

CHICAGO BOARD OF EDUCATION
EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMITTEE MEETING

held on
January 14, 2020

STENOGRAPHIC REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS
had in the above-entitled matter at Mariano
Azuela Elementary School, 4707 West Marquette
Road, Chicago, Illinois, commencing at 5:42 p.m.
and concluding at 7:26 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

MS. LUISIANA MELENDEZ, Committee Chair
MR. MIGUEL del VALLE, President
MR. SENDHIL REVULURI, Vice President
MS. ELIZABETH TODD-BRELAND
MR. LUCINO SOTELO

Reported By: Karen Fatigato, CSR
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I would also like to thank the principal of Azuela Elementary, Carmen Navarro, for hosting us this evening and invite her to say a few words.

PRINCIPAL NAVARRO: Good evening, everyone. How is everyone doing? We're honored that we were chosen to have such an important meeting, and I know that we're going to learn a lot about the plan. And I'm really, really excited that all voices are going to be heard, right. Hopefully we're going to have a lot more people coming in.

But 30 seconds. I've been here for ten years. I was the principal that had the privilege of opening this school. Our kids are fabulous. The teachers are fabulous. The community is wonderful. So it has been my honor to serve this community for the past nine years. So we were multi-track, now we are -- we follow regular calendar.

Thank you to the Board Members, to my -- to the distinguished guests. Thank you to my colleagues like Ms. Sobhy that came to support us. Thank you for the parents. Thank



you for everyone, my APs that are always doing the work. And again, thank you, and please maybe you're going to go through housekeeping procedures so anything that you need, let us know. Thank you again and welcome.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Notice of this meeting was posted on January 10th, 2020, at least 48 hours before this meeting at Mariano Azuela Elementary School 4707 West Marquette Road, the Board office at One North Dearborn, the Madison Street Lobby of 42 West Madison Street, and on our website cpsboe.org.

So I would like to say -- to again welcome you and say that I, like many of you, have been in Early Childhood Education for a long, long time. I was a teacher. I am now -- I have the privilege of training future teachers and, of course, since June of last year serving on the Board and have the honor of chairing this Committee.

So I'm saying that because I want to acknowledge the importance of this tough topic and also thank you for being here to talk about something that is vital to our city and as I



know many of you feel to our whole country.

So one of the things that we are going to talk about is going to briefly give an overview of the City's vision in regards to early learning. And then we're going to focus on the pre-K/4-year-old program at Chicago Public Schools.

We are well-aware that the issues pertaining to Early Childhood Education in our city are many and complex, so -- but tonight we're going to focus on that particular -- that particular issue and programs and initiatives. So hopefully we will have further opportunity to have other meetings and run the conversation. This is just the first -- the first dialogue, let's say. And we very much hope that it will be a dialogue. It is important for us to hear from you, that's why we have invited you, and I know that that's why you've come because you have important things to say that we also want to hear.

And I will go through the program for the night. The welcome is -- it's ongoing. Then we're going to have a presentation from our



guests from the Mayor's Office, which I'll introduce formally in a couple of minutes, and also from the Division of Early Childhood at Chicago Public Schools. We will then have a Q-and-A question -- session in which you will all be invited, and hopefully we'll have time to hear from you, to ask one question of the panelists and of myself, of course, regarding the presentation that they're going to give and issues arising from that presentation, questions that you may have. We very earnestly ask that you limit one question -- to one question. We will have at the end be able to give you the opportunity to give further feedback in writing, and I'll give more details once the Q-and-A session is over. Then we will have a 20-minute public participation in acknowledgment of the Open Meetings Act to which we have to abide at the Chicago Board of Education. And then some very brief closing remarks and some information about where the -- this -- the information that arises from this meeting will be posted and how you can have access to it, you know, in a few weeks. So all those details will be



forthcoming.

I just want to welcome you again and --



this conversation that CPS and the Board has convened. I am only going to make a few brief remarks because we really want to get to the dialogue part of the conversation that Louisiana referenced.

But we were asked to, you know, talk a little bit about, you know, what is happening in the Mayor's Office and what's happening with our visioning. And so Chicago has a long and rich history of providing high-quality Early Childhood services in the city from being one of the first Head Start grantees in the '60s to our early innovative infant and toddler delivery model in our community-based organizations. From the programs that we provide through our park district to the array of services in our libraries, Chicago has a lot going on in terms of Early Childhood and high-quality services.

However, this administration recognizes that we still have a long way to go. We have a long way to go to make sure that every young child birth through 5 in our city has access to high-quality services in the way and programs that the parents are interested in, be those in



schools or community-based settings or in homes. That's why this administration is really committed to building upon Chicago's history of high-quality programming.

Our office is committed to building on that history but also to looking forward to the future and thinking about over the next three years in this administration, beyond this administration, what does the vision for early learning look like for Chicago. We are interested in a bold vision and a vision that's built collectively through transparent and inclusive processes. We have started some of that visioning in our office already over the last few months. We have been engaging with stakeholders and individuals to learn more about what various community members, community-based organizations, principals, parents, what they're interested in and what they're looking for in Chicago Early Learning in the future. And we plan to continue this visioning going forward over the next few months.

And that's why we're really excited to be here today to be a part of this dialogue and



conversation to really ask for your input on what a collective, bold, ambitious vision for Chicago Early Learning can and look like -- should look like moving forward.

So I'm going to turn it over to Jennifer who is going to talk a little bit about Chicago Early Learning today.

MS. ALEXANDER: Hi, everybody. Hi, everybody. This is all about early learning, right, so let's get excited.

Hi I am Jennifer Alexander, the Director of Early Learning Policy Implementation at the Mayor's Office. And some of you ask what does that mean. So under my portfolio I'm focusing on quality, service delivery, along with professional development. And Christi and I work in tandem as we work towards making this a better place for our children and families in the City of Chicago.

I went past and I hope -- okay, I got it right. There we go. So Christi shared a little bit about the vision and where we're going, some of the conversations that we've been having with some of you around the room even.



And from that what we have come up with is what we're calling our five pillars. And you'll hear this a lot as we talk about the work that we're doing and continue to decide on what a vision looks like, but we are definitely committed to high-quality, intentional, unified, prenatal birth to 5 services for those in the least resource communities, so the children and families that need the services most. We're focused on ensuring readiness for kindergarten but not just kindergarten, we're looking for life-long learners, so beyond kindergarten. We're talking about partnerships that we have not only with the Chicago Public Schools but the work that we're doing towards higher learning, some of our partnerships with City colleges.

Christi didn't say anything about the workforce development work that she's doing, which is making a huge impact, and we're hoping it will lead to addressing some of the teacher shortage issues that we're dealing with. So with that being said, we're focusing our attention on what we're calling here the five pillars. And again, I just highlighted some of



that work very quickly.

The unified intentional services, and I'll say it again, for prenatal through birth. Of course, we're looking at high-quality supports and services for those in some of the least resource communities. And then ensuring that our children are ready not only for kindergarten but beyond. So again we're looking at creating life-long learners.

And then in alignment with that, just to talk about some of the other prenatal to 5 work and initiatives that we have that are rolling out of our office, we're really excited about the Family Connect services that some of you may have heard about. I don't even think it's even been over a month when the Mayor made the announcement. But Family Connects, it's a home visiting program, and it's a universal home visiting program. So what we're doing is we're working with I believe it's five hospitals in the City of Chicago on the south and west sides and we're connecting moms at the bedside with nurses. Those nurses are doing home visiting services with -- it's post three weeks I believe



of delivery, and they're getting like three home visits. And with that the intent is to connect those families with services and providers that they need most. So they're having those conversations with trusted nurses who have been trained to provide them with what they need moving forward in that trajectory.

