

BOARD OF EDUCATION
CITY OF CHICAGO
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
(Zoom)
held on
September 11, 2024

STENOGRAPHIC REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS
had in the above-entitled cause held virtually
via Zoom, commencing at 6:07 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

MS. MARY FAHEY-HUGHES, Special
Education Advisory Committee Chairwoman

ALSO PRESENT:

MR. JOSHUA LONG, Chief of the Office for
Students with Disabilities

18:08:24

Reported By: Karen Fatigato, CSR

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

MS. CHRISTINE PALMIERI

MR. FRANK LALLY

MS. DEANDREA FEDRICK

MS. NICOLE ABREU SHEPARD

MS. KIMBERLY WESTON DODD

MS. SANDRA HEIDT

MS. BARB COHEN

MS. TENESHA RAWLS (Virtually)



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(Whereupon, the Special
Education Advisory Committee
Meeting convened at
6:07 p.m.)

18:07:02
18:07:02
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18:08:04
18:08:09
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18:08:21
18:08:22

MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Welcome to the
Chicago Board of Education Special Education
Advisory Committee Meeting. Notice of this
meeting was posted on September 9th, 2024 or at
least 48 hours before the meeting at South Side
Occupational High -- Academy High School, the
Board Office at One North Dearborn, 42 West
Madison Lobby and on the WWW.CPSBOE.ORG website.
Today is September 11th, 2004 -- 2024. We are
holding this meeting in the South Side
Occupational Academy school auditorium or
gym.

I'm Mary Fahey Hughes. I'd also like
to acknowledge the Committee Members who are
present tonight: Nicole Abreu Shepard, Barb
Cohen is on her way, I believe, Dee Fedrick,
Sandra Heidt, Frank Lally, Christine Palmieri
and Kimberly Weston Dodd. Tenesha Rawls may be
joining us virtually.

I also want to recognize the Chief of



1 the Office for Students with Disabilities, 18:08:25
2 Joshua Long. And on behalf of the Chicago Board 18:08:27
3 of Education, we thank you for joining us this 18:08:31
4 evening. 18:08:34

5 The order of the meeting will be as 18:08:34
6 follows: Opening Remarks, Announcements, Public 18:08:35
7 Participation, Office for Students with 18:08:40
8 Disabilities Update, Committee Discussion and 18:08:45
9 Questions and Adjournment. 18:08:47

10 Before we begin, I'd like to welcome 18:08:50
11 Principal Jennifer Bollinger to say a few words. 18:08:52

12 PRINCIPAL BOLLINGER: Hi, everyone. 18:08:58
13 Good evening. I just want to take a minute to 18:09:01
14 welcome you all to South Side. Like she said, 18:09:04
15 my name is Jennifer Bollinger, and I'm the proud 18:09:06
16 principal of South Side. I was really happy to 18:09:09
17 hear that South Side would be hosting this 18:09:11
18 Committee because I know this work is so 18:09:13
19 relevant and so important to the students of 18:09:15
20 CPS, and our work that we do here really 18:09:17
21 supports all that as well. 18:09:19

22 So again, I just want to take a moment, 18:09:21
23 I wanted to introduce you to our school 18:09:23
24 community since you're all in our space. So we 18:09:25



1 are a transition center. Our students are 18 to 18:09:28
2 22. We really do a lot of hands-on 18:09:31
3 community-based learning experiences. We have a 18:09:34
4 variety of classroom learning labs. We really, 18:09:36
5 really are focusing on independent learning 18:09:39
6 skills, work readiness skills, getting students 18:09:42
7 out in the community as much as we possibly 18:09:44
8 can. Our students are quickly approaching 18:09:46
9 their exit from CPS and we take that very 18:09:48
10 seriously. 18:09:51

11 We focus on the individual. We really 18:09:52
12 provide detailed scheduling that supports them 18:09:54
13 and their goals and their IEPs. So there is an 18:09:56
14 individual focus here as well as students move 18:09:59
15 through those labs. 18:10:02

