the process of  
25           creating some high school priorities to

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           support content area teaching and also  
3           supporting teachers in scaffolding the  
4           learnings of students. In addition to  
5           that, allowing students or enabling  
6           students to have the opportunity to apply  
7           their learning so that just the  
8           conversation we just had is not just  
9           content learning, but they have a  
10          specific idea about how to use that  
11          learning in their everyday lives.

12                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So to the  
13           specific question, where are we with  
14           regards to getting young people thinking  
15           about, talking about STEM programming?  
16           Because their lives have to be touched  
17           around STEM pathways prior to ninth  
18           grade.

19                    DR. SAVOY-BROOKS: Yes. So  
20           that's what the high school content  
21           institute is part of that process. We  
22           want their English, math, science, and  
23           social studies teachers who are learning  
24           their content. We're also talking about  
25           integrating the content so that it's

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           applicable in real life situations, which  
3           is the STEM process, also through the  
4           college and career readiness process that  
5           we're implementing. That's one of the  
6           pathways, how are we preparing students  
7           for college or careers aligned to the  
8           content that you're teaching.

9                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I think I  
10          follow you. I'm not sure I do. Is that  
11          a new initiative of the School District?

12                   DR. SAVOY-BROOKS: Which part?  
13          The high school institute? Yes.

14                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes.

15                   DR. SAVOY-BROOKS: Yes.

16                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So then is  
17          the philosophy behind that then that you  
18          touch young people in ninth grade versus  
19          letting them know in sixth, seventh, and  
20          eighth grade that certain STEM-related  
21          courses are required in high school so  
22          that you're equipped if you want to  
23          pursue them for college?

24                   DR. SAVOY-BROOKS: So what  
25          we're doing is not actually starting at



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           ninth grade. We're looking at what's  
3           happening in our middle grades and  
4           preparing students through the college  
5           and career readiness process. So we're  
6           introducing students to college  
7           exploration and college awareness, what  
8           does it take for specific either job  
9           readiness right out of high school or  
10          two-year, four-year degrees, what courses  
11          are necessary to prepare middle school  
12          students for the high school selection  
13          process and then how is it aligned to  
14          careers.

15                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I better  
16           understand now. Thank you for the  
17           clarity.

18                    DR. HITE: So, Councilwoman, I  
19           also want to add that -- I think we  
20           talked about this a couple -- I mean,  
21           when we were doing the one-on-one in the  
22           office. And as we're thinking about what  
23           our young people need in order to go out  
24           and be --

25                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Equipped.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 DR. HITE: -- equipped for a  
3 knowledge economy, we've also done a  
4 great deal around engineering and design  
5 and things like coding and building  
6 robots and through a lot of coded  
7 actions, and we now have 120 schools that  
8 are involved in those types of  
9 activities.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: At all  
11 levels, Dr. Hite?

12 DR. HITE: Well, that's K-8.  
13 Dr. Savoy was talking about high school.  
14 I'm talking now about these are  
15 kindergarten through eighth graders.  
16 Because what we're trying to do, to your  
17 point, is start them as early as  
18 possible.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes.

20 DR. HITE: In addition to that,  
21 we have trained a large number of  
22 teachers who are receiving six hours of  
23 training and job-embedded coaching for  
24 how to utilize the technology in terms of  
25 working it into their curriculum. And so

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           that is happening this year and will  
3           happen next year, and our goal is to  
4           train 3,000 teachers that are working  
5           with K through 8.

6                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So you're  
7           going to take it systemwide?

8                    DR. HITE: Yes.

9                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Because my  
10          follow-up question was going to be, so  
11          who are that lucky group? How do they  
12          get to that group? It's because they  
13          volunteer or is it because it becomes a  
14          part of the required training that you're  
15          insisting? And we can't talk about  
16          coding -- and I don't say this to flatter  
17          my colleague, but I do say this to remind  
18          folks that but for Councilman Domb, this  
19          notion about capturing the imagination of  
20          young people early in this new world  
21          called coding, I'm just thankful that the  
22          School District has embraced that vision.  
23          It's really important.

24                   DR. HITE: So we have at least  
25          two days that are dedicated for that

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           purpose for any teacher that is -- the  
3           130 -- we have 130 digital literacy  
4           teachers in our K-8 schools. Those  
5           individuals then receive the training and  
6           then work to support the teachers in  
7           their schools on that. And so we had two  
8           dedicated days for those 130 teachers,  
9           and those 130 teachers are using things  
10          like Spiros and they call it Ozobots,  
11          they're robots, and to teach the young  
12          people how to program and how to enter  
13          code in order to manipulate those  
14          devices.

15                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I've seen  
16           a couple of recent articles that talks  
17           about all that new terminology. So it's  
18           important to know that the School  
19           District is trying to keep pace with  
20           getting our kids ready for the future.

21                    DR. HITE: And we also had to  
22           update a lot of the technology in order  
23           to utilize those types of materials. And  
24           so we've updated the technology in the  
25           schools that include new Smartboards for

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           teachers and new technologies in  
3           classrooms.

4                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN:   Let's  
5           switch now and move to elementary school  
6           suspensions.  You recall that we did  
7           hearings on that some time ago, and I  
8           just want an update today on how many  
9           students in grades K through 2 did the  
10          District suspend last year, how many  
11          students in grades K -- forgive me; third  
12          through fifth grade.  And now that  
13          suspensions have been banned in grades K  
14          through two, what tools and resources are  
15          you providing teachers to better equip  
16          them so that they can adequately manage  
17          young children who engage in  
18          inappropriate behavior?  What's the  
19          alternative, since it was reported at the  
20          budget hearings last year that you're  
21          moving to eliminate the suspension of  
22          little people in grades K through two?

23                   DR. HITE:   So district-wide  
24          94.2 -- I'm sorry.  That's district-wide.  
25          We're continuing to work to implement the

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 K-2 zero suspensions. I can get for you  
3 the exact percentages of what those are  
4 now. I have district-wide. I don't have  
5 for those grade groups, and so --

6 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: No  
7 worries.

8 DR. HITE: I can get that grade  
9 group for you.

10 District-wide we have 94.2  
11 percent of all students have zero  
12 suspensions. And so that leaves us with  
13 just under 6 percent that --

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Have to  
15 resort to that alternative.

16 DR. HITE: We have the grades  
17 broken down so we would know exactly  
18 where those young people are.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We would  
20 want to see that, only because we have a  
21 bill on the -- not a bill, but a  
22 resolution on the Calendar and we want to  
23 take action in an informed way. And so  
24 you providing us that information will  
25 guide us on whether or not we need to

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           take action at all. So if you can get  
3           that to us, that would be great.

4                     The bell has rung, so I'll  
5           circle back and pick up on the school  
6           suspension piece next round.

7                     COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank  
8           you very much.

9                     A little bit ago Councilwoman  
10          Reynolds Brown mentioned programs and CTE  
11          programs, and as you know, we created the  
12          Penn Assist program. We also created a  
13          program with Brandywine and Drexel. And  
14          with these programs, we advocated and we  
15          have them training kids in local schools  
16          in zip codes 04, 39, and 43 as well as  
17          training adults in those areas.

18                    What we would like to do is  
19          work with you closer for Penn on more  
20          schools in West Philadelphia areas. They  
21          have a lot in the regular Mastbaum,  
22          various trade schools, but we want more  
23          assistance to do more schools in our  
24          area, and we'll be in touch with you  
25          about making that a reality. Fine?

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 DR. HITE: Yes.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Okay.

4 Thank you very much.

5 President Darrell Clarke -- I'm  
6 sorry. Domb and Darrell are two  
7 different names.

8 Councilman Domb.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,  
10 Madam Chairwoman.

11 And good afternoon. I just  
12 have a few questions. I'm just trying to  
13 get an idea. The Earned Income Tax  
14 Credit, the federal program, not the  
15 state, EITC, the federal program, the  
16 Earned Income Tax Credit, and I say this  
17 because it benefits those people the most  
18 who have children under the age of 17,  
19 and we still leave \$100 million. There's  
20 228,000 people in the City who qualify,  
21 40,000 don't get the checks. It's 100  
22 million every year. You can file back  
23 three additional years.

24 Quick example: Single parent  
25 with two kids under 17, 44,000 of income,



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           can get checks up to \$5,700 and file back  
3           three years, and a couple with 51,000 can  
4           get checks up to 5,700 with two kids  
5           under 17. So the program is really  
6           focused on children under age 17.

7                        Is there anything else we could  
8           do through the school system to get this  
9           word out?

10                       MR. MONSON: We can certainly  
11           make people aware of it. There's a lot  
12           of material that your office has put out  
13           and that's around the City. We can look  
14           at ways to kind of spread that word of  
15           what's available so people are aware of  
16           whatever resources are available that  
17           they could be tapping into.

18                       DR. HITE: And we could also  
19           make it a part of the information we  
20           circulate in our Strategic Partnerships  
21           Office that now has a lot of direct  
22           contacts with many of the businesses and  
23           entities that are supporting the School  
24           District.

25                       COUNCILMAN DOMB: That would be

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           great. The more we can get the word out,  
3           it's better for us.

4                     Just a simple question. I  
5           heard you had 14 schools that are closed  
6           right now, and I know that ACCT, our  
7           Annual Control Center, is having a major  
8           issue right now with overcrowding. Do  
9           you think in the inventory of the schools  
10          there might be a school that would be  
11          suitable for ACCT? You don't have to  
12          give me an answer now. You could look at  
13          it and let us know. Because they're in  
14          desperate need of more space.

15                    DR. HITE: We can look at it.

16                    COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. And  
17          then the other question I have is,  
18          there's a school called Williams College  
19          of the Trades. It's in Media,  
20          Pennsylvania, and they train people to go  
21          into the trades. And I know we have  
22          Randolph, which is great, but have we  
23          ever specifically thought of a high  
24          school where we would partner with the  
25          trades, electricians, plumbers,

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           carpenters, everybody, and actually have  
3           them come into the school, have them  
4           teach alongside our teachers or be  
5           consultants or whatever, give us the  
6           information we need to teach ninth to  
7           twelfth graders so they can actually get  
8           jobs in the trade so we're not going to  
9           have any excuses that they're not  
10          trained? We actually go through the  
11          training.

12                   DR. HITE: Yeah. We don't do  
13           that, Councilman Domb. We do recruit  
14           from there. We do recruit their  
15           graduates. But instead we employ  
16           individuals with those same skills who  
17           have been trained in industry, but also  
18           have the certification to teach those in  
19           those certification areas. And so that's  
20           been our approach. We are familiar with  
21           the school because we do recruit from  
22           their graduates.

23                   COUNCILMAN DOMB: I guess what  
24           I'm looking for is a pathway for our  
25           graduates to get into the trades so that

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           we start them in the ninth grade and  
3           teaching them all these different skill  
4           sets that are required, that would give  
5           them an advantage, I think, and  
6           opportunity to go into the trades.

7                         DR. HITE: Yeah. And those are  
8           young people who are already in our CTE  
9           programs who are interested in those  
10          career areas. We have now set up a  
11          sequencing pattern to actually have those  
12          young people experience what those trade  
13          areas are because they've expressed an  
14          interest, and we're doing that at places  
15          like The Workshop School, even at Carver  
16          Engineering and Science, SLA, but also at  
17          many of the CTE programs as well. The  
18          ninth graders are having an opportunity  
19          to experience those areas so that they  
20          know the area they want to pursue in the  
21          later grades.

22                        COUNCILMAN DOMB: Just  
23          something maybe we should think about  
24          down the road, because it seems to be a  
25          good opportunity for people to get into

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2 the trades that way.

3 The second-to-last question. I  
4 know we've supported now 122 public  
5 school teachers who have taken the  
6 courses at the Federal Reserve, and I  
7 know there's a sign-up by May 24th for  
8 any high school teacher who wants to take  
9 it, they can offer it for free, financial  
10 literacy. So these 122 teachers are now  
11 in the schools teaching financial  
12 literacy. Have you seen any of the  
13 efforts or the results of that program?  
14 And also we have 25 high schools where  
15 we're teaching 15 kids in tenth,  
16 eleventh, and twelfth grade coding, which  
17 Sylvester Mobley is doing, Coded by Kids.  
18 And he won the award, by the way, last  
19 week, the Philadelphia Award. He's doing  
20 a great job. But have you seen the  
21 effects of these programs?

22 DR. HITE: Oh, absolutely. I  
23 mean, I think that it is why we want to  
24 make sure that we're integrating into our  
25 curriculum K-12 the PDE standards around

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           financial literacy, because they do have  
3           them there. We've also offered, as you  
4           know, we've offered to every high school  
5           teacher the opportunity to participate in  
6           the summer program. Not as many of the  
7           high school teachers signed up as the  
8           elementary teachers, but we do have until  
9           May 24th to continue that sign-up.

10                    COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank  
11           you. And I'm just echoing Councilwoman  
12           Blondell Reynolds Brown on that coding  
13           piece, because I think that is important  
14           for us.

15                    The other question I had and I  
16           want to mention, Councilwoman Gym  
17           mentioned about the vacancies. In the  
18           last five years, are those vacancies  
19           going up or going down or staying the  
20           same? And also what is the context of  
21           these vacancies? How many teachers or  
22           whatever are against those vacancies?

23                    DR. HITE: Over the last  
24           several years, the vacancy number has  
25           gone down. Actually we had a lot more

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           when we were dealing with a lot of the  
3           issues that we were dealing with in order  
4           to become more financially stable. And  
5           so those numbers have gone down.