Some of you know a lot about our preschool work, child care work that's happening in schools and community settings. And again highlighting the Workforce Scholarship Program that we have that Christi leads out of our office. And, of course, the Universal Pre-K for 4-year olds.

That's just a high level overview of some of the things that we're doing and some of the priorities that are coming out of our administration. And at this point I'm going to turn it back over to you, Louisiana. Thank you for having us.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Thank you for being here. And I stand up because I'm very short. So thank you for being here and for providing that high level, which I think



summarizes some of the things that I believe everybody here shares, the acknowledgment of the first years, the importance and how vital it is to provide services that start right at birth and go on through life that is just not getting the kids ready for kindergarten, although that's very important, that is the longer term. And also I think highlighting also the tradition of quality early care in Chicago and the road ahead, which is -- has some challenges and things we need to work out but also has a community that is absolutely committed to partnerships and to -- from the community, from the institutions that work in early care and education.

I am particularly excited about the Workforce Scholarship because workforce development is something that I work on every day. And as a former teacher, as somebody who was a preschool and kindergarten teacher for over 20 years, I know how important it is to have quality educators in every step of the way of the Early Childhood Programs.

So to speak to one of the pieces that



Jennifer and Christi highlighted, I'm going to pass it over to Leslie McKinily, who is the Deputy Chief of Early -- Deputy Director of Early Childhood Programs at Chicago CPS. Thank you, Leslie, for being here.

MS. MCKINILY: Thank you, Board Member Melendez.

As Board Member Melendez mentioned -- how's this? As Board Member Melendez mentioned, I am the Deputy Chief of Early Childhood for CPS, and I am grateful to have this opportunity to talk to you today. As you can see from our mission in the District, the work of Early Childhood is fundamental to the work that we are embarking in our office of Early Childhood Education.

The core values also speaks to the work of Early Childhood particularly as it relates to student centered. Everything we do in the District, particularly in the Office of Early Childhood, is student centered. We take the whole child approach to our curriculum and development, looking at social/emotional, cognitive, physical development of each child.



Also, we understand that the impact that community and family have on early learning is essential.

When we look at the commitments within the District, the academic progress, integrity and fiscal sensibility, they are all aligned to the work that's happening within the Office of Early Childhood. And I'll talk more about how this work relates to academic progress later in the presentation.

The board launched its five-year vision document with these goals that we are to accomplish and working to striving for over the next couple of years. Particularly look at the blue which highlights the work of Early Childhood. So we have some work to do. Early Childhood is the foundation, we are working to ensure that 50 percent of our children that there's an increase in the number reaching kindergarten-readiness benchmarks. We're also working to look at grade 2 to see that there is an increase of students at or above grade level in 2nd grade. This work is instrumental, and it begins in pre-K.



Here is a little bit about our





So here's -- this slide talks a little bit about what our focus is this year. We heard Christie and Jennifer talk about the Mayor's Office and the focus around early learning from a birth to 5 prospective. Here's the work that's happening within the District.

Our priorities in the Office of Early Childhood is around preschool access and expansion, strategic partnerships and also high-quality programming. Within preschool access and expansion we are going to align and we are aligning with not only the Mayor's Office but with DFSS around universal preschool. We are also working around application enhancements to our COPA system. We know that the Chicago Early Learning application process experiences some challenges or exposes some challenges for families. We are aware of that and we are thinking about ways that we can enhance that process.

We also know that as we move towards universal there's going to have to be some conversations and some changes around how we enroll children. So we're looking at how we can



enhance and create better enrollment policies in the District. When we think about strategic partnerships it really starts with family engagement. How are we engaging families? And I want to commend -- take a moment and commend Board Member Melendez about setting this vision for this conversation because this is one strategy of how we begin to engage families in this process, how we begin to hear from families so that the conversations that happen in this safe space help to align the work that's happening across the city, not only in the District. Our community partnerships, how we work with our sister organization DFSS, how we work with the Mayor's Office is all aligned under these community partnerships. How do we better support schools to have partnerships within not only community organizations but CBOs really to align this work of early learning? We can't do it alone.

We also are focusing on high-quality programming, that goes back to our academic progress commitment in the District. And so we are looking at how do we align professional



development not only within the Office of Early Childhood but across preschool to 2nd grade to meet those five-year goals. So we're looking at how are we designing professional development that supports administrators but also supports the work of classroom teachers as well as teacher assistants.

Our instruction and coaching is another arm of our strategic priority. How are we providing coaching support to those 300-plus classrooms? How are we ensuring that the whole child approach to instruction is taking place with our teachers and our students? So one way to do it is we're looking at P2 instructional alignment, so we're working more closely with our kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade teachers. We're also working more closely with our Network ISLs to align this work.

So where are we now? We talked about what we look like, our landscape. We talked a little bit about our strategic priorities. So where are we now in this work? So we've made some progress and we're excited about it. So we've expanded pre-K across the District by 24



percent. It's our largest expansion to date.

We also identified expansion opportunities within the District. As we think about Universal Pre-K expansion, we have to have a plan and a road map of where there may be opportunities to expand. So we started to think about that. We also launched initiatives like the Summer Institute Winter Institute Professional Development. We are also partners in the workforce work that Christ is spearheading out of the Mayor's Office. And we also are collaborating across the city with the Mayor's Office and DFSS around our preschool city-wide application and enrollment process.

Additionally, new this year we've created a tiered support. So we talked about those different centers and schools. We talked about 300-plus schools that we're supporting. How can we work together with limited resources and staff? And we saw that we had ten, 15, Early Childhood specialists, so how are we utilizing those staffing resources to ensure that schools have what they need? So one way that we've approached it this year is a tiered



support model. So we're providing intense support around education, around comprehensive services, around family engagement to schools.