16 Some examples of those labs are, you 18:10:03
17 know, we have a grocery store so students can 18:10:05
18 learn all the skills of not only working in that 18:10:07
19 type of environment but also being a customer 18:10:11
20 and what all the skills that go into that. We 18:10:13
21 are a performing arts class, right, so there our 18:10:15
22 students learn how to express themselves and 18:10:17
23 speak up for themselves and it's really special 18:10:20
24 to see that as they come in and they develop 18:10:22



1 those skills. We have a carpentry lab, a 18:10:25
2 culinary lab. We have all these really hands-on 18:10:27
3 experiences that we cultivated in the school. 18:10:30

4 We also go out weekly for 18:10:33
5 community-based instruction trips. Like I said, 18:10:35
6 our focus is really the community. We know the 18:10:37
7 community will be so important to our students 18:10:39
8 upon graduation so we really try to tie all that 18:10:42
9 together. We also offer work-based learning 18:10:46
10 experiences at our location on 27th and 18:10:46
11 Dearborn. So we have right now 17 community 18:10:48
12 partner sites that host our students three days 18:10:52
13 a week for the entire year. 18:10:53

14 Our students go out into the community, 18:10:54
15 they take CTA. So all the skills that go with 18:10:56
16 that, learning how to navigate the different 18:11:01
17 routes, downloading apps, looking at bus times. 18:11:01
18 I mean, it's pretty amazing to see it, getting 18:11:03
19 in their uniform, making sure they have 18:11:06
20 everything before they go out to work for the 18:11:08
21 day. They go off site, they spend their day 18:11:10
22 usually working with a mentor. The teacher goes 18:11:12
23 them or they might be working independently on 18:11:15
24 their own. So again, that individual piece is 18:11:18



1 always at the forefront of what we do. 18:11:20

2 We do a ton of wraparound services, 18:11:23
3 planning for transition, post-secondary 18:11:25
4 planning. We have a lot of partnerships with 18:11:27
5 adult service agencies, the Chicago Park 18:11:28
6 District, Special Olympics. You name it, we try 18:11:30
7 to create a relationship with it. And I'm 18:11:33
8 saying all this because I really do want to 18:11:35
9 highlight that I want South Side to be a 18:11:37
10 resource for anyone who needs a resource. We 18:11:39
11 have a depth of knowledge in the building with 18:11:41
12 all our teachers, our case managers, our 18:11:43
13 counselors. And, you know, I know we provide 18:11:46
14 excellent services for students. 18:11:49

15 So I would encourage anyone who, you 18:11:51
16 know, had a question about our program, who 18:11:53
17 needed additional resources specifically around 18:11:54
18 transition, they can call us. Follow us on 18:11:57
19 social media. Check out our website, there's a 18:11:59
20 ton of videos, there's examples, there's 18:11:59
21 pictures, there's information, but those social 18:12:03
22 media handles too really are going to -- this 18:12:04
23 year will reflect our program and everything 18:12:07
24 we're doing. All that to say is we're a 18:12:09



1 resource for anyone. Please reach out if you 18:12:12
2 need us. 18:12:14

3 I do have to share some safety points 18:12:15
4 and a few notes. So please note that the 18:12:17
5 primary entrance and exit to this room is at the 18:12:20
6 front of the room to your left. And if you are 18:12:23
7 leaving the room, please walk along the 18:12:26
8 perimeter to the exit. Please do not walk 18:12:28
9 across the front of the room. Restrooms are 18:12:30
10 located outside of the door you went through 18:12:32
11 near the desk where you checked in at. During 18:12:35
12 the meeting we ask that you keep all aisles and 18:12:37
13 exits clear. And if you need any assistance 18:12:40
14 during the meeting, please wave the attention of 18:12:42
15 one of our security officers. 18:12:45