6                         In addition to that, we were  
7           also talking about the retention numbers,  
8           and those numbers as well have changed in  
9           terms of the retention numbers have gone  
10          up over the past several years, and we  
11          continue to focus our efforts in those  
12          places. They do represent teachers who  
13          are in schools. I indicated earlier that  
14          of the 224 schools, 150 have no  
15          vacancies. There are others that have  
16          one vacancy, but then we have a group of  
17          schools that have more.

18                        COUNCILMAN DOMB: How many  
19          total teachers are in the schools?

20                        DR. HITE: Just under 9,000.

21                        COUNCILMAN DOMB: 9,000. So  
22          you have 158. It's like 1.7 percent  
23          vacancy factor?

24                        DR. HITE: Yeah.

25                        COUNCILMAN DOMB: So it's 98.3

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           percent. Well, you're doing better than  
3           the City, because we have 29,000  
4           employees and we have 1,272 vacancies.  
5           We're at 4.4. So whatever you're doing,  
6           I would keep filling them, because we  
7           want to fill every position, but we're on  
8           the right path, which is good.

9                        Thank you. Thank you very  
10           much.

11                       Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12                       COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
13           you, Councilman.

14                       Councilwoman Gym.

15                       COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you  
16           very much, Mr. Chair.

17                       So I did want to wrap up a  
18           little bit of the last question. I think  
19           the one difference is of course that  
20           students are mandated to have those  
21           classes by the state laws and the State  
22           Constitution. So it's important that we  
23           keep focused on -- as much as we want to  
24           acknowledge all the improvements that are  
25           happening, it's important to ensure that



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           the 13,000 students who don't currently  
3           have a full-time teacher in the classroom  
4           or a certified teacher in the classroom  
5           have the best educational possibilities.

6                        So I wanted to wrap it up  
7           really quickly by saying that what I'd  
8           like to hear from the District is for us  
9           to take a huge step forward in committing  
10          to a bigger plan. We know that these  
11          schools come up. They are relatively  
12          predictable schools at this stage.  
13          They're struggling with a lot of  
14          different issues, and what I don't want  
15          us to have is like every single year come  
16          up with the same kind of plan. We know  
17          that they are going to struggle with  
18          vacancies.

19                       Can the District commit to us  
20          to do -- talk to us about committing to a  
21          resource package for these schools and  
22          for children who are hit hard by the  
23          vacancy issue so we can ensure that their  
24          learning is fully established and not  
25          just kind of in a scattershot sort of

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 way?

3 DR. HITE: Yeah. I mean, it  
4 wasn't -- our intention wasn't  
5 scattershot. Our intention was to be  
6 very intentional around the schools that  
7 we focused on this past year, and those  
8 schools -- in addition to hiring more  
9 individuals who were there, we also in  
10 some places increased the number of  
11 climate staff who were in the building,  
12 because that was a cause for that. We  
13 increased the counselor who was in the  
14 building and in some cases even added  
15 more administrators, in addition to the  
16 teachers who were there. And so it is --  
17 we will commit to making sure that there  
18 are plans for schools that have  
19 historically had high turnover so that  
20 those schools don't become the primary  
21 source of the vacancy numbers as they've  
22 been in the past. So, yes.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I think that  
24 will go a long way and just helping us  
25 move forward and not just having us

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           reenter the school year with a blank  
3           slate each and every time. I'm not  
4           saying that that always happens, but we  
5           want to take care of churn. We want to  
6           take care of stability. And we know the  
7           schools that are having the most amount  
8           of problems and we've got to give them a  
9           big commitment in September. So thank  
10          you.

11                        So this fiscal year we're  
12          adding 11 new counselors, though this is  
13          an area that has been a huge campaign.  
14          It certainly was a major focus of our  
15          hearing last week. I want to thank a  
16          number of our student groups, especially  
17          Philadelphia Student Union, Youth United  
18          for Change, in addition to Asian  
19          Americans United and VietLead, who came  
20          out calling for the importance of more  
21          counselors in our schools. This City  
22          Council passed a resolution urging the  
23          District to take a look at the 250-to-1  
24          student-to-counselor ratio.

25                        Could you tell us, what would

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           be the cost to meet that 250-to-1  
3           counselor ratio? And what would be -- in  
4           each of the individual schools. So not  
5           as an aggregate, but if we were to go  
6           school -- if we could guarantee it school  
7           by school, if that makes sense.

8                     DR. HITE: I want to get the --  
9           we'll have to do some analysis and get  
10          back to you there, get back to you with  
11          that number, Councilwoman. This year  
12          we're adding, I want to say, we're  
13          adding -- I think the number is 27 new  
14          counselors. And the distinction this  
15          year is some of those will have expertise  
16          in behavioral health, because those  
17          students had indicated, even during my  
18          advisory, a clear need to do that. So  
19          this is in addition to the 11 others that  
20          we're able to add using other school  
21          improvement funds, and that actually  
22          brings the ratio down pretty  
23          dramatically. Under the national  
24          average, it doesn't bring it to 250. I  
25          think you said 250.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Right.

3 DR. HITE: So we would have  
4 to -- I'll be glad to get back to Council  
5 with what that would mean in terms of a  
6 dollar amount.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: That's  
8 helpful. I mean, the 250-to-1 is  
9 recommended by American School  
10 Counselors. We know that in higher --  
11 some of the schools like Jenkintown,  
12 Abington will go down to 170-to-1.  
13 They'll be quite low.

14 But I will still say that this  
15 is not just a resource issue. This has  
16 been the number one concern raised to us  
17 both by teachers, by parents, by students  
18 themselves, that they want to see a  
19 school that is developed around needs and  
20 not based on what problems that they have  
21 on the back end of things. They want to  
22 see a school that's being responsive to  
23 their needs. So we hear over and over  
24 and over again school climate,  
25 counselors, support staff in our schools,

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           community connectors. These are all the  
3           things that are making a school feel like  
4           it's actually a school that's responsive  
5           to students, especially when they need  
6           help. They are 16, 15 years old. Any  
7           child would need that, but especially for  
8           some of our school communities, they  
9           really need that support.

10                   DR. HITE: And if I may,  
11           Councilwoman, also want to add, because I  
12           know you and several other Councilmembers  
13           have been advocates for this, that with  
14           the partnership that we've had with  
15           Behavioral Health, it has allowed us to  
16           put 21 counselors into schools. We're  
17           adding an additional 25 within our budget  
18           that will also be in addition to the 21  
19           at the high needs -- I mean, we're doing  
20           it by need. And so we're also adding  
21           those social workers that will also have  
22           behavioral health experience. So we are  
23           pleased to be able to provide those.

24                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Will there  
25           be a social worker at most of the

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           comprehensive high schools? Is that the  
3           goal?

4                     DR. HITE: Yes, that is the  
5           goal.

6                     COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Great.  
7           Thank you very much.

8                     I want to hit very quickly on a  
9           couple of policies that we've gotten from  
10          constituents, and your office has been  
11          really helpful on some of them. But  
12          we've been hearing about a lot of  
13          school-level policies that are not shaped  
14          at the District level, but they are like  
15          coming out on the school level. Some  
16          examples are silent lunches where  
17          kindergartners are not allowed to talk.  
18          As you know, we dealt a little bit with  
19          extreme expenses around graduation costs  
20          that are put upon parents that have felt  
21          excessive, sending students home for  
22          arriving out of uniform, water bottles,  
23          cell phones. And part of the question  
24          has been whether the District intends to  
25          provide some universal guidance on some

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2 of these policies.

3 DR. HITE: Yes.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And that  
5 includes recess, by the way.

6 DR. HITE: Absolutely.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: About  
8 children being denied access to outdoor  
9 recess. If you're working --

10 DR. HITE: And not talking  
11 during lunch for kindergartners.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yes. So if  
13 the District is moving towards that, I  
14 mean, that's a big help. It's another  
15 reason why we've been talking about the  
16 community connector position, because  
17 like the principal is saying one thing,  
18 but there's no one talking to the  
19 parents, and then the District is having  
20 another area. So there's clearly a  
21 disconnect.

22 So could you talk a little bit  
23 about whether you see a role for some  
24 people to play to make sure parents are  
25 getting this information and not just



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           through the lens of the -- like the  
3           principal is the most important,  
4           obviously, but that conversation that  
5           goes with parents, we're down to one in  
6           five, I think, or one in four schools  
7           have a HSA now, and school staffs aren't  
8           really geared up towards the parent  
9           communication. So could you talk a  
10          little bit about the importance of  
11          communicating some of these policies to  
12          parents.

13                         DR. HITE: Yeah. I mean, there  
14          are other organizations that actually  
15          help us communicate, individuals, and do  
16          great work with parents. I'm looking  
17          behind you. I see Mama Gail, who helps  
18          with a group of parents in one community  
19          and also helps us get the word out in  
20          terms of what is acceptable behaviors and  
21          what are policies that are real and those  
22          that are not, and the best way to deal  
23          with those things are bringing those  
24          things to our attention.

25                         We also are doing broader work

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           around just kind of the mindsets of  
3           adults about our young people and what  
4           our young people should be doing as a  
5           part of their educational experience and  
6           not having preconceived notions about a  
7           child or a child's behavior simply  
8           because of where they're from in the City  
9           or their circumstances, but instead  
10          allowing young people to grow up  
11          utilizing all of their abilities and  
12          skills to communicate and do those types  
13          of things.

14                   And so policies that restrict  
15          the socialization, particularly at the  
16          early grades, like kindergarten and first  
17          grade and second grade, those are not  
18          policies that we promote, and when we  
19          come -- when we learn about those, we  
20          actually work to make sure it's clear  
21          with schools that these things are not  
22          appropriate and they have to be  
23          discontinued.

24                   In addition, we can send out a  
25          lot of information directly to many

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           individuals who are on our parent portal.  
3           They've signed up for a parent portal.  
4           We can get that information to those  
5           parents directly. And then in addition  
6           to that, we send a lot of information out  
7           through our Family and Community  
8           Engagement Office.

9                        COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Right.

10                      COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

11           Thank you.

12                      COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And I'll --

13                      COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

14           Councilwoman?

15                      COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I just want  
16           to wrap that up really fast by saying  
17           definitely appreciate that. Just want to  
18           emphasize there's nothing like having  
19           somebody at the school that directly  
20           communicates with parents. We used to  
21           have these with the home school liaison,  
22           parent ombudsmen who have been there.

23                      A good portion of our parents  
24           are not able to be online, so they're not  
25           able to get the parent portal

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           information. We're pushing hard  
3           obviously to have the District recognize  
4           like -- the gap around the communication  
5           has a lot to do with the inability to  
6           access some of the more traditional forms  
7           of communication that might be easy when  
8           people have a lot of access to the  
9           Internet or to certain individuals, but  
10          we want on-the-ground things, and we hope  
11          that -- I'm pushing the District to  
12          really go back to the parent ombudsmen  
13          and the school community connectors that  
14          we've had in the past.

15                        So thank you.

16                        COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

17          Thank you, Councilwoman.

18                        The Chair recognizes Councilman  
19          Green.

20                        COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,  
21          Council President.

22                        I just wanted to follow up on  
23          some of the conversation I had earlier  
24          regarding messaging and also working in a  
25          bolder way.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 In your testimony, you talked  
3 about some of the students also tested  
4 about the enhancement in education,  
5 especially K through 8, and you made  
6 reference to some of the assessments both  
7 on the PSSA assessments as well as  
8 outpacing the state average in merely all  
9 tested grade levels. How are you getting  
10 information out to the general public  
11 regarding how the School District is  
12 making changes? I believe there was a  
13 recent article by a City publication that  
14 talked about how people in the City feel  
15 about the School District and how are you  
16 educating. Because to me -- I mean, how  
17 are you communicating that message?  
18 Because I think that's part of the  
19 challenge.

20 So, one, if you could state  
21 your methodology of assessing that  
22 improvement and how you're letting people  
23 know about what's going on in the School  
24 District.

25 DR. HITE: Yes. Thank you.

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           Here is a good opportunity to introduce  
3           an individual who is new to the District  
4           who worked -- is returning to  
5           Philadelphia from her time at Temple and  
6           her time in marketing at Campbell's Soup,  
7           and we were able to convince her to leave  
8           Charlotte-Mecklenburg to come to the City  
9           of Philadelphia to handle branding and  
10          communications, Kathryn Block. She's  
11          over there.

12                         Wave your hand, Kathryn. And  
13          do you want to respond to this question  
14          in terms of things that you and your  
15          department are doing in order to get the  
16          message out, so to speak?

17                         (Witness approached witness  
18          table.)

19                         MS. BLOCK: Thank you, Dr.  
20          Hite.

21                         Kathryn Block, Chief  
22          Communications Officer and External  
23          Relations, for the record.

24                         So thank you very much for your  
25          question. I have been in my role since

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           December and have been very thrilled to  
3           really focus the District on efforts to  
4           help expand the news of our progress. A  
5           lot of what we've been doing is really  
6           focused on expanding our social media  
7           presence and making sure that we are  
8           expanding our visual storytelling. So  
9           many in the room may be familiar with  
10          some of the "did you know" videos that  
11          we're doing.

12                        What we're finding clearly on a  
13          national scale is that people are less  
14          likely to read and more likely to see  
15          videos. So we're trying to emphasize our  
16          video storytelling and really expanding  
17          our presence within social media.

18                        We've also been focused on  
19          expanding our efforts to inform our  
20          employees more directly so that they in  
21          turn can become better advocates of the  
22          message of progress as well of our School  
23          District.