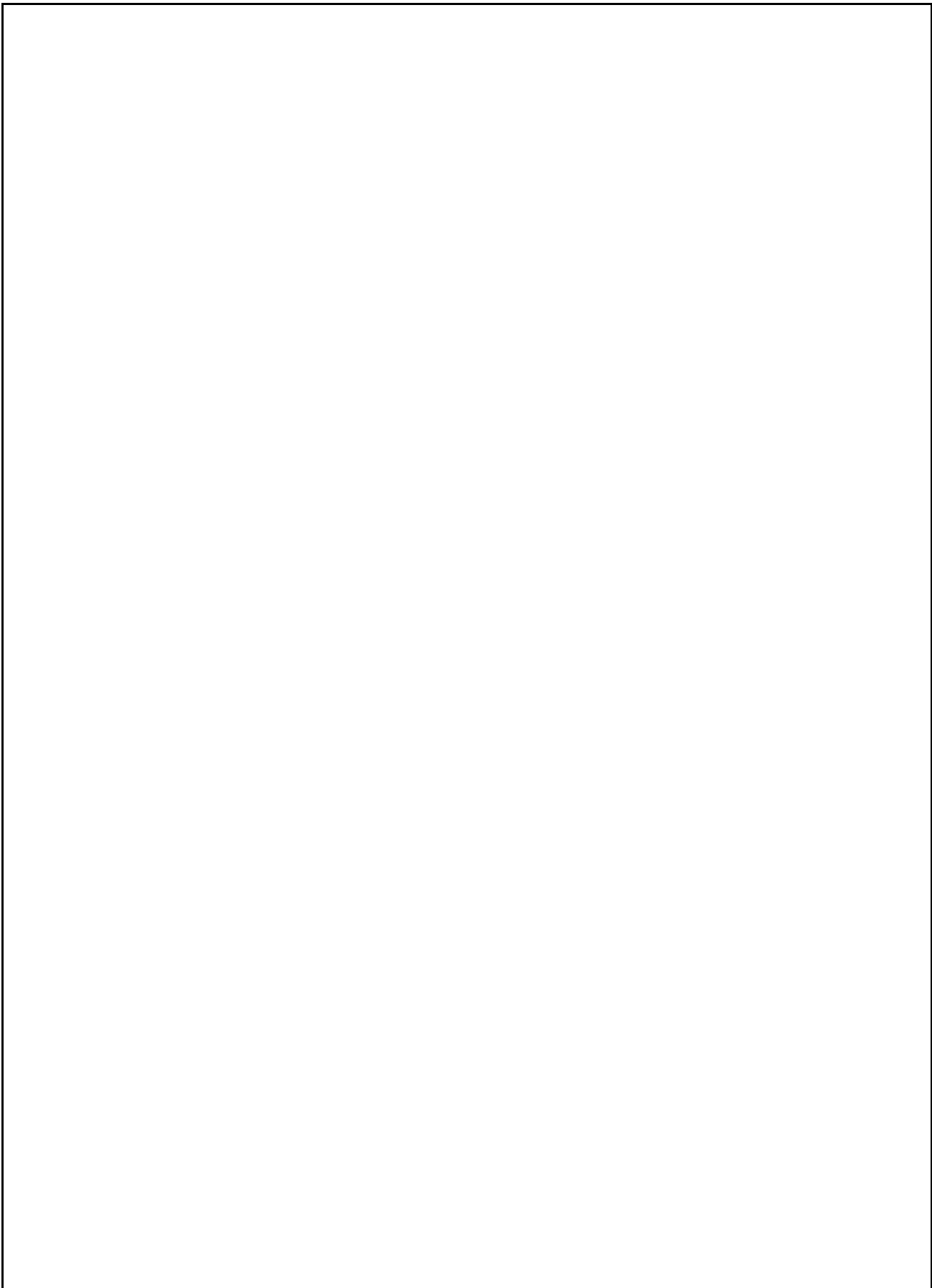
As we work to meet our strategic priorities, we're going to continue the collaboration with the Mayor's Office and DFSS and our own Network supports to ensure that we are assessing the future of our technology and application system. We're going to continue the work around a collaborative process, around building new enrollment policies for pre-K. And we also are going to continue to do things like this, establish work groups and opportunities for community engagement and collaboration.

I thank you for the time to talk with you. I will now turn it over to Board Member Melendez. Thank you.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Thank you, Leslie. Thank you.

I think that our guests have provided us -- given us, you know, a picture of the early learning landscape in Chicago as complex, rich, full of opportunities and also some challenges that we need to address. And that's why we are





you're here, I want to say that something that I am particularly passionate about and that I know is very much part of the vision of CPS and also the city is that, you know, creating services that in order to be of quality need to be

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Also, if there's -- there's a special website for the Early Childhood Committee that I will give you later because I think it's -- I don't have it right here in front of me, okay. So we will have -- what we are going to do now we will have two lines for the Q-and-A, and I'll alternate between them. And then we are lining up on both -- here and here and Susan Narrajos and Estel a Bel tran will help you get organized. And as you come up please state your name and, you know, your affiliation or why you are here. And as a reminder we have Spanish translators available for you if you should need them. so -- I'm sorry? Oh, the Q-and-A session will be -- will end promptly at 7:00. And we will start in one minute as we give you some time just to consider some of the questions that the panelists have brought, but in a minute sharp we'll begin.

(Whereupon, a short break was taken.)

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Okay. Before we begin in about 30 seconds, I want to acknowledge Sendhi I Revul uri , our Board Vice



President. And also our Student Representative, Joshua Torres, yes, who has been very, very -- attends all our meetings, and we're so proud of him.

So also I just wanted to mention that we will all try to answer your questions to the best of our ability. There may be questions that come up that we may not and we will make sure that -- make note of those so you can hand them in at the end so we can go and do some research and post those answers in the summary of the meeting that will be available.

So let's begin.

MS. BELTRAN: So we'll start on this side.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Okay, great.

MS. ROBERTS: Hi. Thanks, everybody, for being here. My name is Kirstin Roberts, I'm a preschool teacher at Brentano Elementary in Logan Square neighborhood teaching a blended classroom, which means a classroom of preschoolers who are enrolled in general education, as well as dedicated spots for children with Individualized Education Plans, so



a special education component.

So, you know, I'm also the chair of the Early Childhood Committee of the Chicago Teachers Union. So I want to make an invitation as well as ask a question, which is, I heard a lot of stakeholders mentioned, and I'm glad that there seems to be at least rhetorically a commitment towards collaboration. I didn't hear teachers and preschool teachers in particular mentioned as one of the stakeholders and partners that you'd like to collaborate with. And I'll tell you, we have a lot of insights into all the questions that you have up. We also have more questions, more issues we'd love to bring to the table and talk with you about. It's one of the things we did during the negotiations with the Board during the strike, which is why we now for the first time in the history of the Chicago Teachers Union have an article entirely devoted to ensuring the rights of our youngest learners, their teachers and their families, including the right for nap time. We shouldn't have had to fight for it, but we did.²³



So my question really is, I heard you say that we expanded pre-K to 24 -- about 24 percent, 2019/20. Fantastic. That almost makes up for all the spots we lost over the past several years when we went to website-based centralized registration. That is the biggest barrier to access in my experience. Families who do not speak English are having an extremely difficult time. All families, no matter what language you speak, have an extremely difficult time with this website. It is not transparent. It is difficult. We took a great system, which was going to your local school, forming relationships with teachers and administrators and getting our youngest learners and their families into the schools that way, we took that great system and we really ripped it apart with centralized registration.

So I was really curious to hear, you said, Leslie, thank you for saying that changes are coming to enrollment process now that we're moving to full day, we're adding a grade. That's the first time that I know of that happening in the Chicago Public Schools. We're



adding a grade for 4-year-olds, that's exciting.
How are we going to deal with registration when
we do that? How are we going to make access
equitable, especially for our black and brown



that we need to change around the application process.

We did do a study where we looked at our current application and enrollment process in hopes of informing the work that needs to happen as we change and enhance the system for enrollment.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: If I may also address the issue of the teachers. This is our first meeting, and we are a new Committee, and definitely I think that my partners in crime at the Board have been -- heard me say we have to hear from families and we have to hear from teachers. Those are very important stakeholders. This first meeting is -- was for the community because -- you know, including teachers as members of the communities. But in the future I anticipate that definitely we want to hear from you and, you know, what's working, what's not, as I'm sure also, you know, that Chicago Public Schools' division of Early Child also wants to. But that is very much at the center of my work as the Chair of this Committee.



MS. O' BANNER: Hi. Good afternoon. My



2nd grade you need to be like an E or F level for 2nd grade or I. Then you want to say how you going to keep the attainment for 2nd grade, you're not going to get the attainment. Then when they get to 3rd grade benchmark they're already off track because you're not coming to the school listening to what exactly we need and the help and support that we need.

I just tried to register my baby yesterday for Early Childhood because my great-grandbaby is going to go to pre-K, she's 3. When I went in there, and I know the system, the only option they gave me, they said I had to go to a FACE-based. I don't want her to go there. I want her to go to half-day Earle. So how come at an early stage of registration why didn't the option -- give me the option to say whether I want her to be in the CPS school or the day care? I don't believe in day cares on none of any children.