16 At this time I will turn it over to our 18:12:47
17 Chairperson, Mary Fahey Hughes, to continue with 18:12:48
18 the meeting agenda. Thank you. 18:12:51

19 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you. 18:12:53

20 I just want to mention that my son 18:12:53
21 Aidan graduated from here and he had a great 18:12:57
22 experience. I think the specialty schools in 18:13:00
23 CPS should be a model for specialty schools or 18:13:05
24 transition programs across the country. 18:13:12



1 So having said that, I'll continue. 18:13:17
2 The next Special Education Advisory Committee 18:13:21
3 Meeting is scheduled at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, 18:13:23
4 November 13th, 2024 at Vaughn Occupational High 18:13:26
5 School at 4355 North Lindor Avenue, Chicago, 18:13:31
6 Illinois. You can find upcoming meeting 18:13:36
7 information at WWW.CPSBOE.ORG on the Committee's 18:13:38
8 tab. We also encourage you to e-mail 18:13:44
9 BOESEAC@CPS.EDU with any comments or 18:13:47
10 suggestions. 18:13:54
11 So let us now proceed with public 18:13:57
12 participation. As a reminder, union 18:13:59
13 representatives are allowed 10 minutes to speak 18:14:03
14 before public participation and elected 18:14:05
15 officials will speak after the conclusion of 18:14:08
16 public participation. 18:14:10
17 The rules of public participation are 18:14:11
18 as follows: Members of the public who 18:14:13
19 registered to speak were given the option to 18:14:15
20 attend in person or via an electronic format. 18:14:18
21 Those who preferred to attend via an electronic 18:14:21
22 format were given information to access this 18:14:25
23 meeting by dialing a number and using their 18:14:27
24 phone. We did this so that speakers with 18:14:29



1 limited or no access to the Internet or who may 18:14:32
2 have a weak Internet connection could still 18:14:35
3 participate using their phones. 18:14:38

4 For the record, advance registration to 18:14:40
5 speak at the Special Education Advisory 18:14:41
6 Committee Meeting began on Monday, September 18:14:44
7 9th, 2024 at 10:30 a.m. and closed on Tuesday, 18:14:46
8 September 10th, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. or until five 18:14:50
9 slots for speakers and a hundred slots for 18:14:55
10 observers filled, whichever occurred first. 18:14:58
11 Individuals who registered to speak will have 3 18:15:01
12 minutes to comment, and I will call speakers in 18:15:04
13 the order of registration. 18:15:06

14 Members of the public may submit 18:15:08
15 written comments via the Written Comments Form 18:15:10
16 on the Board's website at WWW.CPSBOE.ORG or 18:15:13
17 mail your comments to One North Dearborn, suite 18:15:20
18 950, by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, September 12th, 18:15:24
19 2024. 18:15:27

20 We will now move on to the registered 18:15:28
21 speakers' list. There -- we have four public 18:15:29
22 participants registered to speak. I will call 18:15:34
23 your name and number when it's your turn to 18:15:37
24 speak. For speakers joining us virtually, to 18:15:40



1 unmute, please press star 6. Once you hear your 18:15:43
2 name, please state your name for the record, 18:15:50
3 then the 3-minute timer will start. Once the 18:15:51
4 3-minute time -- 3 minutes are over proceed to 18:15:55
5 continue -- to conclude your remarks to allow 18:15:59
6 for the next speaker to begin. 18:16:01
7 Thank you. 18:16:03
8 We are ready to call the registered 18:16:04
9 speakers from the speakers' list. Speaker 18:16:05
10 number 1 is Alicia Wilcoxson Davis, who is not 18:16:08
11 here. 18:16:18
12 All right. So then we have next 18:16:18
13 speaker number 2 is Tim Gleason. 18:16:20
14 All right. Then speaker number 3 is 18:16:27
15 Annette Applebee. 18:16:31
16 And then speaker number 4 is Mary 18:16:36
17 Williams, who has joined virtually. Please 18:16:39
18 press star 6 to unmute. Ms. Williams, please 18:16:44
19 press star 6. 18:16:56
20 MS. WILLIAMS: Hi. Can you hear me? 18:16:57
21 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Yes. 18:16:58
22 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay, excellent. 18:17:01
23 All right. Hi, I'm special education 18:17:03
24 teacher, I teach at Dunn Elementary. I am also 18:17:06