24                        Moving forward, we are going to  
25          be focused on a more expansive

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           communications strategy that we're hoping  
3           will include a number of other tools that  
4           we're going to incorporate into our tool  
5           belt, but a lot of those efforts so far  
6           have been social media driven, focused on  
7           our employees, extending our news to some  
8           of our influencers in the community with  
9           other organizations that can help in turn  
10          share that news with their employees or  
11          their networks, et cetera. So there's a  
12          more robust communications strategy that  
13          we're focused on.

14                   COUNCILMAN GREEN: Also how  
15                   would you describe the support that's  
16                   provided to the friends of groups, home  
17                   and school associations, other type of  
18                   entities in their relationship to the  
19                   School District?

20                   MS. BLOCK: Yes. That's been  
21                   an area of emphasis for us. So whenever  
22                   there's a major piece of District news,  
23                   like SPR is a prime example, we develop a  
24                   toolkit of information that we share with  
25                   our friends of groups as well as other



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           networks of influencers across the City,  
3           because we recognize that it's not just  
4           our responsibility to share the news, but  
5           the more we can create ambassadors of  
6           messaging that can share that news with  
7           their networks, the better off we'll be  
8           in making an impact. So the friends of  
9           group is a vital component of that  
10          strategy.

11                   COUNCILMAN GREEN: I know also  
12          one of the consistent concerns I think  
13          people have had in reference to real  
14          information that seems to have been --  
15          and I think that has gotten better under  
16          your leadership, Dr. Hite, and also it  
17          seems to be better under local control  
18          with the School Board, but there's been a  
19          consistent challenge in getting  
20          information in reference to the status of  
21          our schools, just some of the other just  
22          fundamental information that if I'm a  
23          parent, say I'm a single parent and I  
24          have a child and I'm thinking of  
25          education, there's a trust level not only

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           for single parents, two-parent  
3           households, grandparents who are  
4           guardians, and that's from people of all  
5           different financial perspectives, ethnic  
6           perspectives. There just seems to be a  
7           lack of trust in the School District in  
8           reference to the education that they  
9           provided. And how do you change that  
10          narrative? Because I think that's what  
11          feeds into some of the dynamic and  
12          challenges in reference to enrollment and  
13          other issues.

14                   MS. BLOCK: And I would say --  
15          so thank you for that remark. I agree  
16          with that assessment. I would say that  
17          it's not just the dynamic in the City of  
18          Philadelphia. It's a national challenge  
19          for large urban school districts. But I  
20          think a great part of that is empowering  
21          our principals and our schools to be able  
22          to share information more proactively  
23          with our community and, again, working on  
24          more tools at the District level to be  
25          able to share that information as well.

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           And so I think it's a steady focus, a  
3           very intentional plan of making sure that  
4           we are focused on the best or the most  
5           important news to share and making sure  
6           that we're intentional about leveraging  
7           all of our networks and our tools to be  
8           able to share that information. So it is  
9           definitely something we will be focused  
10          on going forward.

11                   COUNCILMAN GREEN: I also  
12          wanted to ask some questions in reference  
13          to the efforts of the District regarding  
14          special education, especially those who  
15          have physical learning differences. I  
16          want to get some perspective on what's  
17          the progress that you believe has been  
18          made and what are the needs going  
19          forward. Because there's been some  
20          concerns that I've seen from my  
21          observation and my role as Chair of the  
22          Council Committee with People with  
23          Disabilities and Special Needs. So I  
24          wanted to get a perspective, what are we  
25          doing in reference to meeting IEPs,

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           meeting progress, and really  
3           communicating to parents and also  
4           children who can be self-advocates  
5           regarding those issues?

6                     DR. SAVOY-BROOKS: What we've  
7           noticed this year in the Office of  
8           Specialized Services, which is the  
9           special education department, is we need  
10          to focus more on the organizational  
11          structure that will support what's  
12          happening at the school level. So when  
13          we talk about IEPs, we've been focused  
14          more on ensuring that IEPs, our standards  
15          aligned as much as possible so that we  
16          can ensure that whatever level that  
17          we're -- or whatever the goals are, they  
18          are focused on what's happening or close  
19          to what's happening in the classroom so  
20          there is no disconnect for the students  
21          from what the special education teacher  
22          is working on and what the general  
23          education teacher is working on.

24                     Another part of that is the  
25          implementation of the IEP, how are we

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           ensuring that all of the adults that are  
3           supporting the student are on one accord  
4           regarding the supports for the student  
5           and how are we monitoring the student's  
6           progress.

7                         Another part of that is how are  
8           we communicating not only to parents but  
9           our teachers about what our expectations  
10          are and what our programs are.

11                        One of the important feedback  
12          that I received was regarding ESY, which  
13          is coming up. ESY -- I received a lot of  
14          feedback regarding how ESY was  
15          implemented as early as last year. This  
16          year we implemented an ESY -- we created  
17          an ESY manual for teachers, describing  
18          the leadership structure, the  
19          expectations for teachers, why they're  
20          supporting students in ESY, the ESY  
21          programming aligned to the identification  
22          of students, what is the expectation at  
23          the end of ESY, what could parents expect  
24          from their students while they're  
25          participating in ESY, and our monitoring

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 system for ESY.

3 From the Office of Academic  
4 Supports, I'm also concerned about how  
5 special education -- the staff of special  
6 education is aligned to the staff of  
7 curriculum instruction and assessment,  
8 the staff of teaching and learning, and  
9 the staff of multicultural programs.

10 Because I want to ensure that whatever  
11 message we're sending about the  
12 instructional program, all of those  
13 entities are sending the same message and  
14 providing supports under the same  
15 context.

16 COUNCILMAN GREEN: My time is  
17 up, but I have some additional questions.

18 Thank you, Council President.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

20 Thank you, Councilman.

21 The Chair recognizes  
22 Councilwoman Bass.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,  
24 Mr. President.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 You're welcome.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good  
4 afternoon again.

5 DR. HITE: Good afternoon.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. Can  
7 you tell me what is the School District's  
8 protocol when a school must be closed for  
9 lead or asbestos or other environmental  
10 issues?

11 Both the Steel and Kelly  
12 elementary schools, which are both in the  
13 Eighth Council District, had to be closed  
14 and there was not a plan in place to send  
15 kids to another location so that learning  
16 would not be interrupted. Can you talk  
17 about that briefly?

18 DR. HITE: I can. So when  
19 there is a -- so we have -- when there's  
20 an issue like an environmental issue at a  
21 school and we have advisory groups that  
22 we work with, when we have to make a  
23 decision about closing one -- well, when  
24 we have to make a decision on the school  
25 in general, what we do is send one of the

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           District engineers out to the school.  
3           They assess the situation to determine if  
4           the situation can be addressed and what  
5           will be needed in order to address that  
6           situation. And so is it a small space?  
7           Is it the entire school? And then after  
8           that, we work with the principal and the  
9           assistant superintendent to determine  
10          what communication will go out.

11                        Generally relocating students  
12          to other schools is a strategy that we  
13          take so that children will still be able  
14          to have an education that day. Closing  
15          is an absolute last resort, and it only  
16          results if in fact there's a power  
17          outage, for instance, and that power  
18          outage is with a relatively large school  
19          that then -- that all of the neighboring  
20          schools around it are also relatively  
21          large and at capacity and then there's  
22          no -- because there's no place to send  
23          those young people, then in those cases  
24          we would make a decision to close. But  
25          that's a last resort that we have and



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           relocating children out of the building  
3           is the last resort as well.

4                     If that happens, we will then  
5           arrange transportation from that school  
6           to whatever the relocation site is and  
7           then transportation back to the school  
8           that afternoon if parents want to pick  
9           their children up at the same school.

10                    That generally is the process  
11           that we take. Then we try to communicate  
12           with -- we try to communicate with  
13           everyone in that community and all of the  
14           families so that they know what is  
15           happening.

16                    In the event we have to close a  
17           school, we actually try to make that  
18           decision as best we can before people  
19           send their children off to school.

20                    COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

21                    DR. HITE: Because once they're  
22           there, it's hard for individuals to get  
23           back to the school to get their children.

24                    COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I just  
25           think that when -- and actually before I

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           say this, can you tell me how many  
3           schools were affected? Like I said, I  
4           know that J.B. Kelly and also the Steel  
5           elementary schools were both closed  
6           because of environmental issues, but can  
7           you speak to that citywide? Like how  
8           many other schools may have closed  
9           because of environmental issues for any  
10          length of time?

11                   DR. HITE: Closed or the  
12          children were relocated? So children  
13          didn't have school that day?

14                   COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well,  
15          closed temporarily. I don't mean like  
16          shut down. So with J.B. Kelly, there was  
17          a significant mold issue and the school  
18          had to be evacuated, and those kids lost  
19          a whole week of education. There was no  
20          back-up plan in terms of where to send  
21          them or, you know what I'm saying, how to  
22          keep them on track. So how do we keep  
23          our young people on track and not  
24          losing -- not having a gap?

25                   We know that when kids are out

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           of school, when young people are out of  
3           school, there's sort of like a gap in  
4           terms of where they were when they last  
5           were in a classroom and where they are  
6           when they return. So if we know, for  
7           example, over the summer months, it's  
8           two, roughly three months that they're  
9           away from school. There's a learning  
10          gap. What they learn at the end of June,  
11          they've lost some of that. So on a  
12          smaller scale, there had to be some loss  
13          when you close a school for as long as a  
14          week, and how do we avoid that from  
15          happening? So I guess the two questions  
16          are, how many schools citywide had  
17          similar circumstances and how do we avoid  
18          that in the future?

19                   (Witness approached witness  
20          table.)

21                   MS. FLOYD: Danielle Floyd,  
22          Chief Operating Officer for the District.

23                   This school year we have not  
24          had to close schools for a significant  
25          period of time due to environmental

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           concern, whether that be an asbestos  
3           abatement project or lead or mold.

4                   COUNCILWOMAN BASS: How about  
5           last year or the year before? Because  
6           none of this occurred this school year.

7                   MS. FLOYD: They did not. To  
8           Dr. Hite's point, we've had to close for  
9           other issues. For example, we've had  
10          significant power outages and it has  
11          required us, on a very limited and very  
12          specific basis, the need to close school  
13          for that day. As Dr. Hite alluded to in  
14          his comments, we do look as much as  
15          possible to see if we can accommodate  
16          children in a nearby facility. Again, we  
17          provide the transportation for students  
18          to come back and forth. We don't have  
19          that ability in all parts of the City to  
20          be able to, especially when we're talking  
21          about populations of 600, 700, 800  
22          students, we don't necessarily always  
23          have the ability to support that moving  
24          forward in all parts of the City, but  
25          where we can, as Dr. Hite had mentioned

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           before, our last resort is needing to  
3           close.

4                         And to answer your other part  
5           of it, I think what you have seen from  
6           our work is a lot more work around the  
7           prevention piece. So what are we doing  
8           and how are we investing so that we don't  
9           end up in situations where we are forced  
10          to have to make those kind of decisions.  
11          And so you heard about the mold, the  
12          humidity sensors that we're putting in  
13          schools to be able to monitor mold, the  
14          additional staff that we've hired to be  
15          able to clean schools, the additional  
16          monitoring that just our staff is doing  
17          to try to be more proactive.

18                        And then I certainly would be  
19          remiss if I didn't mention our  
20          cooperation with the Philadelphia  
21          Federation of Teachers around doing joint  
22          inspections and trying to work  
23          collaboratively together to come to some  
24          solutions. And we do have unfortunate  
25          incidents where extended closures are

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           required, and as Dr. Hite mentioned, we  
3           try to work very closely with the school  
4           on how we can support those schools. So  
5           last year in the case of J.B. Kelly, some  
6           of the days that were half days became  
7           full instructional days so that those  
8           students didn't lose the time that they  
9           had lost for the week that schools are  
10          closed.

11                    COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. My  
12          time is up, so I'm going to come back  
13          around, but I did want to just add to the  
14          end. I don't think that it's -- I don't  
15          know. I shouldn't put it this way. No  
16          disrespect intended, but I think that  
17          this is easy. I don't think that it's  
18          too hard for us to figure out a game  
19          plan, a Plan B. So if I need to close  
20          J.B. Kelly if the mold issue pops back up  
21          again, I think that we should have what  
22          is the Plan B. If the school needs to be  
23          evacuated because it is not able to be  
24          occupied for any reason, then I think all  
25          of our schools should have a Plan B of

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           where are we going to move these young  
3           folks to. What is the plan? What are we  
4           going to do?

5                     DR. HITE: Yes. And I will  
6           add, because I'd be remiss if I didn't,  
7           that for every school we have a Plan B,  
8           because that speaks to the emergency  
9           situation that -- like if there was a  
10          fire at the school, we would need to move  
11          those children.

12                    COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So there is  
13          a plan?

14                    DR. HITE: For that. But to  
15          provide for the education of 600 students  
16          for an extended period of time creates a  
17          larger challenge for us.

18                    COUNCILWOMAN BASS: What's  
19          considered an extended period of time?

20                    DR. HITE: Well, an extended  
21          period of time could be longer than one  
22          day. In some areas of the City we have  
23          the ability to do that with some of our  
24          larger high schools, but other places we  
25          would not have the ability to host

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           classes at other schools for an extended  
3           period of time.

4                    COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So I guess  
5           I'm having a little trouble  
6           understanding -- and I know the bell has  
7           rung, so I have to move on. But either  
8           we have a plan or we don't have a plan.