So I want someone to call me and talk to me. I don't think pre-K -- and I talked to Leslie several times, I don't think that pre-K is fair around the board from the north side to



the south side to the west side. It's not fair. You're doing expansion in communities, you're doing expansions in school. If you're doing an expansion and having a pre-K student go there, whether it's selective-enrollment like Miles Davis, you're doing a \$50,000 expansion there, that child can go to pre-K, but when that child gets to kindergarten that principal is not going to allow that child to stay at Miles Davis from kindergarten to 8th grade. That's not fair.

So I need to talk to someone because if we're not -- if our students is not on a level of reading, parent involvement, parent engagement is hard. I do the work. I volunteer with Parent University. I do everything I can. Parent engagement is hard, but you can't take it out on the child, you have to be there for those students that's in those schools. And if you all does not really listen all that right there you put up there, .9 7i 70M1here

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different stuff to make it look good for a meeting, but it's not actually happening in the schools. It's not happening, and I'm a witness to it and I'm seeing it. So I would just want you to be fair with your expansion, give everyone opportunity in the way that we're enrolled and we know it's been a problem.

My baby now is in 2nd grade, it's been a problem with registration with pre-K for the last three years. And your study keeps saying it's a problem, it's a glitch. You're not fixing it because no one -- you're trying to take a set of kids and put them in certain places, then you want to leave it open and say that you want to let this many to go to CPS. That's not fair. Parents should have the opportunity to say whether they want to go to a FACE-based or whether they want to go to CPS, and it's not happening.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Thank you for your -- you know, I don't know if you want to comment on that or, you know.

MS. McKINILY: As Ms. O'Banner said, we've had several conversations and she has been



with us a part of the process as we have been working out -- we have been working out the kinks to enhance our application and enrollment process. Although, we have made strides, we have made some adjustments, there is still some work to go and some things that we still need to think about, particularly around the point that you made around Miles Davis and being a magnet school and students not having the ability once they go to pre-K to remain at that site. Again, when I talked about making new enrollment policies that's some of the work that we will be addressing. We will be looking at how we can create enrollment policies within the District that allow for that choice for families but also align to current K-12 enrollment policies and structures.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Thank you for your feedback.

MS. CHEN: Hi. I'm Jieqi Chen, I'm a senior vice president of Erikson Institute. I come here just want to tell you we want to work with you, okay. Erikson Institute is a graduate school, and we are really focusing on birth to 8



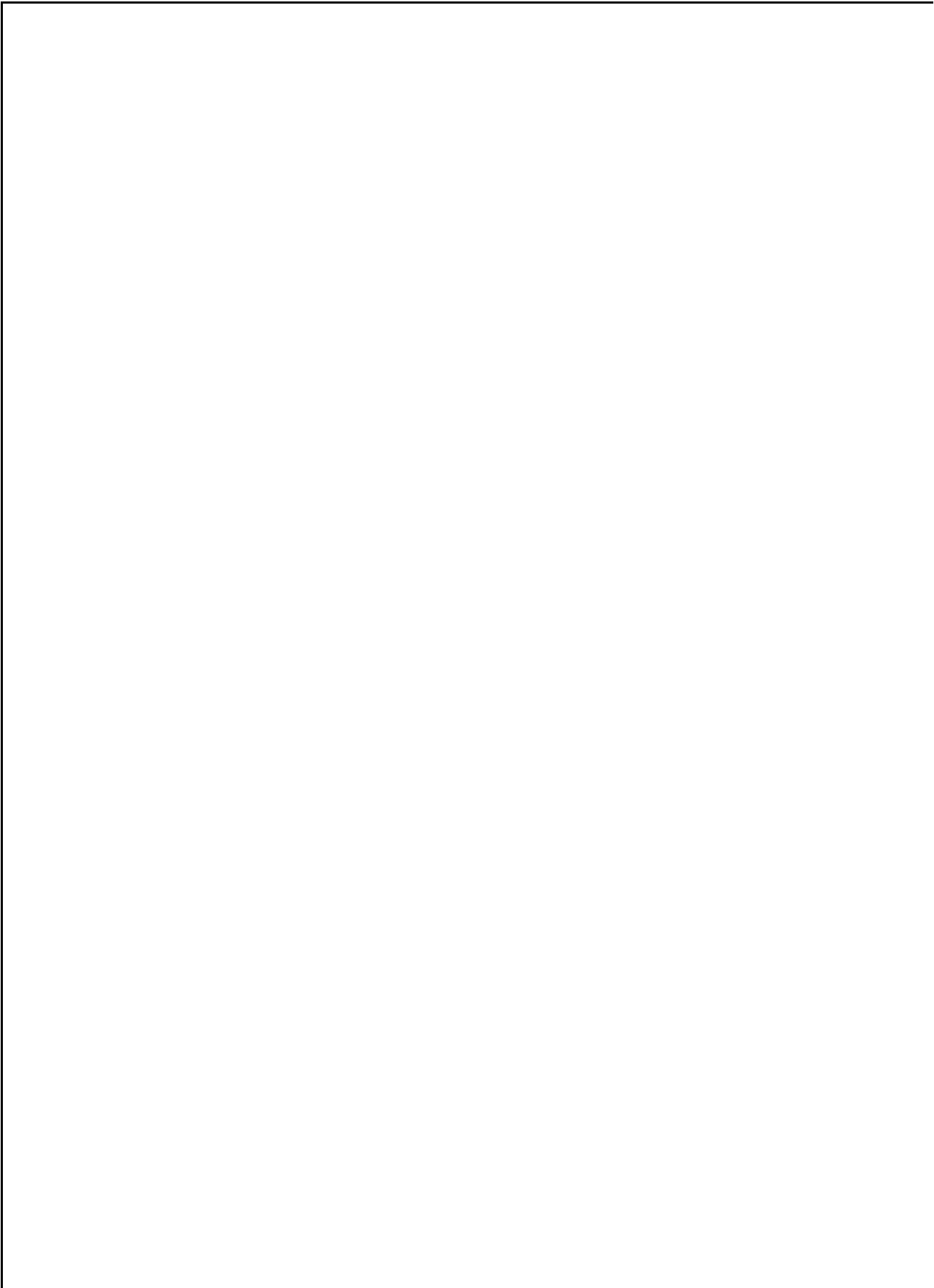
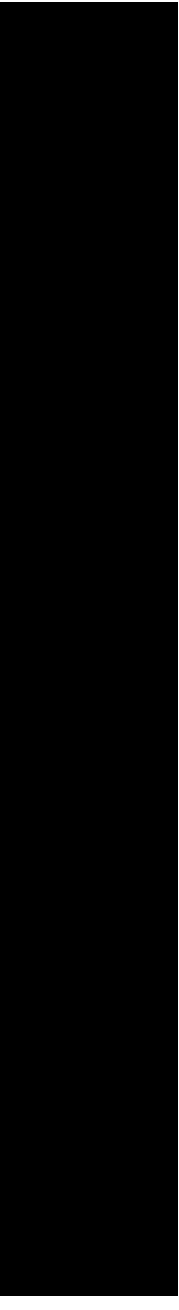
and a delegate of DFSS in providing preschool care and education.

I just wanted to talk a little bit about parent choice and Universal Pre-K options.