1 the parent of two CPS children, but I'm coming 18:17:10
2 today mostly as a special education teacher 18:17:15
3 because I have concerns about how the city-wide 18:17:17
4 budget cuts for special education teachers 18:17:22
5 affecting students receiving services in the 18:17:26
6 resource pullout setting, in the separate 18:17:32
7 setting in their IEPs. 18:17:37

8 So when special education teacher 18:17:40
9 positions were cut District-wide, I noticed that 18:17:41
10 a lot of teachers were complaining, myself 18:17:43
11 included, about their schedules being loaded up 18:17:46
12 with extra classes. For example, we lost a 18:17:51
13 position at my school, and I went from teaching 18:17:54
14 four classes to seven classes this year. I 18:18:00
15 think my principal tried her best to create a 18:18:05
16 schedule that would cover the minutes and in 18:18:08
17 doing so I ended up with an increased number of 18:18:12
18 classes that I was expected to teach. Hence, 18:18:15
19 I'm being expected to teach multiple subjects at 18:18:19
20 the same time. I think this is happening across 18:18:23
21 the District based on what I'm hearing. 18:18:27

22 So I'd like to talk about the results 18:18:31
23 of those changes. Planning, preparation and 18:18:33
24 grading for seven subjects is not really 18:18:37



1 possible to complete during the workday. This 18:18:39
2 is not only a labor issue, but it makes it 18:18:42
3 impossible for me to provide high-quality 18:18:46
4 instruction, interventions and exposure to 18:18:49
5 grade-level material all within a single period. 18:18:53
6 I have 36 IEP goals that I am expected this year 18:18:58
7 to give instruction for, progress monitor and 18:19:06
8 assess, as well as communicating to parents the 18:19:08
9 progress on these IEP goals. 18:19:11

10 Furthermore, for example, I have a 18:19:14
11 60-minute block where I'm expected to teach two 18:19:20
12 subjects at the same time. If I have a 18:19:23
13 60-minute block and I'm teaching math and social 18:19:27
14 studies, essentially those students are only 18:19:30
15 getting 30 minutes of instruction with their 18:19:32
16 special education teacher. I have another 18:19:34
17 period where I'm teaching three classes at the 18:19:37
18 same time, they are only getting 20 minutes of 18:19:40
19 instruction. I've heard of other teachers 18:19:43
20 having to teach four classes at the same time. 18:19:45
21 Even in a very well-managed classroom, this is 18:19:49
22 resulting in all off-task behaviors and loss of 18:19:52
23 learning. 18:19:55

24 So when resource special education 18:19:55



1 teachers are expected to teach multiple subjects 18:19:57
2 at the same time it is not possible and our 18:19:59
3 students are not getting their legally required 18:20:02
4 minutes. 18:20:04
5 Thank you for your time. 18:20:06
6 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you for 18:20:08
7 your comments. 18:20:10
8 All right. We have no elected 18:20:14
9 officials registered to speak, so this concludes 18:20:17
10 public participation. 18:20:20
11 We will now proceed with an update from 18:20:24
12 Chief Joshua Long from the Office for Students 18:20:26
13 with Disabilities. 18:20:33
14 CHIEF LONG: Hi, everybody. Good to 18:20:33
15 see you all today. 18:20:35
16 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Good to see you. 18:20:36
17 CHIEF LONG: It's very nice to be 18:20:38
18 standing in the gym at South Side Occupational 18:20:40
19 Academy, loved hearing from Principal Bollinger 18:20:43
20 and then looking around at just all the spaces 18:20:45
21 and feel very at home here. I was here for 18:20:48
22 about 14 years and very happy to be here, but 18:20:51
23 also really excited to talk to you because we 18:20:54
24 have had a good start to the school year. 18:20:57