9                    DR. HITE: It's two different  
10          plans.

11                   COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

12                   DR. HITE: I mean, things  
13          happen at schools and we had -- in some  
14          cases, we've had a fire at a school. You  
15          need to evacuate that school. We don't  
16          send those children home. We send them  
17          to a different place.

18                   COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So that's  
19          my point. So if we have a fire at a  
20          school and a school burns down and we  
21          have a Plan B where we're going to take  
22          these young folks, but we only have a  
23          Plan B for one day. Is that what you're  
24          saying?

25                   DR. HITE: In order to



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           educate -- so we have an emergency plan  
3           for every single school. That's what I'm  
4           saying. In order to educate those  
5           children in a different place, depending  
6           on where that school is and where it is  
7           in the City, that would be something that  
8           would need a longer term plan of action.

9                        So I'll use an example. We had  
10          in the Northeast, we had the foundation  
11          issue at one of the large schools out  
12          there. We had to send those students to  
13          two different schools. And so they  
14          didn't start school when everyone else  
15          started. They started a week later,  
16          because that gave us the time to make a  
17          plan for the numbers of children who had  
18          to be relocated in order to receive an  
19          education.

20                      COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. So I  
21          guess I'm saying there is not a plan for  
22          educating our children if the school is  
23          closed beyond one day.

24                      DR. HITE: For emergency. So  
25          we have plans for emergencies. Then we

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           have to construct plans for educational  
3           purposes. We don't have the facilities  
4           to educate all of our children in other  
5           schools for an extended period of time if  
6           in fact their school has to be closed in  
7           some cases. So some cases the plan is to  
8           close if in fact that will happen.

9                        COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.  
10          We'll come back around. I'll come back  
11          around.

12                        Thank you.

13                        COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:  
14          Thank you, Councilwoman.

15                        The Chair recognizes Councilman  
16          Johnson.

17                        COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,  
18          Council President.

19                        I want to thank you, Dr. Hite  
20          and Uri, for being here today.

21                        Dr. Hite, I always start off  
22          these conversations by thanking you for  
23          staying. Thank you for your leadership  
24          and stepping up to the plate. I come  
25          from an era where every time there's a

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           new Mayor and a new Administration,  
3           there's a new Superintendent with a new  
4           plan on how we're going to take our  
5           schools to the next level. So I do want  
6           to thank you for taking the opportunity  
7           for sticking and staying and focusing on  
8           improving the quality of education for  
9           our students here in the City of  
10          Philadelphia.

11                   I also want to give a shout-out  
12          to my good friend Evelyn Sample-Oates,  
13          who is a staunch advocate and, most  
14          importantly, keeps the lines of  
15          communication open between the  
16          Philadelphia School District and myself  
17          and the schools that I represent within  
18          the Second Councilmanic District so I  
19          don't have to call you every five minutes  
20          on every single issue that comes to my  
21          desk in the Second Councilmanic District.

22                   Just two issues I just want to  
23          get some feedback on. One is, earlier  
24          this year I introduced a resolution to  
25          hold hearings regarding diversity and

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           inclusion in the procurement and capital  
3           expenditures by the Philadelphia School  
4           District. So just give me an idea of the  
5           diversity and inclusion numbers around  
6           procurement, professional service  
7           contracts, and capital expenditures.

8                         And the second part of my  
9           question is around the issue of public  
10          safety in our schools. If you talk to  
11          any parents here in the City of  
12          Philadelphia -- and I know there is  
13          sometimes a debate regarding sending  
14          children to public schools versus charter  
15          schools, and charter schools are public  
16          schools, but nevertheless, parents will  
17          opt out of our public school system to  
18          send their children to charter schools,  
19          and if you ask the parent why is the  
20          reason, it isn't always about academics.  
21          It's about the issue of public safety.

22                         So I know there was a lot of  
23          outrage regarding the School Board's  
24          decision to put metal detectors in all of  
25          the schools, but I do remember like two

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           days later in one of the schools, the  
3           school was shut down because some kids  
4           brought some guns to schools.

5                        So I just want to get an idea  
6           what are we doing around public safety  
7           and making sure our young people are  
8           safe, the environment is safe and, most  
9           importantly, making the connection  
10          between what happens in the school  
11          environment and how it translates into  
12          what's going on inside the neighborhood  
13          as it relates to student conflicts? So  
14          diversity and inclusion around  
15          procurement and capital expenditures and  
16          also public safety around our students.

17                      MS. FLOYD: Good afternoon.  
18          Danielle Floyd, Chief Operating Officer.

19                      To answer your first question,  
20          Councilman, through March 31st of this  
21          year, the School District has awarded 155  
22          contracts. The total value of those  
23          dollars was 171 million, and the dollars  
24          that were committed to our M/WBE vendors  
25          was 65 million, which --

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: 65

3 million?

4 MS. FLOYD: 65 million, which  
5 equals a 38 percent award to MBEs through  
6 March 31st of this year. We also provide  
7 that information in our quarterly reports  
8 to City Council.

9 Specifically on your question  
10 about how does that break out among  
11 purchasing construction materials and  
12 goods, in purchasing, the percent of  
13 dollars that were awarded to our minority  
14 and women-owned businesses was 12 percent  
15 of the contract dollars. The total value  
16 of the contracts were about 15 million.

17 For design and construction  
18 awards, our percent of dollars awarded to  
19 MBEs was 38 percent, and the dollar value  
20 of that was 43 million.

21 And then for professional  
22 services, the dollars that were -- the  
23 value of the dollars to MBEs was \$20  
24 million, and the percent of awards to our  
25 MBEs was 49 percent.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And what's  
3 the District's goal?

4 MS. FLOYD: Well, one of the  
5 things that we are working very closely  
6 with the Board on is a new  
7 anti-discrimination policy, and one of  
8 the items that would be included as part  
9 of that policy is the establishment of  
10 annual goals that we would report  
11 publicly on. Right now we don't  
12 communicate -- we don't have established  
13 percentage goals. In the proposed policy  
14 that will be brought forth, it would  
15 establish annual participation goals.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: When  
17 that's completed, can you please make  
18 sure I get a copy and also to the Council  
19 President and Chair of Education so we  
20 can just be abreast? All right. Thank  
21 you.

22 DR. HITE: And I think it's in  
23 the quarterly report that we are  
24 distributing today too, Councilman. So  
25 thank you for that question.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 In addition to --

3 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Not this  
4 particular -- not these numbers. The new  
5 policy that's going to be established  
6 with the specific goals, when that's  
7 completed by the Board --

8 DR. HITE: Yes.

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: -- if you  
10 can provide that.

11 DR. HITE: Absolutely.

12 Absolutely.

13 With respect to behavior -- you  
14 asked about safety, and naturally it is  
15 our goal to ensure student safety across  
16 all of our schools. We've done a lot of  
17 work over the past several years of  
18 revising the Student Conduct -- the  
19 Student Code of Conduct, in order to  
20 revise it, in order to reflect the  
21 position for us that's less punitive and  
22 creates a culture of working together in  
23 the schools to make them a more positive  
24 environment.

25 We also have done a lot around



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           trauma-informed support both for students  
3           and staff members, and I've communicated  
4           to all principals that all staff will  
5           begin receiving mental health first aid,  
6           trauma 101, and trauma 102, and that is  
7           in partnership with DBH that we will  
8           accomplish that goal. And the purpose of  
9           that is really to understand what  
10          triggers some behaviors so that the  
11          response from an adult doesn't create the  
12          trigger for problematic behavior.

13                         In addition to that, we have --  
14          I think I was talking earlier answering a  
15          different question about the numbers of  
16          licensed social workers who are now in  
17          our schools. We have them now  
18          implemented in 21 schools. We're adding  
19          that in 25 additional schools next year,  
20          and our goal is to have them at all  
21          comprehensive high schools to help with  
22          some of the behaviorally related issues  
23          that have come up.

24                         COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Do we have  
25          crisis teams in every school that will

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           focus on the conflicts again that  
3           happens? I can give you several  
4           different incidents that took place in  
5           South Philadelphia and in Southwest where  
6           these conflicts arise even in the  
7           neighborhood and translate in school, but  
8           also these conflicts start in school and  
9           someone winds up being murdered and shot  
10          when they come back home. A lot of it  
11          revolves around social media, right?

12                        So are we at the point where we  
13          have a team that will work with the  
14          Philadelphia Police Department with intel  
15          as it relates to what's going on in the  
16          schools and outside the schools?

17                        And I'm going to steal one last  
18          aspect, because I'm past my time. Can we  
19          get back to the point of bringing NTAs  
20          back into our schools? And that's just  
21          basically hiring somebody, Ms. Mae-Mae  
22          from the neighborhood, Mr. Johnny from  
23          the neighborhood, right? And when I went  
24          to Childs School, I'm going to be up  
25          front with you. Because I knew Ms.

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           Mae-Mae was watching, she had more  
3           influence than the teachers that I didn't  
4           know. And so when Ms. Mae-Mae saw me in  
5           the hallway or Mr. Johnny saw me in the  
6           hallway at Bok when I was in the bathroom  
7           when I was supposed to be inside the  
8           class, he had more influence on me to get  
9           back inside the classroom, right, as  
10          opposed to their teacher, who I may have  
11          a relationship but I don't really know,  
12          but Ms. Mae-Mae or Mr. Johnny going to  
13          see me when I come back around the  
14          neighborhood later on and they're going  
15          to tell my parents.

16                        So have we looked into that,  
17                        like getting back to the old school way  
18                        of schooling when it comes to the  
19                        violence issue?

20                        DR. HITE: Yes. And, number  
21                        one -- so you asked several questions.  
22                        So, one, we have intel from the Police  
23                        Department in Philadelphia that helps --  
24                        who monitor social media. And so we are  
25                        made aware in some cases long before an

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           incident happens, and it gives us an  
3           opportunity to be proactive with those  
4           young people.

5                         We do have crisis teams, both  
6           school-based and district-wide, that both  
7           go out to prevent and respond to crises  
8           that have happened either in schools or  
9           in the surrounding communities. And we  
10          also provide crisis counseling to  
11          families that have been impacted, and  
12          friends.

13                        And with respect to the NTAs,  
14          we are looking at using individuals that  
15          help provide common support in schools.  
16          Many of those individuals are from the  
17          communities in those schools and know the  
18          young people. We're also in the process  
19          of looking at how we deploy school safety  
20          officers or school police and then what  
21          do those individuals become so that  
22          they're advocates for students as opposed  
23          to individuals who are enforcing the law  
24          to students and how do we reorganize that  
25          large group of individuals to be

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           advocates for young people so our  
3           students will have those individuals with  
4           whom they've established a relationship  
5           that can help that young person behave in  
6           a classroom much better or in a  
7           schoolyard.

8                        COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Just a  
9           recommendation, if you can be patient  
10          with me, Council President, and I'll wrap  
11          up.

12                      And I guarantee you, I really  
13          believe this will work. It's just old  
14          school, because some of the stuff is just  
15          basic common sense. Philadelphia  
16          Anti-Drug/Anti-Violence Network, that's  
17          the crisis team that we support here in  
18          the City of Philadelphia. These guys go  
19          out on the street specifically to do  
20          intervention when these homicides and  
21          shootings happen. I don't know what's  
22          their role when it comes to Philadelphia  
23          School District. These are guys who and  
24          young women who have been incarcerated,  
25          lived their lifestyle, but can connect

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           with our young people. Somehow if they  
3           could be integrated into what we do as a  
4           district.

5                         And then the last component, I  
6           know you said you're working on this, I  
7           think them NTAs -- I'm just being real.  
8           I think having the person hired from the  
9           neighborhood to just assist in that  
10          process will go a long way to helping us  
11          regain control.

12                         (Applause.)

13                         COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Because  
14          some of it -- it's going to take all of  
15          us to do it, so I don't want to just say  
16          the District has to do it, but some of  
17          those basic principles that I've known  
18          that worked in the past. And I try to  
19          tell some of the advocates like these  
20          schools today aren't the schools of the  
21          past, right? But some of the same  
22          tactics that were used in the past to  
23          keep our schools safe can be still  
24          modeled this day. And hopefully we'll  
25          hire some more African American male

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           teachers in this process to kind of help  
3           with some of our young people.

4                     I'm going to wrap up. I'm way  
5           beyond my time.

6                     DR. HITE: And if I may,  
7           Councilman, the other -- the name change  
8           of the NTAs was a negotiated item that we  
9           did with Unite Now, because they wanted a  
10          different name for those individuals. So  
11          our climate support staff are the NTAs.

12                    COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay. Got  
13          you.

14                    DR. HITE: So those are  
15          individuals who are in schools now. Now,  
16          to the degree of whether or not they're  
17          from the communities, but that's the  
18          position that used to be the NTA. It was  
19          just a name change for us.

20                    COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.  
21          Thank you, Council President.

22                    COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:  
23          Thank you, Councilman. I remember those  
24          days.

25                    We're going to take a break.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 There's several people that kind of give  
3 me that eye. So we're going to come back  
4 at like 1:30. Is that good?

5 DR. HITE: That's fine.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

7 Which is probably 1:45.

8 All right. Thank you.

9 (Recess.)

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Why don't  
11 we get started again, please. And if  
12 there's any members that have questions  
13 for the School District, please come to  
14 Chambers.