I have many families who choose to come to





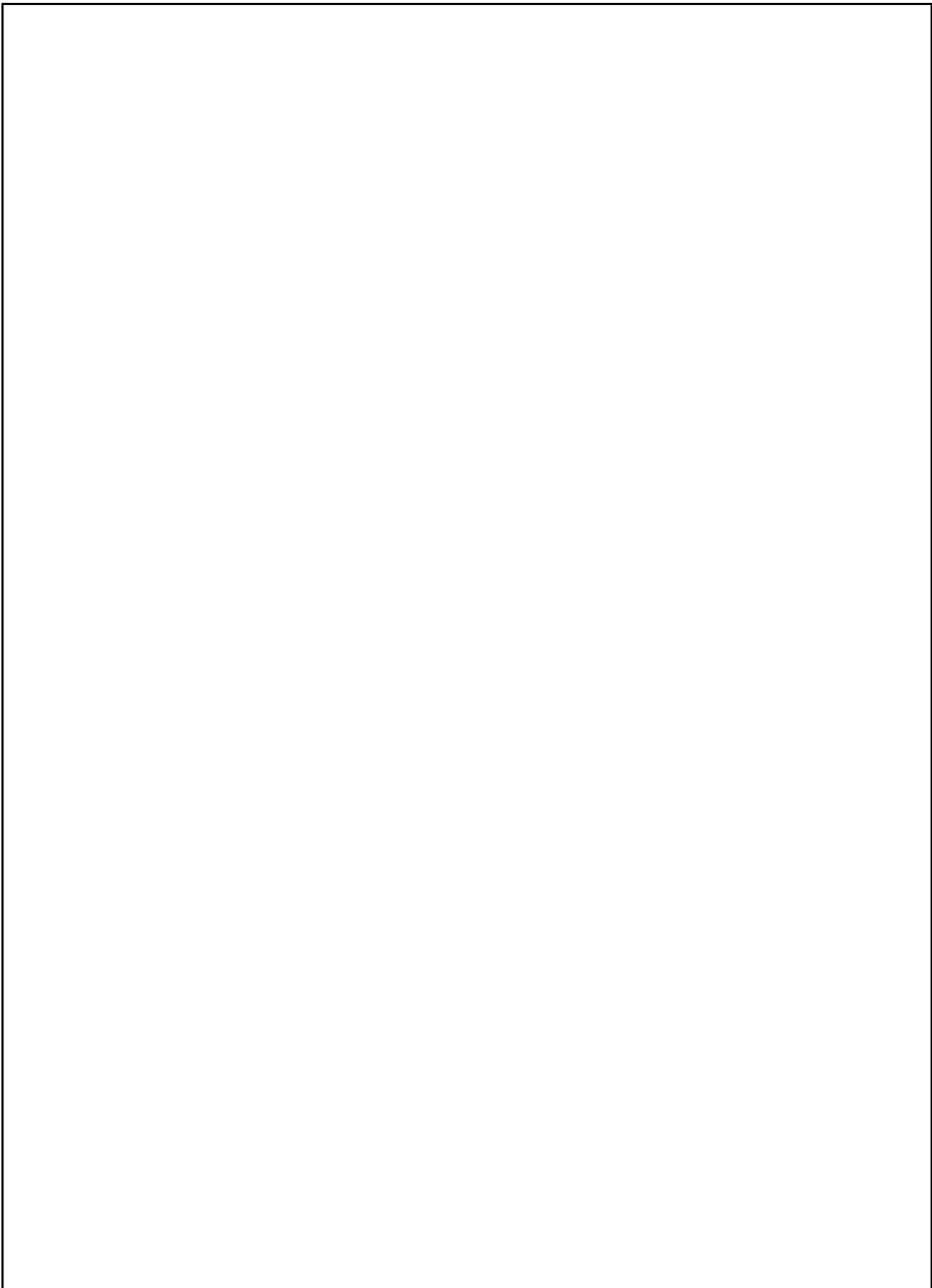


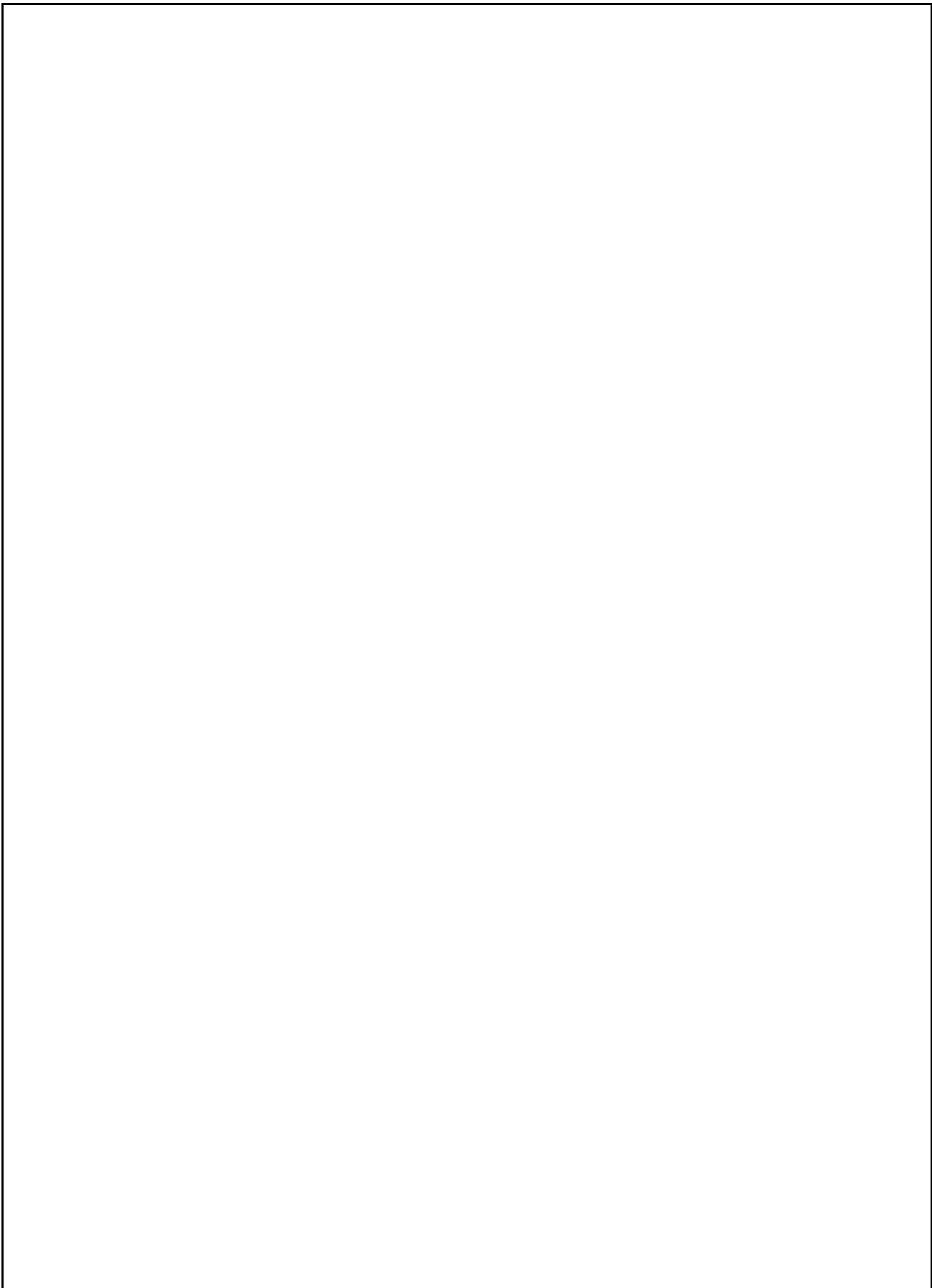
to CBOs in our community.