1 Go to the next slide, please. 18:21:00

2 What you're seeing up here is a picture 18:21:02

3 of our new logo. We know that we work together 18:21:04

4 as a committee to come up with a new name, which 18:21:08

5 I really appreciate that and worked with the 18:21:11

6 community. We did come up with a new logo. And 18:21:13

7 looking at that what you'll see is that we're 18:21:16

8 centered on the individuals that we serve. The 18:21:19

9 different colors that are represented in the O 18:21:22

10 our a representation of the diversity of our 18:21:25

11 students. And then the through lines through 18:21:28

12 the S and the D are the forward movement of our 18:21:30

13 department and our aspirations to continue to do 18:21:34

14 our best for our students with disabilities. 18:21:37

15 And so you know everything has purpose and just 18:21:39

16 as we move forward it's something that we're 18:21:42

17 definitely rooted in. 18:21:45

18 Next slide, please. 18:21:46

19 You'll all be really happy to hear one 18:21:49

20 of the next things that you had provided me with 18:21:52

21 some feedback on was creating a Parent 18:21:54

22 Satisfaction Survey. And as we really started 18:21:57

23 building this out what we realized is that, yes, 18:21:59

24 we wanted the voices of our parents and we 18:22:01



1 wanted a place for our parents to be able to 18:22:04
2 give us feedback, but we also know that there's 18:22:07
3 feedback to be given from a lot of people. And 18:22:09
4 so we wanted to really increase the 18:22:12
5 functionality of that survey and provide a space 18:22:14
6 for principals, for school staff, for Network 18:22:16
7 and Central Office leaders in addition to 18:22:20
8 community members to provide us feedback. 18:22:23
9 And so the survey is completed and is 18:22:25
10 live and will stay open forever. And the 18:22:28
11 intention is that we will share this, it's going 18:22:32
12 to be added to -- it's been directed and is 18:22:34
13 being done where all OSD staff will have this in 18:22:37
14 their signature line. We also will share this 18:22:41
15 at the end of every OSD presentation. This will 18:22:44
16 be shared with case managers and also will be 18:22:47
17 shared with -- on all of our web -- you know, 18:22:50
18 our different websites. Really we're just 18:22:54
19 trying to get it out there and to make sure that 18:22:56
20 everyone has access to this and we can gather 18:22:58
21 the feedback that we certainly want and 18:23:02
22 obviously need. 18:23:04
23 Next slide, please. 18:23:08
24 You'll see a familiar face there. This 18:23:09



1 was our kickoff event. We had an amazing event. 18:23:12
2 Really the intention was to bring our entire 18:23:15
3 staff together. We have 1900 plus staff, and we 18:23:18
4 really wanted a space where we could all come 18:23:22
5 together and just really, you know, talk about 18:23:25
6 the name, talk about what we were doing as an 18:23:27
7 office and really be able to be in a space 18:23:29
8 together. And we had lunch, it was a great 18:23:32
9 meeting. And we had speakers, so Pedro came, 18:23:35
10 CEO Martinez, CEO Chkoumbova, Board Member Mary 18:23:39
11 Fahey Hughes came. We also had our partner over 18:23:44
12 at ISBE, Laura Bodiker also came. Our 18:23:47
13 participants, our team members were able to hear 18:23:51
14 from the different directors of our seven 18:23:53
15 departments who also provided an overview of 18:23:55
16 what they do on behalf of students with 18:23:57
17 disabilities. And really the intention was just 18:24:00
18 to outline who we are as an office and, you 18:24:01
19 know, what we're going to be doing moving 18:24:04
20 forward. And so these are just a few pictures 18:24:06
21 from that. 18:24:08
22 One thing that we talked about during 18:24:10
23 the kickoff event was to really introduce for 18:24:13
24 those who were not familiar with the framework 18:24:16