15 Good afternoon again.

16 DR. HITE: Good afternoon.

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:

18 Councilwoman Gym.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you.

20 Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

21 And welcome back. Thank you  
22 for staying, Dr. Hite and team and Chair  
23 Wilkerson and Mr. Monson. We really  
24 appreciate you being here to answer all  
25 the questions.



1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 I wanted to follow up, I think,  
3 on some earlier testimony that you  
4 heard -- that we heard earlier today.

5 As we start to enter into sort  
6 of the warm days of spring, there's been  
7 a lot of questions about the condition of  
8 our schools in terms of climate control,  
9 air conditioning in particular. I wanted  
10 to laud the School District for trying to  
11 start school early, mostly because this  
12 is what suburban school districts do as  
13 well. And it's important that our kids  
14 don't get shortchanged in the early part  
15 of the year, that they have a chance to  
16 learn early. I mean, everyone takes the  
17 state test in April. That time is fixed.  
18 So the fact that our suburban school  
19 systems can go as much as three weeks  
20 early because they have full air  
21 conditioning in their schools is not --  
22 doesn't mean that air conditioning is  
23 considered a luxury or anything, but it  
24 has a deep impact on our young people's  
25 ability to learn.

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2                    So I think you heard -- we  
3           heard something or I heard something  
4           which was pretty significant about --  
5           that you may be able to move some schools  
6           towards this early on, and could you just  
7           clarify that for me? And then I'd love  
8           to ask another follow-up.

9                    DR. HITE: Sure. Thank you.  
10           Thank you for asking us to reiterate that  
11           response, because it's an important one.

12                    The first part of it was, we  
13           were talking about the need to address  
14           many of the high-risk building challenges  
15           that we have, and we talked about how  
16           much it would take in order to remediate  
17           the schools to make them lead-safe, how  
18           much additional dollars would it take to  
19           have all of the schools have to remove  
20           all of the asbestos over the next four  
21           years. Then it would require \$140  
22           million of new resources to make  
23           electrical upgrades in schools to support  
24           the technology that we talked about  
25           earlier and to add air conditioners in

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           over 2,000 classrooms.

3                       But in completing this  
4           analysis, we actually went into schools  
5           to determine if any schools had the  
6           electrical capacity right now to handle  
7           air conditioners in all of their  
8           classrooms. We discovered that 23 of our  
9           schools have the available capacity to do  
10          that. So we are in the process of  
11          purchasing air conditioners for those 23  
12          schools and all of the classrooms inside  
13          of those, and they will be installed for  
14          the start of the next cooling season. So  
15          we have to install them over the summer,  
16          and it will take us through the fall to  
17          do that, but wanted to highlight that  
18          that is something that we're able to do  
19          inside our operating dollars simply  
20          because we have 23 schools that already  
21          have the capacity to handle air  
22          conditioners.

23                      COUNCILWOMAN GYM: That's great  
24          news, and I want to say thank you to you  
25          and your team who took the time to take a

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           look, because I know how complicated it  
3           is, and it is exciting to have 23 schools  
4           go online for air conditioning to be able  
5           to exist comfortably. We've got old  
6           school buildings.

7                         One of the questions I'd love  
8           to ask is whether we could get a  
9           commitment to work together with the City  
10          and probably with our other entities,  
11          utilities like PECO and others, to build  
12          out towards that universal plan for  
13          universal air in our schools. And I  
14          don't know how far that's down the road,  
15          but for me I'm deeply committed to this.  
16          I think it's clearly one of the most  
17          popular things in our system. And from,  
18          honestly, a learning perspective, you're  
19          buying three weeks potentially at the  
20          front end of school and also no missed  
21          days during whatever days that pop up in  
22          October or in the fall and then towards  
23          the end of the year. We want young  
24          people to be enjoying their last days of  
25          the school year and not feeling

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           shortchanged. So for the commitment to  
3           work together and for us to figure out a  
4           plan towards universal air would be  
5           great.

6                         DR. HITE: Absolutely. We're  
7           very interested in talking about that,  
8           and we'll have an opportunity in a couple  
9           of weeks when we all come together again  
10          as City Council, School Board, the Mayor,  
11          the Council President, and the School  
12          District. It's May 23rd, right? So we  
13          could talk about how we can all work  
14          together to do that, but you certainly  
15          have our commitment to work with those  
16          entities to do that.

17                        COUNCILWOMAN GYM: That's great  
18          news. Thank you.

19                        The other question I have is,  
20          the City recently raised its minimum wage  
21          for City contractors and subcontractors  
22          to move towards \$15 an hour by 2022. We  
23          would like to urge the School District to  
24          move towards that and would like to know  
25          like where the District is positioned to

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           move its employees, including some of its  
3           subcontractors, towards supporting and  
4           matching the Philadelphia City's 21st  
5           Century Wage Standard.

6                       MR. MONSON: So we're currently  
7           in negotiations with the unit that would  
8           be most impacted by that. We're aware of  
9           that, and there's a general commitment to  
10          get to that on kind of a similar timeline  
11          as the City, but it is something we're  
12          very aware of. The Board has stressed  
13          and I think all of us are committed to  
14          it. And then there are a few folks in  
15          some of the other unions that we're going  
16          to be talking to, but there's one main  
17          group that we're working with now. So  
18          obviously I don't want to comment more on  
19          ongoing negotiations, but we're aware of  
20          that commitment.

21                      In terms of the subcontractor  
22          issue, it's one we're looking at and  
23          trying to figure out where there would be  
24          areas of subcontractors that might fit  
25          into that range and how we can get that

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           data. We don't collect it routinely.  
3           It's one we're trying to figure out how  
4           we can get that data, how we can make  
5           that in future contract requirements.

6                     I think for us, unlike our own  
7           employee issue, it's a data-gathering  
8           issue first before we even recognize that  
9           that is a concern, because we don't want  
10          to put the edict out and not be able to  
11          follow up and actually know if it's  
12          happening. So we need to figure out the  
13          best way to collect that data, and that's  
14          something we're working on now.

15                    COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And you have  
16          an established minimum wage through  
17          contracts, is that right, for  
18          subcontractors? Do subcontractors have  
19          an established minimum wage, do you know,  
20          for the School District?

21                    DR. HITE: We'll find out.

22                    MR. MONSON: Why don't we get  
23          back to you.

24                    COUNCILWOMAN GYM: One of the  
25          questions has been like certain

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           categories, like special education aides  
3           or some of the others, is there an  
4           established minimum wage. It would be  
5           great to follow up on that with you.

6                   MR. MONSON: We can get back to  
7           you on that.

8                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. I'm  
9           going to come back for a couple more.

10                   DR. HITE: Our commitment is to  
11           get all of those up to the -- and it's  
12           going to happen over time, but our  
13           commitment, and the Board has been very  
14           clear on this as well, we want to get  
15           that to the City's.

16                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And that's  
17           huge. It really is. It's a huge thing  
18           to have the School District employees,  
19           contractors, subcontractors. I mean,  
20           that's thousands and thousands of our  
21           Philadelphia families moving towards a  
22           \$15 standard is a big step forward, and  
23           thank you.

24                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
25           you. Thank you, Councilwoman.



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2                    Councilwoman Reynolds Brown.  
3                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes. I  
4 would like to pick up where I left off.  
5 First, let me say that Councilman  
6 Kenyatta Johnson is not the only person  
7 that Evelyn Sample-Oates walks on water  
8 for. She has also managed some very  
9 complex ask of our office as well. So I  
10 don't want that to go unrecognized.

11                   Back to school suspensions, now  
12 that the District is working to eliminate  
13 the practice of suspending little people,  
14 I call them, what tools or resources have  
15 been given to teachers to manage  
16 inappropriate behavior of young people  
17 between the ages of K to 2?

18                   DR. HITE: Yes. So some of the  
19 response that I made in the response to  
20 Councilman Kenyatta Johnson's questions  
21 goes a lot around the training that we've  
22 done in schools, training to actually  
23 equip individuals with the ability to  
24 recognize positive behavior. We call it  
25 PBIS. We also have --

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What is it  
3 called?

4 DR. HITE: I'm sorry?

5 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What is it  
6 called?

7 DR. HITE: It's called positive  
8 behavior and intervention. It's called  
9 PBIS, and we've implemented -- and the  
10 whole point of that is to acknowledge  
11 positive behavior as opposed to just  
12 children who are misbehaving. So we want  
13 to promote positive behavior with young  
14 people.

15 The other thing is really  
16 training staff on recognizing trauma.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes.

18 DR. HITE: And understanding  
19 the behaviors as it relates to trauma.  
20 And then once you train individuals on  
21 recognizing trauma, it's also important  
22 to equip them with the tools and the  
23 strategies to use with respect to that.  
24 And so -- and then the final thing is how  
25 we are thinking about the deployment of

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           more counselors and behavioral health  
3           staff in schools and really prioritizing  
4           that based on data that we have about  
5           schools where there may be high numbers  
6           of absenteeism or where there are a lot  
7           of issues in or around that community.  
8           Those are places where we are targeting  
9           those interventions.

10                        So those are things that we  
11           have been doing to equip our staff with  
12           the ability to do many of those things.  
13           And it is also -- when you take away the  
14           ability to move a child out of a  
15           classroom, you have to equip people with  
16           strategies that they can use to make sure  
17           that child remains in the classroom.

18                        COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And  
19           learning.

20                        DR. HITE: And that takes some  
21           time, and we've been using the year to  
22           continuously train individuals on the use  
23           of that.

24                        As a part of our new contract  
25           with the PFT, it also requires every

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           single one of their members to be trained  
3           in restorative practices.

4                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Is that  
5           right?

6                   DR. HITE: And that was meant  
7           to address some of the behavioral types  
8           of challenges that are happening.

9                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Challenges  
10          that teachers are facing with children  
11          coming to school with so many challenges  
12          around them.

13                   You should know that my office  
14          was contacted by the Education Law Center  
15          where -- you've spoken about training and  
16          particularly as it relates to crisis in  
17          the schools. So here's the question: Is  
18          the District requiring schools to keep  
19          this aggregated data on the exclusions  
20          that track young people by race, gender,  
21          and disability? Because we know the sad  
22          fact which too often African American  
23          boys are disproportionately categorized  
24          in those type of categories. So what  
25          would be your response to that question?

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 DR. HITE: Yes, we do keep that  
3 information. And we actually have a  
4 process for, number one, identifying  
5 disproportionality in terms of the  
6 consequences that are given to groups of  
7 children and we also have now the ability  
8 to look at it, and not only do we look at  
9 that and track that information, we also  
10 provide schools and school leaders with  
11 strategies to address many of the issues  
12 around disproportionality. So we do it  
13 as it relates to gender, race, and --

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN:  
15 Disability?

16 DR. HITE: Disability, yes.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Councilman  
18 Kenyatta Johnson also asked a detailed  
19 list of questions around MBE/WBE  
20 activity. What I did not hear in the  
21 encouraging data was how many of those  
22 companies are local, because we as a city  
23 do not do -- in fact, we do a poor job  
24 when it comes to giving local businesses  
25 a chance to hire local people so that

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 they can feed their families.

3 DR. HITE: I don't know if we  
4 have that information, Councilwoman, but  
5 we can get how many local. We don't have  
6 that right at our disposal. But a part  
7 of what the Board has asked us to do was  
8 do a much better job at tracking that  
9 information. So in the new policy and  
10 the accompanying procedures, we would  
11 have the ability to track that. In our  
12 current policy, we don't have --

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Doesn't  
14 capture that.

15 DR. HITE: -- the -- choose to  
16 do that.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.  
18 Well taken. That is a requirement we  
19 have of our Office of Equal Opportunity.  
20 We want to know how well the City is  
21 doing with regards to hiring local  
22 companies.

23 In the one-on-one meeting, we  
24 gave a lot of discussion to Catapult.  
25 How many other schools are there like

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           Catapult that service children with  
3           exceptional disability needs?

4                       I did go visit. I spent a half  
5           day there with a staffer, and it is an  
6           eye-opener to be on the front line and to  
7           see what those organizations are doing  
8           for children who are disabled, be it for  
9           mental disabilities and/or inappropriate  
10          behavior. So how many schools would be  
11          on that list of organizations that you  
12          contract with that provide those type of  
13          services?

14                      DR. HITE: I'm looking for that  
15          information right now for you.

16                      I don't want to give an  
17          approximate. I want to make sure we give  
18          you the right number.

19                      COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And while  
20          you secure those numbers, are there plans  
21          to provide additional supports for the 18  
22          to 21 population who are graduating  
23          through the IEP goals?

24                      DR. HITE: Yes, absolutely. We  
25          can -- absolutely. We can provide more

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           information on that if you need us to,  
3           but yes is the answer to that question.

4                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So how  
5           long have you been there now, Dr. Hite?  
6           How long have you been with us now?

7                    DR. HITE: This is my seventh  
8           year.

9                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And prior  
10          to you arriving, there were at least  
11          three different special ed directors, and  
12          I only know that because my office  
13          followed a child on the autism spectrum  
14          from age 5 to age 12 where the IEP was  
15          never, ever, ever honored. And so how  
16          well are we doing now in having stability  
17          in that office servicing families who  
18          have children with special needs?

19                   DR. HITE: We have now --  
20          Natalie Hess leads that office for us  
21          under the direction of Malika  
22          Savoy-Brooks, who we saw earlier.  
23          Natalie has been doing that work now for  
24          about two years for us. So it's been  
25          some stability, but as you heard from



1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 Dr. Savoy-Brooks, one thing we want to  
3 also get clearer on are the processes so  
4 that it's clear to everyone what steps  
5 should be taken for any child to address  
6 those issues so that it's not a question  
7 based on who is in the role.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you.