So I am hoping with the plans that you have expressed today that looking into these collective work that we are doing and collaborative work with our partners really meet the families and the communities where they are. Our communities in Chicago have a lot of quality of life plans already in place. Let's look into the quality of life plans our neighborhood has and how to really align the policies, the funding and the work that we are doing, the collective work to the parents and family needs. We have a big gap in our community, we have over 7,000 0 to 5 children in Little Village, so we have kids to enroll. But also we have a different practice in our families. So education is about registration in the CPS or CBOs or a home provider, but also meet the families where they are and provide services and access to information on education to their families. So that has been important for us.

Also, about the data. So this year working in collaboration with many of you, we have a lot of families (inaudible) until











because she was provided whole education and services at the age of 15 months.

I'm really standing here to make sure that this conversation around the understanding of what needs to happen starting at the age of 0, and what happens there is a direct impact on what that child and the amount of supports and services they're going to need when they get to CPS. Our 0 to 3, I'm sorry, are more important than my 4-year-old. My 4-year-old is great, but she got to you, CPS, and the way that she got to you because she was in an appropriate program that provided for the services that she needed.

I'm very concerned when I understand the city-wide assessment team that I went through stripped my daughter of all of her services. That was CPS that did that that. It wasn't El Hogar that provided my daughter all the supports and assisted me with getting her all of the supports that she needed.

So I'm very concerned as we're continuing to rollout Universal Pre-K in a



problem. We have a trust problem. You have families who don't trust CPS like that. I work in various capacities where I'm engaging parents and I'm trying to bring them into the system, but they are afraid, and rightfully so, they've seen some things. It's not all parents who have had a good experience with CPS, as well as the City of Chicago and needing to build trust.

As we're embarking on this new endeavor, and as Chicago is actually being utilized as guinea pigs because this is not going on -- this rollout of Universal Pre-K is only happening here in Chicago, it's happening in other parts of the State, and they're working out the kinks on people's babies. We need to really understand and have a real robust and honest conversation because the last time I checked our schools are set up to have Local School Councils. Local School Councils ain't nowhere but in the City of Chicago. Do we really understand what it is, the politics, the understanding of ecosystems, how people receive, you know, services in their back yards? It's a more in-depth conversation that's needed than

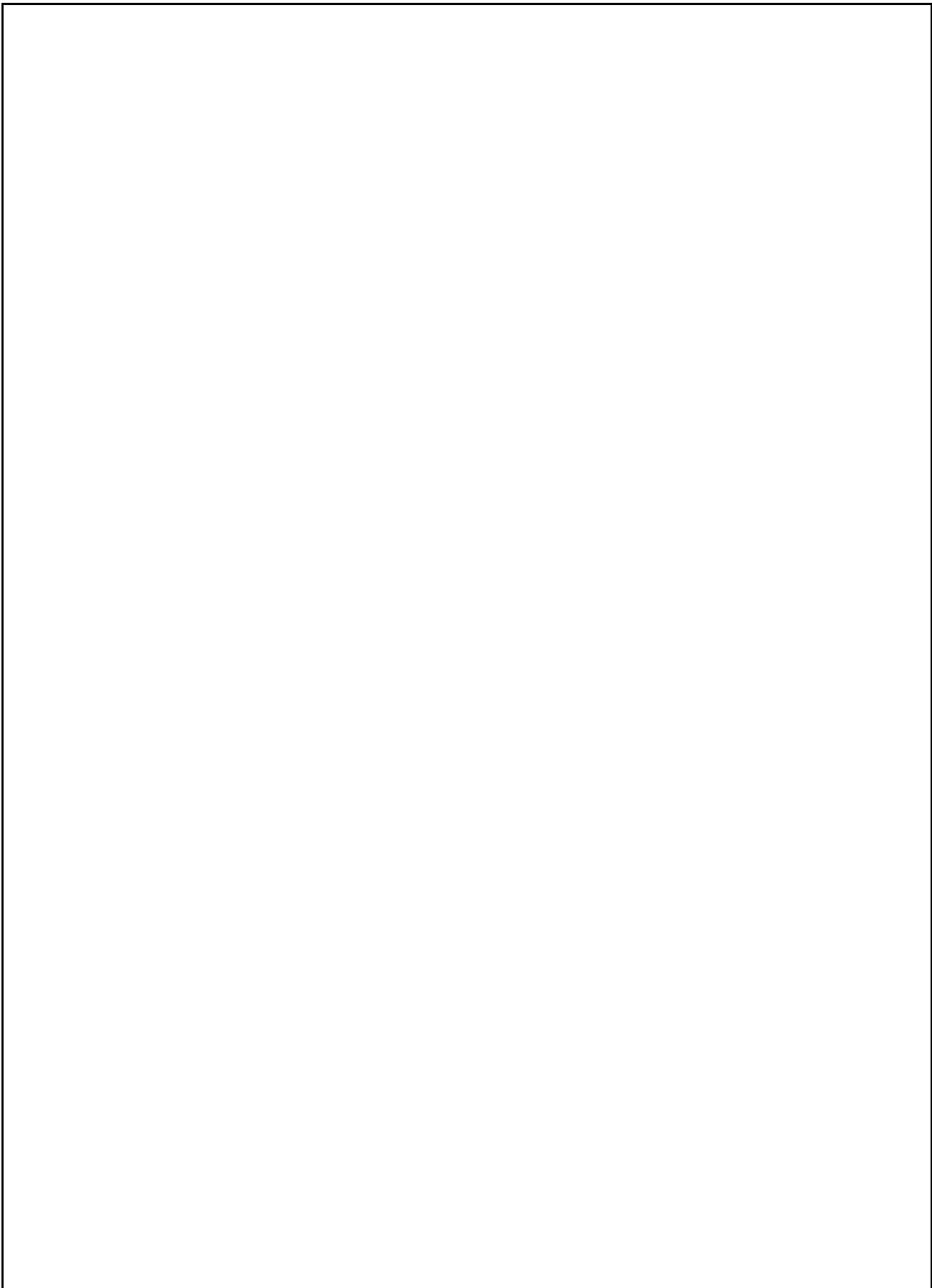


what's happening.

And I think that as policy makers and as, you know, you're making decisions about people's babies, engage us, engage us as parents. And I think that we have a lot of parents who have a lot to say, but we're not being engaged. I have been to many meetings with these people sitting right here and we're not getting the answers that we need. I was at another meeting with -- what's the gentleman's name who just stepped down? Your head of Early Childhood, Anthony Abello. And honestly, what I heard out of his mouth when he was at a Teach for America conference, I didn't really like it either. I don't feel like there's a true understanding of what's happening in people's back yards. What is it that I need to make me whole as a family so that my child can be whole and gets to you, CPS, in one piece? That conversation needs to take place.

And so my question is around the whole notion of transparency and having ongoing type of focus groups and putting it out there and making sure that it's out there and that what





that one of the things that we value most in our office is parent choice and what families want and how we, you know, build and expand the systems to allow for parent choice. We know that more engagement of parents needs to happen. There have been Think Tanks. We have done some focus groups. We know that we need to do more and we need to do this on an ongoing basis.

We also are looking into what it means to have more parent choice in the city, and it's something that we're, you know, committed to continuing to have a conversation around.