1 of rightful presence. And, you know, as a 18:24:19
2 Committee we have talked, you've heard me talk 18:24:22
3 about it, I've heard you talk about it, you 18:24:25
4 know, we know that there are a large number of 18:24:28
5 students being identified with disabilities. We 18:24:29
6 know that there are a large number of students 18:24:31
7 being educated and recommended for education in 18:24:34
8 a cluster setting, which is our most restrictive 18:24:36
9 setting or one of our most restrictive settings 18:24:39
10 within the schools. 18:24:42
11 We also know that, you know, students 18:24:43
12 are being educated in different ways across 18:24:46
13 different schools. And, you know, with some 18:24:52
14 schools that I visited, you know, there was some 18:24:54
15 schools where they did a lot of services for 18:24:57
16 students in the gen ed environment and a lot of 18:24:59
17 services in a separate environment, so just 18:25:02
18 there's inconsistencies. And so what we started 18:25:04
19 thinking about was really looking at these 18:25:07
20 numbers and thinking what can we do to really 18:25:09
21 move Chicago Public Schools forward in the way 18:25:12
22 that they service students with disabilities? 18:25:14
23 And where we landed was really focusing on the 18:25:16
24 framework of rightful presence. 18:25:19



1 And if you don't know what this is, 18:25:21
2 it's an equity-based justice-centered framework 18:25:23
3 on behalf of students with disabilities that 18:25:26
4 really focuses on, you know, something where if 18:25:28
5 we think about typical practices of inclusion 18:25:32
6 are something that we could say is kind of like 18:25:38
7 a guest host dynamic, and the best way to 18:25:40
8 describe this is, you know, we all have people 18:25:43
9 come over to our house and we know what the 18:25:45
10 rules of our house are and we know when we have 18:25:47
11 guests come and sometimes the guests break those 18:25:50
12 rules and we definitely notice when those guests 18:25:53
13 leave and we've all been there. 18:25:55

14 And what we want to acknowledge is, you 18:25:57
15 know, when we think about that guest host 18:26:00
16 dynamic for students with disabilities being 18:26:02
17 included and being educated in their least 18:26:05
18 restrictive environment, often what happens is 18:26:07
19 the rules are already predetermined for them to 18:26:09
20 participate in a general education environment. 18:26:12
21 And so when we think about rightful presence, 18:26:14
22 rightful presence moves beyond traditional 18:26:18
23 systems of inclusion and challenges one to start 18:26:21
24 thinking about the notion that students with 18:26:24



1 disabilities actually have a right to be in that 18:26:25
2 environment. They have a right to be educated 18:26:28
3 with their gen ed peers and they actually belong 18:26:32
4 in those environments. 18:26:35

5 And so as we continue to move forward 18:26:36
6 you'll hear me talk more about this, and I'll 18:26:38
7 have more examples about how our strategic goals 18:26:41
8 are aligned to that within the Office for 18:26:44
9 Students with Disabilities. But if that's a new 18:26:46
10 concept for you, I certainly include you to -- 18:26:49
11 or encourage you to Google that and there's some 18:26:51
12 great videos out there on that too. 18:26:54

13 A few updates I'd like to share with 18:26:57
14 everybody. As we do every year our procedural 18:26:59
15 manual is live. And, you know, just looking at 18:27:03
16 some of our changes that we did this year, we 18:27:05
17 really worked to think about, you know, some of 18:27:07
18 the things that we were hearing from our 18:27:11
19 community that was raising questions. And one 18:27:12
20 thing that I had personally heard a lot about 18:27:14
21 since I've been here in January is least 18:27:17
22 restrictive environment and just different 18:27:19
23 service delivery models within schools. And so 18:27:22
24 as a team we took a look at that section within 18:27:25