9 DR. HITE: But instead it  
10 becomes a part of a process that's been  
11 established. And that's what we're  
12 working on now.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: How well  
14 are you towards finalizing that process?

15 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: If you  
16 are going to speak, you got to come to  
17 the microphone.

18 (Witness approached witness  
19 table.)

20 DR. SAVOY-BROOKS: Malika  
21 Savoy-Brooks --

22 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Pull the  
23 mic closer.

24 DR. SAVOY-BROOKS: Malika  
25 Savoy-Brooks, Chief Academic Officer.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 We should have the full program  
3 implemented July 1st, with supports in  
4 schools -- with training occurring over  
5 the summer and supports in schools  
6 starting September -- well, August 26th.

7 We have -- just to expand,  
8 starting with the organizational  
9 structure and then programming. I have  
10 an individual that's responsible for  
11 programming from Central Office all the  
12 way through to the student, and then I  
13 have an individual responsible for field  
14 support from Central Office all the way  
15 through the school. So we're developing  
16 systems now with those individuals and  
17 should be able to communicate that.

18 I also want to ensure that,  
19 like Dr. Hite said, that there's a  
20 protocol. If you ask, we have it, not  
21 just speaking about it, sort of like we  
22 did with the ESY booklet.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. The  
24 bell has rung, so I have to punt the ball  
25 back to Councilwoman Gym.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Hold on.

3 Hold on.

4 Councilwoman Blackwell.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank  
6 you very much.

7 I neglected to mention earlier  
8 that we wanted to thank,  
9 Mr. Superintendent, all the people with  
10 whom we communicate, like Evelyn  
11 Sample-Oates and so many others who are  
12 here, other than the Board, who we are  
13 very, very happy to work with and who  
14 work with us in our neighborhoods.  
15 There's so many people, people we've  
16 known before. Thank you, Madam Board  
17 member and Ms. Floyd and so many others.  
18 But I really wanted to thank your people,  
19 and as you know, we call Evelyn every day  
20 and among the other Board members with  
21 whom we have worked for many years. So  
22 thank you very much.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
24 you. And, Councilwoman, I'd be remiss.  
25 I don't want to be the only person not to

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           thank Evelyn for her help too, because  
3           she -- Councilwoman said she handles the  
4           big stuff. She handles the little stuff  
5           too, so we appreciate that. Thank you.

6                     DR. HITE: Before our next  
7           question, Councilman Greenlee -- and we  
8           love Evelyn too and think she's doing a  
9           great job, but we also have another  
10          person here, Haniyyah Sharpe-Brown, who  
11          came from Councilwoman Reynolds Brown.

12                    COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Yes.

13                    DR. HITE: Who is here as well.  
14          I didn't want her to feel left out.

15                    COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: No. I'm  
16          glad you pointed that out. Thank you,  
17          sir.

18                    COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank  
19          you.

20                    COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:  
21          Councilwoman Gym.

22                    COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you  
23          very much, Mr. Chair.

24                    So a couple of additional  
25          questions. The District has made big

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           commitments around the conditions of our  
3           schools and, again, I really want to  
4           thank you for, one, the lead abatement  
5           work for lead abating every single  
6           elementary school by September, which is  
7           a major commitment, really important.  
8           But I know that we're still concerned  
9           about the vacancies within the cleaning  
10          staff. So that includes building  
11          engineers. It looks like there's still  
12          about 106 vacancies there, and 71 or so  
13          cleaning-related positions. You've also  
14          made big commitments around like a  
15          bathroom standard. Again, all of which  
16          is laudable, but one of the -- as we work  
17          to try and get our larger school  
18          facilities' issues addressed, I know that  
19          one of the major complaints within the  
20          schools is that a clean school will do a  
21          lot towards getting things -- staving off  
22          the big problems until we can make the  
23          major repairs that are necessary.

24                        But, one, could you provide us  
25          with a list of the maintenance and

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           cleaning vacancies by school and then,  
3           two, what is your thinking about again  
4           how we kind of go into the coming year  
5           with the need for the cleaning positions  
6           needing to be filled? I mean, this is  
7           something we hear a lot from principals  
8           and others.

9                     DR. HITE: Yeah. I think one  
10            thing that's also important, particularly  
11            with the vacancies as it relates to the  
12            cleaning positions in schools, is that we  
13            also -- that's also a function of the  
14            fact that we added 102 positions midyear,  
15            and it was the Board that approved that  
16            spend, because we were trying to have  
17            more fidelity toward the standards that  
18            we have implemented and they've just  
19            required more people.

20                     And so part of that vacancy --  
21            so part of that contributed to the  
22            vacancy number in the cleaners, but  
23            nonetheless we have those. And I want  
24            to, number one, thank all of the  
25            Councilpersons who helped us with the job

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           fairs around that, because we've hired  
3           quite a few individuals from those job  
4           fairs. In addition, we've increased the  
5           hourly rate of pay for those individuals,  
6           and it's still a function -- it's still a  
7           major priority as we move into the summer  
8           of cleaning season.

9                         And so it has become our new  
10          base, and as we continue to add those  
11          positions, we know we have to fill those  
12          slots, and we're working now with  
13          multiple partners in order to do that.  
14          PHA has been a significant partner in  
15          that space, who has housed quite a few  
16          recruitment job fairs in which we've  
17          hired over 70 people as a result of that  
18          for those types of positions.

19                        And so, yes, we have those  
20          vacancies, but it's been an effort to  
21          address that, because we don't implement  
22          the standards without the people to do  
23          that.

24                        COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Exactly. Do  
25          you think that the move towards a higher

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           minimum wage for the District might help  
3           with that or have you projected out  
4           whether you think that makes the District  
5           more attractive on these positions?

6                     DR. HITE: It's made it more  
7           attractive, I mean, from the lower rate,  
8           because we were not getting even the  
9           candidates, and even the ones who would  
10          agree to sign on would stay for a little  
11          while until there was an opportunity to  
12          move into a different position. So, yes,  
13          that's helped tremendously. And we've  
14          done something different this year. We  
15          also have roving cleaning crews, and the  
16          roving crews actually are designed to hit  
17          those schools that may have something  
18          surfaced that for whatever reason the  
19          staff at those schools couldn't address.  
20          And so we have now a couple of roving  
21          crews that go from school to school to  
22          address those issues in a more timely  
23          fashion than what we've been able to do  
24          in the past.

25                     COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           very much.

3                        So the one question that came  
4           up last week with our public hearing on  
5           some of the community priorities was the  
6           question of students who are pregnant or  
7           parenting, especially those who have  
8           given birth recently. So Education Law  
9           Center found that -- did a two-year study  
10          on teenage mothers who give birth, that  
11          they're often out of school for about  
12          four to six weeks following the birth of  
13          their child and that they're not eligible  
14          to apply for homebound instruction for 30  
15          days.

16                      So there's been concerns raised  
17          about how to support these young people  
18          during an important time in their lives.  
19          Of course we want to make sure that they  
20          have their full rights and access to an  
21          education during this time period and  
22          that they really need a lot of  
23          connections and supports to ensure  
24          like -- the birth of a child is a joyous  
25          thing, but that they shouldn't be

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           prevented from coming back to school and  
3           finishing their education. But often  
4           what they found was that during the weeks  
5           that a student is out of school following  
6           the birth of the child, the students have  
7           no real ongoing connection to teachers.  
8           Very few receive academic instruction,  
9           and a lot of it has to do with the  
10          prohibition on the homebound instruction  
11          for 30 days. And then when they come  
12          back, the transition support back into  
13          reentry, there needs to be some  
14          accommodations for breastfeeding, a  
15          little bit of -- like how they're going  
16          to handle some of the childcare and other  
17          issues.

18                        So could you talk a little bit  
19                        about what is this, like they're not  
20                        eligible to receive homebound instruction  
21                        after 30 days? And is there something  
22                        that we're taking a look at that, whether  
23                        that can be changed or be more responsive  
24                        to teenagers who recently have given  
25                        birth?

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 (Witness approached witness  
3 table.)

4 MS. LYNCH: Thank you very  
5 much. For the record, Karyn Lynch, Chief  
6 of Student Support Services.

7 Thank you very much for the  
8 question. A couple of things that I  
9 would raise just to give context. So our  
10 ELECT Program, which provides services to  
11 pregnant and parenting teens, in our next  
12 budget is going to receive an additional  
13 \$900,000 from the state in order provide  
14 supports to individuals, to our students  
15 who are pregnant and parenting.

16 We have found over the last few  
17 years, ten years or so that we've been  
18 implementing this service, that it's been  
19 a tremendous opportunity to assist young  
20 girls and fathers with acclimating back  
21 into school, with addressing the issues  
22 that are related to childcare, to  
23 parenting, to gain additional supports,  
24 and certainly for us to be able to follow  
25 them back into schools and provide

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           additional support.

3                       I will make note that in the  
4           last two years, we have been limited in  
5           our ability to help fathers, young  
6           fathers who are attending school, because  
7           the state has changed its rules and  
8           regulations. And so to the extent that  
9           we can get any support from the state in  
10          order to be able to assist young fathers  
11          and help them bond with their children  
12          and stay involved, it's just been very,  
13          very difficult.

14                      We have lactation rooms in all  
15          of our high schools, which is extremely  
16          beneficial. We don't promote one way or  
17          another, but we do make that opportunity  
18          available. And I believe that the Ed Law  
19          Center was supportive of that effort when  
20          we moved to do that.

21                      With regard to homebound  
22          services, homebound is a service that's  
23          available in Philadelphia. Not all  
24          jurisdictions across the state offer  
25          homebound services, and in fact, it's not

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           required for any jurisdiction in the  
3           State of Pennsylvania to provide  
4           homebound services. Our homebound  
5           dollars pay for all students after 30  
6           days. And so that has been our practice.  
7           We have other opportunities to support  
8           pregnant and parenting teens other than  
9           homebound services, and if there is a  
10          pregnant or parenting teen that needs  
11          additional support, homebound is not  
12          necessarily the source of funding, if you  
13          will, that should afford that. And we  
14          would be more than willing to hear any  
15          issues or concerns any particular student  
16          might have with regard to transitioning,  
17          tutoring. Our ELECT Program has provided  
18          laptops and tutorial and training and all  
19          kinds of other supports just to ensure  
20          that students who transition out of  
21          school can come back in and hopefully  
22          follow up and move through without a  
23          break in their education.

24                    COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I definitely  
25            appreciate the fact that there are

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           programs. I wonder is there a policy,  
3           though? Like does the District have a  
4           policy for pregnant and parenting teens  
5           so that there are certain rights and  
6           privileges accorded? I mean, I think  
7           it's similar to IDEA to some extent, that  
8           if a teen gives birth, they're obviously  
9           not going to come back to school the next  
10          day. I mean, that's just not going to  
11          happen. So I think the concern is is  
12          that because there's no clarity about  
13          what a teen has a right to after they  
14          give birth, that it feels like it's a  
15          little bit like, oh, well, we have these  
16          programs that you can access, but there's  
17          not an effort to reach out to that  
18          vulnerable young person on their own  
19          proactively because there's not a clarity  
20          about a policy that exists at the school  
21          level. But is there a policy for these  
22          young people?

23                   MS. LYNCH: There is absolutely  
24                   a policy. It outlines the rights, the  
25                   responsibilities of the District. It

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           speaks to one of the provisions that I  
3           indicated -- in fact, we've incorporated  
4           the lactation opportunity. It is Policy  
5           No. 234, and it includes the details that  
6           you're speaking of.

7                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. And  
8           maybe we can come back together a little  
9           bit, because I think there needs to be a  
10          little bit more dialogue so we can  
11          reconcile whatever the concerns are with  
12          the Ed Law Center saying that young  
13          people aren't accessing these services.

14                   MS. LYNCH: I would also take  
15          this opportunity if there's anyone who is  
16          listening or anyone who knows of a  
17          pregnant or parenting teen, we provide  
18          the service for public school students.  
19          So it's not just students in the School  
20          District of Philadelphia, but it's also  
21          our charter school students who are  
22          benefiting from this service and  
23          opportunity as well.

24                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you.

25                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 you, Councilwoman.

3 Councilman Squilla.

4 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,  
5 Mr. Chair.

6 Thank you guys for being here,  
7 Dr. Hite, and your team for your  
8 responsiveness. One thing we do  
9 appreciate is access and to be able to  
10 get response, and also Danielle too.  
11 Danielle, thank you so much. We do  
12 harass the team, and Evelyn can tell you  
13 how much we harass you guys. And even  
14 though sometimes we don't like the  
15 answers, we appreciate them, and we have  
16 to continue to work together to make this  
17 better for everyone.

18 I apologize for missing the  
19 earlier part of your testimony, but  
20 looking at not only the issues and also  
21 your ability to work with us on the lead  
22 paint legislation and putting that policy  
23 into action and working in the future  
24 with asbestos and mold, but looking at  
25 what we can say, I guess, is a good



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           problem and how our schools are starting  
3           to get at capacity and how we are  
4           addressing not only current issues where  
5           schools are now in capacity, but how  
6           we're looking at the surrounding schools  
7           in those areas to see what model we could  
8           take moving forward. Is there something  
9           that you can just point out what we're  
10          doing to address that issue?