MS. ALEXANDER: Thank you for your passion. What I do want to say is to your point about transparency and engagement and, yes, we have had several conversations with many of you around the room, but a lot of those conversations have been about taking stock and where we currently are and where we're going next. So I think a lot of those conversations are still ongoing and we do need to leave room for that. But thank you very much for your passion.

STUDENT MEMBER TORRES: Good evening,



everyone. My name is Joshua Torres, I am the Honorary Student Board Member. And just to get straight to the point, my question is, how will CPS ensure that restorative justice practices are implemented in preschools District-wide to reform how misbehaving children are, you know, treated?

MS. McKINILY: One of the support structures that we have in places utilizing our Early Childhood specialists to work directly with teachers and also ensuring that we engage our social workers, school social workers, our SEL Department in that process to ensure that the work and the training that's happening for our preschool teachers is on par with diffusing some of the social/emotional concerns that are happening in classrooms.

So we're working with our SEL Department, our education specialists to ensure that there is a concise message around that.

MS. GARNER: Good evening, everyone. My name is Dana Garner, and I represent over 40 community-based organizations in the City of Chicago that provide early childhood services to



children and families. It's easier for me to start off with a small story that I've told before. And I'll say, Ms. Alexander, Ms. Chadwick and Ms. McKinily, there were -- about two years ago I was driving right around this time down the street and there were two girls, it was 7:30 in the morning and there was two girls walking down the street. What I think was oxymoronic about the two girls walking down the street were they had backpacks on. One was about 6, one was about 4. The 6-year-old was crying uncontrollably. Now, it was 7:15 in the morning. She was crying uncontrollably with a backpack holding her daughter's hand -- holding her sister's hand on their way to school. And I stopped -- I didn't stop, but I stopped in my mind like what could she be crying about at 7:15 in the morning? What did she see at 7:15 in the morning? How oxymoronic is it for somebody to be whaling the way she was whaling because you could hear her crying but going to school.

So being an early -- I was the executive director at the time, I was wondering is that child going to my program. And I felt





months? Because as community-based organizations we need to know how we can plan using the guidance of three strong powerful women to set us in the right path because again the ecosystem in Chicago has -- the Early Childhood ecosystem has been traumatized in the City of Chicago, that is a national fact. And what we want to do as Early Childhood educators and as community-based organizations is to restore it but do it with the children in mind.

Again, for the past 18 months I've been haunted by those two little girls wondering where they are. They are probably like 8 and 9 at this point in time. It was about two years ago.

So what's important to me as we talk about what is the vision, a true ambitious vision is the transparency that you all created having these engaging conversations, and I'm grateful for that. Allowing the Mayor's Office to create a team that works directly with community-based organizations and CPO. So I do say we're on the right track, I just think what we do need to know is at the end of the line





we move forward and to be patient with us, you know. This is a big challenge, a complex challenge and one that we need to get right. So thank you. Do you ladies, lovely ladies, want to add anything?

Okay. Just last two questions because we have to move on -- allow time for the public participation.

MS. SAURI: I came on this side because Beltran took the mic the last time I was there. And she's one of our graduates from Edwards.

So I am Judy Sauri, Principal of Edwards. This young lady here is on more boards than I thought I could be. So I'm right now the President of the Illinois Association for Multilingual Multicultural Education. I'm also the treasurer for the National Association for Bilingual Education and also working with many people here.

My question is regarding -- because this is no small matter. And my question has to be with what plans do you have to develop bilingual teachers and also special education bilingual teachers and special education



teachers generally?

When are you going to have university partners to work with paraprofessionals to allow them to do their required observation hours and student teaching in the schools where they work without losing their jobs having to have to go to other places?

What support is provided also for bilingual students?

What assessment tools are being developed to validate the learning and the teaching that's going on in Spanish in our bilingual classrooms?

And before I end I wanted to thank Leslie for stepping up because we have some hope with you still there. And, you know, this is something that touches me dearly and just with these community organizations we could be partnering. I had a waiting list of 200 kids after full enrollment, and I wonder where are they? Where are those 200 that were on my waiting list? And we are already are serving how many -- this is my wonderful head teacher here, Oriana Wilson. How many kids are we



servicing right now in preschool?

MS. WILSON: 165.

MS. SAURI: 165. In a building that I have fought for ten years to maintain because I'm also threatened to take that building away from me because I believe in Early Childhood and not all the principals do in Chicago. So we need to also have some staff development for those principals to understand that this is where they start and this is what they need.

So what are the plans for staff development and talent?

MS. McKINILY: So within CPS we have a teacher residency program that is housed through our Talent Office. And so that is a program that allows teacher assistants or other teachers with a degree that is other than Early Childhood an opportunity to get certified Fast Track and Early Childhood and still continue to do their course work and do some work inside of a CPS classroom.

MS. SAURI: I have seven right now. And I am sorry because I am paying. So I'm doing CPS a favor, but why am I being punished



because I'm doing them a favor? So at our Early Childhood we have three that are doing special ed right now, and I have four that are becoming bilingual teachers, and I have to pay part of that. So that's something that we have to talk to with Matt Lyons or whoever or Felicia Butts because that shouldn't be. My colleagues are not going to want to volunteer if they have to pay for it.



can't necessarily do all of their practicum experience in that particular job site. So one of the things that we were brainstorming for some of the student teachers in our scholarship program were things like, you know, if there is -- if they're in a preschool program but there's an infant/toddler class and they end their day, you know, at 2, could they then go and spend, you know, some more time in infant/toddler class? Or how do we work with directors for them to think about, you know, ways that we can do interesting and flexible scheduling? And does the student teaching experience need to be two hours a day across the semester or could you get it all done within a few days? So those are some of the conversation that we're continuing to have.

My understanding too is that last year the State also put some legislation into place to make sure that folks understood that you could do some of your student teaching within your current placement and be paid for that placement. So it's something that is allowable, it's just there's a lot of complexities about



making sure you get all those other experiences for that professional educator license.

MS. SAURI: I did my student teaching in my classroom 20 years ago, but I had working for us in the State and making sure that the universities were doing what they're supposed to do. We're giving a lot of money to National Louis, to Northeastern, and teacher assistants are losing their jobs because they have to do



there's efforts for bilingual recruitment. It's going to be you and 350 other school districts across the State that are looking for bilingual candidates. So the State has to become -- the City has to become very creative particularly in trying to encourage parents who speak other languages to, even though that's a long road, to consider going into the field of teaching because otherwise we are not going to dig ourselves out of this hole.

But one of the reasons why I wanted to



expectations are we communicating?

Going back to the issue of bilingual, Luisiana was just on the steering committee for the University of Chicago for a fabulous report about what great strides bilingual students are making. If we were to start that program even earlier, can you imagine what that would result in?



specified diagnosis, such as, Down Syndrome cerebral palsy or very low birth weight and premature kids, and I wonder why. And I think that we are maybe having other services coming in their home and we are not allowed because families get overwhelmed when so many people come.

So my question is, who can I talk to -- so because I'm on the LIC coordinator, Local Intervention Council, so we can partner and we can support families without overwhelming, without providing double services that are not necessary. So I need to know who to talk to. Thank you.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: That one is for you, all of you.

MS. ALEXANDER: So just to clarify we're talking about birth to 3, 3 to 5, when we're saying parents are declining EI services, birth to 3?

MS. PATRON: Birth to 3.

MS. ALEXANDER: So part of the beauty of working with community-based organizations is the fact that they do offer wraparound services.



So I think someone indicated, if it was not the principal, who said that we should be partnering with those community-based organizations. So I think that there's value in leadership wherever to have those conversations to say, hey, what services are you offering? I'm looking at someone who is an awesome family support worker who is sitting in the audience right now who probably could share some more information with you as well, but I think that that may be the gap and the disconnect.