1 the procedural manual, tried to add further 18:27:27
2 description within those different models. 18:27:30

3 We also added details on specialty high 18:27:33
4 schools and transition centers. We increased 18:27:35
5 the information that we had about 18:27:37
6 paraprofessionals and also added additional 18:27:38
7 information about PUNS and DRS. 18:27:43

8 Here's a few pictures on the next slide 18:27:45
9 from our -- my school visits from the beginning 18:27:48
10 of the year. I had the pleasure of going to 15 18:27:50
11 different schools. I went to a lot of specialty 18:27:53
12 schools but then also spent some time in some 18:27:55
13 neighborhood schools too. And, you know, here's 18:27:59
14 just some different photos, but it was amazing. 18:28:00
15 And what I was so impressed with, you know, as a 18:28:03
16 principal I think a measure of success for those 18:28:06
17 first few days of school is a quiet building and 18:28:08
18 having students go to where they're supposed to 18:28:12
19 be and also the floors looking shiny. It does 18:28:14
20 change once they start putting salt on the 18:28:18
21 concrete, but until then the floors look good. 18:28:20
22 And I can tell you that that's what I saw over 18:28:22
23 at our buildings, well-organized, students were 18:28:24
24 engaged, educators were happy to be there and, 18:28:27



1 of course, I got to interact with a lot of 18:28:30
2 amazing students. I was often one of the last 18:28:31
3 ones to leave the room. I don't get to be 18:28:35
4 around a lot of student in my job so I'm really, 18:28:36
5 really happy to be around them when I go out for 18:28:36
6 the visits. 18:28:38
7 I wanted to also provide some updates, 18:28:39
8 I know we had been talking about the cluster 18:28:42
9 indicator, which is still in motion, but there's 18:28:45
10 some other things that we had already been 18:28:48
11 working on that I'm really happy to announce. 18:28:50
12 And one that I can tell you that I'm really 18:28:53
13 happy to be standing in this space right now at 18:28:56
14 South Side Occupational Academy because one 18:29:00
15 thing that we had -- that we're aware of as when 18:29:03
16 I was principal is that a lot of our families 18:29:05
17 didn't really know about PUNS. And we all know 18:29:09
18 that the State of Illinois is much less than 18:29:11
19 perfect when it comes to funding for programs 18:29:15
20 for adults with disabilities. And one thing 18:29:17
21 that would happen is while we worked really hard 18:29:21
22 to get the word out on PUNS, we were constantly 18:29:24
23 faced with a large part of our population of 18:29:27
24 parents who did not know about the PUNS 18:29:30



1 application. So one of the first things that I 18:29:32
2 said was once I moved on to being able to be in 18:29:34
3 the role of chief and actually influence what 18:29:38
4 was going into the IEP and what was getting 18:29:40
5 developed was that we were going to build out a 18:29:43
6 section on PUNS within the IEP. And so I'm 18:29:45
7 really happy to be standing here today to say 18:29:48
8 that it is scheduled for development -- for 18:29:50
9 release. It's been developed. There will be 18:29:52
10 questions. It will be within the IEP. And what 18:29:54
11 this will do is create the opportunity for 18:29:56
12 families to have a discussion or case managers 18:29:58
13 to talk about this. You know, if you're not 18:30:01
14 aware, when you do the PUNS application you do 18:30:04
15 have to renew it annually, and we often say do 18:30:06
16 that on the birthday. Well, now you'll also 18:30:09
17 have an annual review to talk about that PUNS 18:30:13
18 application too. 18:30:15

19 And we all know, for those of us who 18:30:16
20 are familiar, that while it is not the only 18:30:19
21 determiner of when your name gets pulled off the 18:30:21
22 PUNS list, the amount of time that you've been 18:30:25
23 on the PUNS list is one of those factors. And 18:30:27
24 so now we can make sure that across the entire 18:30:29