11                   DR. HITE: Yes, and it is  
12           something that we just presented to the  
13           Board of Education, and they were very  
14           receptive of the process. We're calling  
15           it -- and this name may change because  
16           part of the name represents other and  
17           different things, but we're doing a  
18           comprehensive school portfolio review.  
19           The portfolio part is the part we may  
20           change. And what it's designed to do,  
21           it's designed to cover every school in  
22           the entire City of Philadelphia.

23                   It's going to be conducted in  
24           four cycles, each of which will focus on  
25           a different area of the City. And I

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           talked earlier about one area of the City  
3           that -- the first three areas that we  
4           will be focused on.

5                        The overall goal is to design  
6           schools in every neighborhood that meet  
7           the educational needs of a changing  
8           population by, one, optimizing  
9           utilizations of buildings and, two,  
10          investing limited capital dollars where  
11          needed most, creating thoughtful  
12          transitions for students at elementary  
13          and middle grades, looking at how we do  
14          that. And the distinctive part of this  
15          is also utilizing the City-owned assets,  
16          the District and City-owned assets as a  
17          part of this comprehensive review.

18                       We are starting this in three  
19          areas of the City, the Northeast, Center  
20          City, and the Kensington area, and then  
21          this will become either an annual or  
22          biannual process so that we are able to  
23          identify the needs that are coming down  
24          the road in terms of population shifts in  
25          and throughout the City. So that

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           comprehensive review is designed to look  
3           at both short-term and long-term  
4           strategies for addressing these issues,  
5           and it allows us to work with the  
6           communities impacted in these three areas  
7           to talk about the options available to  
8           address the capacity needs.

9                   COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Because  
10           some of the challenges obviously, as we  
11           see, when you have an area that is sort  
12           of at capacity, so the worries are are  
13           catchment areas going to change or do we  
14           have to build an annex to a building.  
15           Some of these can be very costly. And as  
16           we deal with resources and where the  
17           money is coming from, it's always a  
18           challenge. If we can be proactive on  
19           that to give us time to build -- right  
20           now we're being reactive. Even though we  
21           saw this coming a little bit, we had so  
22           many other issues, it was sort of put on  
23           the back burner. To see that you're  
24           actually doing this is encouraging, and  
25           the Center City piece does include parts

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           of South Philly also, which is important,  
3           because whatever you do in one area  
4           affects the surrounding boundaries. And  
5           as we're dealing with the capital  
6           improvements of these buildings, looking  
7           at the holistic view of where our schools  
8           are going, which to me is a good thing,  
9           more people are going to our public  
10          schools, which means that they're getting  
11          more full, which means that we have to  
12          address that issue, which adds to another  
13          problem, and our facilities, it's a  
14          challenging subject.

15                        So if we can continue to do  
16          that, I think -- is there a timeline that  
17          we can say we're starting this process,  
18          and so within a year or two, we will have  
19          a full map of what our actions are going  
20          to be and then what those costs would be  
21          associated with that?

22                        DR. HITE: Yeah. So it  
23          begins -- I think the timeline is to  
24          begin in the fall. The planning work is  
25          happening now. We thought it was going

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           to take a year or so to actually make  
3           some of the recommendations.

4                        I would also add, Councilman  
5           Squilla, that it's not just looking --  
6           it's looking at all public schools too,  
7           by the way, not just District, because  
8           even where the -- I mean, you have to  
9           also consider the placement of charters  
10          and where they are as it relates to this  
11          issue as well.

12                       So it is a comprehensive review  
13          that will happen over the next year, and  
14          all of these communities will be a part  
15          of that. And while this is happening, we  
16          also have to implement short-term  
17          strategies to deal with the overcrowding  
18          issues that are occurring right now.

19                       COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And as we  
20          talk about the capital improvements and  
21          some of the issues with lead paint that's  
22          being addressed throughout there, I think  
23          some of the concerns we were hearing,  
24          that is there going to be a comprehensive  
25          approach that each school will be

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           evaluated based every year on an  
3           assessment done by the District to make  
4           sure that we are meeting our goals, that  
5           the lead paint, the mold, and asbestos is  
6           being looked at, and that there's some  
7           type of priority list that it will be  
8           assembled so that these schools could  
9           have it addressed, so it's not just the  
10          schools that make the most noise, but the  
11          schools that have the biggest problem?

12                   DR. HITE: Yes. I mean, and we  
13          will have the ability to look at this  
14          issue. I think the legislation that --  
15          the City Council resolution is going to  
16          require some additional resources to do  
17          some of this testing, but the goal is  
18          to -- once we hit the high-priority  
19          schools -- and we will be finished those  
20          by the beginning of the next school  
21          year -- there are another set of schools  
22          that we have to do. But I think the  
23          point and part of my earlier testimony  
24          was to also say along with that, what we  
25          would need over the next five years to

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           make them all lead-free and how do we do  
3           that, and there's an amount associated  
4           with that, and then it becomes how do we  
5           then work together to get that capital  
6           revenue in order to solve this problem.

7                        COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Right.  
8           And it seems like -- I'll end here. I  
9           won't ask another question, just a  
10          comment.

11                       Hopefully with the coalition  
12          being built with our Save Our Facilities  
13          Coalition and with the District and PFT  
14          and everybody trying to work together to  
15          get additional resources, we put all our  
16          heads together and to be able to work  
17          together to make this happen I think is  
18          important, and instead of fighting with  
19          each other, working with each other to  
20          get there I think will only get us to a  
21          better place.

22                       DR. HITE: Really important.  
23          That's a really important point, and to  
24          the extent that the PFT Health and  
25          Welfare Fund created an app, and that app

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           is also another -- it has become another  
3           reporting mechanism so we have more eyes  
4           on the problems so that we can actually  
5           get in and respond to those problems more  
6           quickly. And I think that's an example  
7           of working together in order to resolve  
8           these issues.

9                        COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you.

10                      COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
11           you, Councilman.

12                      Councilwoman Reynolds Brown.

13                      COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes.

14           Dr. Hite, I want to revisit the  
15           disciplinary portion of the testimony.  
16           So I've learned that there's certain  
17           behaviors that are defined as clear and  
18           present danger. Are you aware of that  
19           kind of terminology, and when that  
20           happens -- and, again, these are based on  
21           a couple of cases that have come to my  
22           office -- that students are identified as  
23           or put in what's called a crisis,  
24           resulting in a de facto suspension or  
25           have the school call crisis on that child



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           in response to behavior that often times  
3           is considered age-appropriate  
4           misbehavior? So do you know about that?  
5           Do you understand why that's happening,  
6           when the School District is working hard  
7           to fully phase out school suspensions?

8                     DR. HITE: Yes. And that is  
9           more -- so that speaks more to the  
10          service that's needed and the support  
11          that's needed by the student or the  
12          family at the time versus the  
13          consequence. So involving the crisis  
14          team or calling the crisis hotline could  
15          be because now the individual has been  
16          able to recognize the trauma that the  
17          child is experiencing, and then based on  
18          that trauma, then trying to connect the  
19          City-based services to that child or his  
20          or her family in order to address that  
21          trauma. So that in the past, that could  
22          have resulted in a suspension because a  
23          person didn't know what to do, and  
24          because the child was misbehaving, they  
25          just said, go home. But instead of

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           sending what could be a child back into  
3           the traumatic situation, what we're  
4           trying to do is create the opportunity to  
5           match the response to the need that is  
6           apparent at the given time.

7                        So, yes, very familiar with  
8           that. And it's a tiered approach. I  
9           mean, it is different tiers that would  
10          then create a different response.

11                       COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. So  
12          what is the level of the relationship  
13          and/or interface with the Education Law  
14          Center? I'm just curious.

15                       DR. HITE: We work with the Ed  
16          Law Center. They help us on policy  
17          issues. They give recommendations.  
18          We've worked with them most recently on  
19          the suspension -- I mean, eliminating the  
20          suspensions, particularly at the early  
21          grades. We also have worked with them on  
22          the rewriting our Code of Student  
23          Conduct. So we do work with the  
24          Educational Law Center as well as the --  
25          there's another group that we work with

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           as well that I can't think of right now.  
3           But we work with that entity to actually  
4           rewrite some policies that speak  
5           specifically to these issues.

6                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: She's one  
7           of your right arms, I know.

8                    Thank you, Karyn Lynch.

9                    MS. LYNCH: Good afternoon.

10                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes, yes,  
11           yes.

12                   MS. LYNCH: For the record,  
13           Karyn Lynch, School District of  
14           Philadelphia.

15                    I would say that ours is an  
16           interesting relationship with the Ed Law  
17           Center. As Dr. Hite indicated, we're  
18           doing quite a bit of work together. Most  
19           recently, Deborah and I actually served  
20           on the panel for Pushout, the book that  
21           deals with the experiences of young black  
22           girls and the educational system. We sat  
23           on the panel that was organized by  
24           Drexel, and Deborah and I each remarked  
25           that as panelists on the same panel, it

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           was an interesting experience. We had  
3           quite a bit in common and agreed very  
4           much with regard to philosophy, practice,  
5           and where we're going moving forward as  
6           we educate young black girls.

7                        COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.  
8           Thank you for that.

9                        As I wrap up my line of  
10          questioning -- well, no. That's not  
11          true. I do have one more related to  
12          solar. And I'd really be remiss not to  
13          put this on the record, particularly my  
14          capacity as Chair of the Committee on the  
15          Environment and Sustainability. But you  
16          may be aware of the Philadelphia Energy  
17          Authority's report that showed solar to  
18          be under the cost of what you are  
19          currently paying for electricity based on  
20          the PEA study. And we know that you're  
21          principally an academic institution  
22          trying to provide the best in terms of  
23          educational experiences for our children  
24          and you get sometimes shouldered, others  
25          might say burdened, with other requests

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           and expectations. In this case the  
3           question is, how far along are you in the  
4           process of moving forward with buildings  
5           that may have solar and/or green roofs?  
6           Is the sustainability and a plan in the  
7           works? Is that part of the long-term  
8           plan at all?

9                       MR. MONSON: Partially because  
10           of the age of our buildings, to be  
11           honest, and the unique structure of some  
12           of them, I think each one is a case by  
13           case. I think all those issues of  
14           general energy efficiency inform all the  
15           decisions as we look at any repairs we do  
16           and are there ways to reduce our  
17           footprint at the same time. But we're  
18           dealing with -- Dr. Hite mentioned the  
19           average age is 70 years old. Some are  
20           120 years old.

21                      COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: That makes  
22           perfect sense to me.

23                      MR. MONSON: So it's part of  
24           the strategy and we look at each one, but  
25           every school is unique.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN:

3 Absolutely. And so with new schools that  
4 you have on the docket, be it 48 months  
5 from now or five years from now, are  
6 environmental and sustainability  
7 practices, measures, strategies a part of  
8 the plan from the architectural  
9 renderings to the actual --

10 MR. MONSON: Yes. Absolutely.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN:

12 Absolutely? Complete the sentence.

13 MR. MONSON: Absolutely those  
14 are considerations that are taken in,  
15 reducing the footprint, reducing energy  
16 costs, all of the above.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. So  
18 you say they're considered. That's  
19 different than the expectation that the  
20 School District will in fact adopt  
21 environmental and sustainability  
22 policies.

23 DR. HITE: We actually have  
24 a -- it's called Green Futures that  
25 actually builds from the City's

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           sustainability policy. We have that in  
3           place. We've been recognized as a  
4           district by the -- we've been recognized  
5           as a Green Ribbon School District because  
6           of those efforts.

7                    COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Well, that  
8           says it all.

9                    DR. HITE: I also wanted to  
10          add, Councilwoman, that we also are  
11          planning, in partnership with the  
12          Philadelphia Energy Authority, to start a  
13          CTE program focused on careers in solar  
14          and clean energy.

15                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes.

16                   DR. HITE: So we will have one  
17          of those programs hosted in one of our  
18          high schools.

19                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Very good.

20                   DR. HITE: We have one now at  
21          Ben Franklin, and several of the children  
22          work over the summer in those roles, but  
23          that's one that we want to make as a part  
24          of our CTE program.

25                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So let me

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           seize the moment to say a huge thank you  
3           to Karyn Lynch, who was a partner with my  
4           office for the past ten years maybe,  
5           however long you've been here, Karyn,  
6           with the Step Into College experience at  
7           University of the Sciences. That effort  
8           would not work but for the partnership  
9           we've enjoyed with the Philadelphia  
10          School District every Friday bussing  
11          close to 500 young people into University  
12          of the Sciences. So I need to thank you  
13          and acknowledge your work product and  
14          helping us just lift up that program.

15                   DR. HITE: She came with me.  
16          She's been here seven years. She didn't  
17          want to tell her age.

18                   COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: There you  
19          go.

20                   Well, thank you very, very  
21          much, Dr. Hite.

22                   COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
23          you, Councilwoman. I won't comment on  
24          that.

25                   Councilwoman Gym.



1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

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

4 One quick note. Policy 234  
5 looks like it denies any punitive  
6 measures against students who give birth.  
7 I think what I was asking about is  
8 whether there's clarity about policies  
9 that expand educational outreach to  
10 students who do give birth. So clearly  
11 we cannot punish students who do give  
12 birth, but I think what we were looking  
13 at is that because there's not clarity  
14 about what young people are actually  
15 entitled to when they do give birth,  
16 that's what we're coming into conflict  
17 with. Not a lot of principals have it on  
18 their radar, nurses may not, counselors  
19 may not.