You're right, sometimes our parents are oversaturated with services, but when we're talking about parents who are in least resource communities, part of the challenge is just survival. So I don't know what my child may be to the point that the parent may when she says she has three children who have IEPs who have been in special ed services, we need to meet parents where they are, as someone indicated, but that we need to take the initiatives to have conversations with some of our partners that are serving these families that show up at their door.



So I would say that that's a starting point. I know that our early Head Start services are awesome services. We have our FACE team here from CPS who have connections as well that could probably link those families to those services so that we can stop over-duplicating and basically stressing our families out. I hope that helps.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Well, thank you everyone for participating. We're going to move now into the public participation part of the meeting. And each speaker will have 2 minutes each to present their remarks. For members of the public who wish to submit written comments they can be submitted at the Committee meeting via e-mail at boeccc, which is the website that I forgot before, it's the Early Childhood, cps.edu or One Dearborn, Suite 950. Written comments will be accepted until 5 p.m. tomorrow, January 15, 2020.

So if there is -- do we have some people signed up for public participation?

Thank you. If you want to address the public and, of course, the panel, you can line



up. And the topics here are a little bit -- you will have 2 minutes and Adam and Susan Narrajos from the Board will be in charge, I believe, of tracking the time.

MS. OTTINET: My name is Mary Ottinet. I'm just looking for the list or where it's publicly advertised for these community meetings that are taking place in regard to the rollout of Universal Pre-K. I'd like to see where that list is, where it's written. I'd like to have early and often communications about it. So I'm looking for it. So please find it, post it, have a whole bunch of them. That's what I'm looking for.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Thank you.

MS. ROBERTS: Hi. Sorry to come up again. Kirstin Roberts, Chicago Teachers Union and preschool teacher in Chicago Public Schools.

I do really want to underline what people are saying about Early Childhood trauma. In this City the past few years of teaching, walking into my classroom have been children with much more severe disabilities, not misbehavior, trauma, trauma-induced behavioral



difficulties. They are not getting the kind of supports they need.





with their children if the school day for pre-K ends at 3:00 and we don't get off work until 5:30 or 6. We certainly have not seen any plans for that thus far, but it needs to be a part of the conversation.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Thank you.

Thank you.

Do we have anybody else for public comment?

MS. HALOW: I do have one.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Okay. Coming up.

MS. HALOW: Hi, everyone. My name is Tola Halow, I'm a parent, and I'm also a parliamentarian for (inaudible) Parent Policy Council. And I wanted to know what is the plan with all these proposals that look so good, awesome, you know, yummy, but sometimes implementation of these things, you know, is nothing to talk about? So I've seen things, you know, as a parent, I've seen most of these things that we say, oh, it looks good on paper, but when we see those things we don't see that kind of thing. Our kid doesn't experience



anything of those things.

So, I don't know, what is your plan in terms of implementation of these thing? What does it look like and how -- I know that you all tell us that you have monitors or inspections or something that goes around to monitor these programs, but I still want to know because as a parent I believe -- and I've been in the policy council for a while so there is an issue of a conflict of interest, which I wanted to know what is the plan to address that? Because I don't believe that the Parent Policy Council ** should be on DFSS. I believe it should be two different bodies, the governing body for DFSS as a grantee should stand independently and the parent policy should be independent as well. Putting them on each other is a conflict of interest because you cannot request for your funding and again evaluate and do everything and request your funding, I believe is not okay, it's violation. Thank you.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Thank you for your comment. And I believe that that is an



we will take note and we will follow up, you know, we will share with DFSS some of the -- everything that has transpired in this meeting, but that is a question that I don't know if any of the panelists feels that they can answer fully at this moment. So -- but we do -- we will take note of that and it will be part of the information that will be posted on the website. So thank you for bringing that concern to us.

Any other comments or questions? Yes.

MS. COFFMAN: My name is Valerie Coffman. My comment right now is as a parent of a former CPS student. You made a comment earlier about being patient with you as a new Committee. And while I understand that, my daughter doesn't. I can't say to her you need to stop growing because we're implementing this whole new program and we're working out the kinks so just stay for one more year until next year we can figure it out and then you'll be good.

So like this parent was saying, she has -- you know, she has needs. We all have





it becomes a lot more difficult as a task, which is already by -- you know, by nature.

So, yes, I really appreciate, and I think that we need to hold each other accountable, and in particular your voices are going to be foundational to make this effort to -- and I'm going to be very daring and speak on behalf of my -- our guests that we all are committed too. So thank you.

Any other? Okay. So thank you -- oh, one more question or, I mean, comment.

MS. GUTKANST: This actually is a question. Hello, everyone. My name is Norine Gutekanst, and I'm a staff member with the Chicago Teachers Union, and I'm a veteran primary teacher.

Something that you just said, Ms. Melendez, reminded me that it's not completely clear to me what -- if you could describe a little bit about what's the process of the Committee? What's the timeline? What are the goals? Will there be a report? How many meetings will be held? Because we talk -- we talk about accountability, so will there be



some kind of final recommendations that come out of these hearings, and how will they be communicated? And how will we be invited to report giving or to further -- to further meetings of the Committee? So if you could just speak a little bit about that.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Absolutely.

The first thing I need to clarify is that I am the Committee. It's just me. And, of course, I am very fortunate to have the support of the Chicago Board of Education staff and of my partners, you know, who are diligently working on behalf of Early Learning.

In terms of the purpose of the Committee, the goal of the Chicago Board of Education Committees, which were the brainchild of our President, Miguel del Valle, is to engage in activities like these, and there was one about Workforce Development that happened in December, there's one on the Whole Child that is happening at the end, is to engage communities and gather feedback about issues that are pertinent to our work as Board Members.

We will post everything -- the



proceedings and the questions and all the things that I hope you will write for us as well as, you know, the contributions that you have made so far, we will need to post on the site. They will be up in a couple of weeks, so we need to summarize and we can share them with our partners, but they will all be there, written comments, anything, will be up there.

And it is -- I think one of the main goals is to provide a forum for feedback and community engagement but also a way of informing our work as Board Members individually and collectively. And someone asked me yesterday about, you know, these different Committees, and they -- each one -- the Committee is one Board Member for the most part, there's one that has more than one, but we will be sharing this information. How? Aside from the posting



is -- we do have what I would say are -- you know, have clear goals. Some of them are very clear, others are emerging in the process.

Does that answer your question?

MS. GUTKANST: Yes.

BOARD MEMBER MELENDEZ: Thank you. So I think that it is now closing time so last call?

So I want to thank you again for your generous participation for your presence here and for making so clear, you know, both the opportunities that we have to change, grow and be better. And also, you know, highlighting with your comments, with your talk the complexities of this process. And with the complexities also is urgency and it's important because it pertains to young children and families with young children.

So thank you on my behalf and on behalf of the panelists and of the Board. And I want to ask you to complete your question sheets and submit them on the way out. If you would like to submit further written comment you have until tomorrow, is it? We can collect them tonight or



send them via e-mail at boeccc@cps.edu or bring them to the Board Office at One North Dearborn, Suite 950. Written comments will be accepted until 5 p.m. tomorrow.

So I also want to ask for a big round of applause for our guests and their generosity in taking time from their very, very busy schedule. These are big problems, and they're working hard at addressing them. And a big round of applause to each and every one of you who came tonight. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the meeting
adjourned at 7:26 p.m.)