20 And so our overall population  
21 of teens giving birth are going down  
22 across most demographics, except for  
23 Latina girls. And so it is really --  
24 that is actually on the rise. So it's  
25 one of these areas where we want to make

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           sure that they are not adversely impacted  
3           and that we are being much more proactive  
4           about getting out to them.

5                     DR. HITE: Yeah. And we still  
6           have three Board members here, and they  
7           have a Policy Review Committee. It's one  
8           of the four committees that exist. And  
9           this is a policy that we could bring back  
10          to talk about all of the things that you  
11          just discussed. That becomes a part of  
12          reviewing the policy and the accompanying  
13          administrative procedures.

14                    COUNCILWOMAN GYM: No; I  
15          appreciate that.

16                    And similarly, back to the  
17          Policy Review Committee, about a decade  
18          ago -- so this is 2019, but in 2009, I  
19          worked with a lot of young immigrant  
20          students in a large high school that were  
21          being harassed, and together we helped  
22          work on writing the District's  
23          anti-bullying, anti-harassment policies  
24          for students, and we piloted a pretty  
25          intense and I think fairly successful

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           program at South Philadelphia High School  
3           with Otis Hackney, who is now our  
4           Deputy -- I forget what we call him --  
5           Mayor, Commissioner, Education Office  
6           Chair, something. He's head of our  
7           Education Office. And so we had a really  
8           good pilot, and effectively there was  
9           clarity when a parent -- when there was a  
10          student who experienced bullying and  
11          harassment at schools. They filed a  
12          complaint. There was a designated  
13          individual. There were two weeks  
14          investigation and a response back to the  
15          families I think within a certain time  
16          period that was pretty timely. But since  
17          the federal settlement with the  
18          Department of Justice expired, it's felt  
19          like that's gone -- that's dissipated and  
20          that again we're back into a stage where  
21          there used to be a lot of clarity and a  
22          lot of focus and attention, designated  
23          individuals, and tracking of complaints.  
24          It feels much more diffused. And we get  
25          a lot of complaints from students,

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           especially students of color, students  
3           with disabilities, English language  
4           learners, LGBTQ youth, that there still  
5           is a pervasive problem that results in  
6           numerous calls certainly to our office  
7           but to other places as well.

8                     And so I very briefly stopped  
9           by the Policy Committee. We had a  
10          dialogue about it. Again, Karyn is  
11          talented, amazing. She can't do it all.  
12          We had a lot of support staff underneath  
13          that position to be able to deal with it.

14                    So could you talk a little bit?  
15          Ten years after this historic settlement  
16          was made and the District really embarked  
17          on a serious program around bullying and  
18          harassment and investigations. What  
19          programs and interventions does the  
20          District have in place right now to  
21          address bullying and what can be provided  
22          next year?

23                    DR. HITE: Yes. So thank you.  
24          We do have -- like the structures that  
25          were put in place as a part of whatever

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           happened at South Philadelphia before we  
3           arrived, many of those structures are  
4           still in place. In fact, we've gotten  
5           much better in terms of tracking the  
6           number of reports and completing  
7           investigations.

8                         And so there have been  
9           approximately 1,300 reports submitted so  
10          far in '17-'18. One of the reasons we're  
11          promoting making the reports, because it  
12          allows us to respond. When we know more,  
13          we can do more to address that.

14                        As a result of that, 761  
15          actually have completed investigations,  
16          and of the 761, there was almost 250  
17          cases of bullying and/or harassment that  
18          were addressed. And so part of -- in  
19          recent years, we've also added or taken  
20          the steps to address the issues with  
21          respect to publicizing our bullying and  
22          harassment hotline. We have a hotline  
23          out there now that anyone can make a  
24          report, it's 215-400-SAFE, and  
25          emphasizing with staff and students that

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           bullying and harassment is unacceptable  
3           and that everybody is responsible for  
4           reporting. So it's not just teachers or  
5           administrators. It's also students.

6                     And then, most importantly, we  
7           have purchased a new reporting and  
8           tracking system that is currently being  
9           utilized by PDE, the Pennsylvania  
10          Department of Education, and that system  
11          will be in use for the first time in the  
12          next school year. That will give us a  
13          lot more information in terms of where  
14          these events are happening and the types  
15          of steps we're taking in order to do  
16          that.

17                    COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So a couple  
18          of quick questions. You had a person in  
19          your District counsel office, the legal  
20          office for the District, that was really  
21          committed to going around and training  
22          District staff regarding how to prevent  
23          bullying and harassment. I mean, is  
24          there a person who is going out  
25          proactively reminding people what the

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           responsibilities are right now? Is that  
3           something that you're seeing in the  
4           future, especially in schools where  
5           you're seeing more incidences being  
6           reported or a higher level or a spike or  
7           anything like that?

8                   MS. LYNCH: Yes. As a matter  
9           of fact, when we transitioned from having  
10          a single person do this work to having  
11          all of our NTSS specialists do this work  
12          within our schools, we recognized that it  
13          was a much better way to ensure that more  
14          people were familiar, that we were  
15          consistently applying the same across the  
16          entire District and we were getting the  
17          results that we needed.

18                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. And  
19          then when a parent has an incident of  
20          bullying and harassment, who do they  
21          actually file with at the school level?

22                   MS. LYNCH: They file at the  
23          school level with a counselor, they can  
24          file with a principal, they can file  
25          with -- that's the beauty of service.

1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 It's intended to add whoever they  
3 contact, whoever they engage with.  
4 Sometimes and very frequently it could be  
5 the teacher, that the investigation is  
6 conducted and all have been trained on  
7 exactly what's to happen.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And I think  
9 we discussed this earlier. The complaint  
10 that we had at one of the schools is that  
11 if everybody is responsible, then  
12 sometimes the feeling is is that nobody  
13 follows through because it's too diffuse.  
14 So in the settlement, in the federal  
15 settlement, there was a decision then to  
16 designate one specific individual who had  
17 to respond to a parent complaint, was  
18 responsible for the followthrough, and it  
19 was not the principal. That was the  
20 clear thing, that it was not the  
21 principal, but that it was another  
22 individual who was responsible. Have we  
23 moved away from that?

24 MS. LYNCH: No. There's a  
25 specific person in each of our schools



1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           that has that designation, but our  
3           numbers are so great, to have one person  
4           for the entire District doing this work  
5           and doing this work alone, we found that  
6           we weren't able to keep up with the  
7           volume, especially as people had a much  
8           greater understanding of bullying and  
9           harassment.

10                   A good number of the referrals  
11           that are made are not actually  
12           technically by law bullying and  
13           harassment, but if a child is anywhere in  
14           any of our schools feeling as though  
15           they're not safe or they're anxious or  
16           someone is bothering them, that it's  
17           essential that somebody engage in order  
18           to protect.

19                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So going  
20           back again, so who is responsible at the  
21           school level for investigating a case of  
22           bullying and harassment?

23                   MS. LYNCH: So the person who  
24           is usually the position is -- the person  
25           who is usually the position that knows

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           that if anything happens, this is the  
3           person to go to, it would be our  
4           counselor or the teacher.

5                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Or the  
6           teacher? Okay. And then --

7                   MS. LYNCH: And then our NTSS  
8           at the central level all follow up. And  
9           as soon as the system is in place, then  
10          we're going to be able to see much more  
11          easily what the investigation is, how  
12          long it takes, and so on and so on.

13                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Again, we  
14          should keep talking this through, because  
15          this is an area that obviously I'm very  
16          passionate about, because we worked so  
17          hard on it and I thought that we got to a  
18          place where we were starting to  
19          understand how challenging it is.

20                   First of all, I want to  
21          emphasize how sympathetic I am about how  
22          difficult the challenges are at the  
23          school level, but also just a constant --  
24          like what became very apparent as we were  
25          looking at how these things were

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           happening across the City is that without  
3           consistent training and awareness that  
4           the teacher is responsible for following  
5           through, the counselor is responsible for  
6           following through, that the response was  
7           erratic. People do not have a consistent  
8           understanding of how seriously to take  
9           name-calling versus a racist slur, how  
10          deeply a casual comment of indifference  
11          or cruelty is actually demeaning to a  
12          child's appearance, their sexual  
13          orientation, their gender. And so it's a  
14          very fine line, and people have to  
15          constantly be reminded, trained, and then  
16          if it's a lot of people, it becomes very  
17          difficult. If it's one individual at the  
18          school, they become more of -- a better  
19          expert around it.

20                        So I'd like to keep this  
21          conversation going a little bit more  
22          about how to understand. I do think this  
23          ten-year anniversary on the federal  
24          settlement is a good chance for us to  
25          review what our policies are like and how

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           well we're doing it. We know it has  
3           profound impact on young people, even as  
4           early as age 10 and 12.

5                     It's heartbreaking to see  
6           people feel like the situation is so  
7           hopeless that they can't find a way out  
8           of it. I know you share that. I'm not  
9           suggesting that you wouldn't, but it's a  
10          lot of work.

11                    I have one other question  
12          especially for Karyn Lynch. I want to  
13          thank the School District for being an  
14          incredible partner with us on the  
15          residential treatment facilities and the  
16          reduction, the aggressive attention that  
17          we paid to youth in residential treatment  
18          facilities. This has been a big issue  
19          for the School District of Philadelphia,  
20          because frequently you're the  
21          check-writer. You don't have a voice in  
22          both the outcomes, what kind of  
23          conditions that young people are in. You  
24          obviously write the check and you deal  
25          with the outcomes, because they come back

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           to us, whether they're rehabilitated or  
3           not, and we found in too many cases that  
4           they were not. But we have done yeoman's  
5           work over the last two years to, one,  
6           make sure the District is an equal voice  
7           and partner at the table with our City  
8           systems and with our courts also. We  
9           reduced the number of kids in treatment  
10          through the delinquent system, which has  
11          been significant. It means it puts a big  
12          burden, though, on the District. So  
13          especially when it comes to  
14          reintegration, I'd love to hear from you  
15          about how are you coping with the changes  
16          in the youth who are returning from  
17          placement. Do you need more partnerships  
18          from us on the City level? We're  
19          obviously sitting at the table together  
20          for the task force. Do you need more  
21          supports from us? If so, what are the  
22          primary ones?

23                           And then I do want to also  
24          point out and express my thanks for the  
25          investment on the social workers in

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           schools, because this has been a big  
3           help. But we are hearing a lot that  
4           principals in schools still need like a  
5           reentry strategy. So could you talk a  
6           little bit about that? Because that's  
7           been a big part of our work together and  
8           one that I really appreciate.

9                   MS. LYNCH: So I thank you for  
10           the question. We have been very focused,  
11           particularly in the last year, in making  
12           certain that the supports are in place.  
13           You know that we have a transition center  
14           that has, for several years now,  
15           facilitated children coming back into the  
16           City and transitioning into schools  
17           across the --

18                   COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Where is  
19           that physically located?

20                   MS. LYNCH: It's 440. And at  
21           440, you know that we have staff from  
22           Parole and Probation, CBH, DHS all at our  
23           transition center, engaging and  
24           supporting children that are returning  
25           back to our schools.

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2                   In this past year, we have  
3           augmented that service by increasing the  
4           effort with five additional case managers  
5           that we're particularly pleased for.  
6           They are supervised by a clinician who  
7           has behavioral health experience, and the  
8           case managers follow transitioning  
9           students into schools and stay with them,  
10          follow their progress throughout.

11                   We've had several success  
12          stories. Several of the students who  
13          have transitioned back have become honor  
14          roll students. They are primarily going  
15          into our credit recovery schools for the  
16          reasons that we have discussed at our  
17          task force; namely, that when students  
18          are educated in on-ground schools,  
19          they're not always getting the best  
20          opportunities for a traditional  
21          educational experience and they don't  
22          always gain the credits that they need.  
23          And so one of the things that we have  
24          really pushed for is a recommendation  
25          that if students are outside of the City

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.  
2           attending school, that they're going to  
3           attend a public school and have that  
4           experience. We want the same thing  
5           within the City if that -- when they come  
6           back, we want them to be able to have as  
7           much opportunities to attend a  
8           traditional school as possible.

9                    COUNCILWOMAN GYM: That's  
10           great. And, again, I want to thank you  
11           for your partnership on this. We should  
12           keep talking. There's going to be big  
13           changes ahead. I just think that there's  
14           a movement towards seeing some things  
15           really move and evolve, and it is a huge  
16           class for the District certainly in terms  
17           of monetary investment in this area, so  
18           we want to make sure that you're at the  
19           table as all these decisions are being  
20           made.

21                    So thank you very much.

22                    COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
23           you. Thank you, Councilwoman.

24                    And thank you all very much for  
25           your many hours here today. We



1 5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2 appreciate it very much.

3 Madam Chair, thank you.

4 And with that, this Committee  
5 will stand in recess until Wednesday, May  
6 15th, 2019 at 10:00 a.m., at which time  
7 we will reconvene here in Room 400, City  
8 Hall.

9 DR. HITE: Councilman Greenlee,  
10 I just wanted to once again thank you and  
11 thank Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds  
12 Brown for the seven years that I've been  
13 here for the support that you provided to  
14 the children of this city. So thank you.

15 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
16 you. And just for the record --

17 DR. HITE: And good luck on  
18 your retirement.

19 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And just  
20 for the record, the Councilwoman doesn't  
21 like the word "retirement." I actually  
22 think it's one of the greatest words in  
23 the English language. So we differ  
24 there.

25 (Committee of the Whole

1           5/14/19 - WHOLE - BILL 190152, ETC.

2           adjourned at 3:02 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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

-----  
MICHELE L. MURPHY  
RPR-Notary Public

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