1 city of Chicago for all of our students with 18:30:32
2 disabilities, you know, when the IEP is written 18:30:34
3 we can make sure that we're having that 18:30:37
4 conversation as early as that first IEP, which 18:30:39
5 happens sometimes before the age of 3. So we're 18:30:42
6 really excited about that. 18:30:44

7 Another thing that we're doing and that 18:30:46
8 we've been working on is follow-up letters on 18:30:47
9 our placement. One thing that happens is, you 18:30:50
10 know, people are -- they move, people are 18:30:53
11 unhappy with placement or people opt out of 18:30:55
12 placement. But we really didn't have a legal 18:30:57
13 way to continue to correspond with our families 18:31:00
14 to make sure that they knew what their rights 18:31:02
15 were for when they were ready to come back or 18:31:05
16 the way that they would indicate to us that they 18:31:07
17 were not going to be continuing with Chicago 18:31:10
18 Public Schools. So this is something that we've 18:31:12
19 been working on and that we'll also be rolling 18:31:13
20 out. 18:31:17

21 Just a couple of notes about staffing. 18:31:17
22 We do -- I wanted to focus on cluster 18:31:19
23 classrooms. We have talked about this but just 18:31:23
24 so everybody is aware we have up to 13 students 18:31:25



1 in each class. There is one special education 18:31:27
2 teacher. We start off with two 18:31:30
3 paraprofessionals and there may be additional 18:31:32
4 paraprofessionals based on student need. 18:31:35

5 In terms of enrollment, as I mentioned 18:31:41
6 just a few minutes ago, we are continuing to see 18:31:43
7 a rise in students who are recommended for 18:31:45
8 placement in cluster. And as we move forward 18:31:47
9 this year across the months of October and 18:31:51
10 December -- I'm sorry, October and November, our 18:31:54
11 District representatives and our special 18:31:57
12 education administrators will be working with 18:31:59
13 school teams and visiting all schools with 18:32:01
14 cluster programs and observing all cluster 18:32:05
15 classrooms to provide support to answer 18:32:08
16 questions, you know, to help the teachers in 18:32:10
17 identifying, you know, any strategies that they 18:32:13
18 need. But that is a level of support that we 18:32:16
19 will be providing, which is new coming out of 18:32:19
20 our office. 18:32:21

21 Spending just a few minutes talking 18:32:22
22 about least restrictive environment. You know, 18:32:25
23 one bit of feedback that I had after the kickoff 18:32:28
24 meeting, and this is -- I had a lot of feedback, 18:32:31



1 but one thing that someone said was, well, you 18:32:34
2 told us about there's a big increase in students 18:32:37
3 with disabilities and, you know, you told us 18:32:41
4 that there's students being recommended for more 18:32:42
5 restrictive settings, you know, what does that 18:32:44
6 mean? And I said, well, what I said was we're 18:32:46
7 noticing this data and it makes us wonder, but 18:32:49
8 there is no space where we're saying I want you 18:32:52
9 to identify less students or I want you to 18:32:54
10 identify less students who need a cluster 18:32:56
11 setting. What we want to make sure is that 18:32:58
12 there are consistent practices happening across 18:33:00
13 Chicago Public Schools for all students with 18:33:02
14 disabilities. 18:33:05

15 And so, yes, we will continue to talk 18:33:05
16 about least restrictive environment. We do have 18:33:07
17 training that's coming out for co-teaching 18:33:10
18 support, paraprofessional training, disability 18:33:12
19 awareness. We're also working across different 18:33:15
20 academic offices on how to support students' 18:33:19
21 behavior. And we will continue to talk about 18:33:21
22 least restrictive environment data at the school 18:33:23
23 level. We actually have that data that is 18:33:26
24 published and sent to principals within our 18:33:28



1 internal data management system. And we will 18:33:30
2 continue to focus on rightful presence. And now 18:33:33
3 if that means that, you know, we have some 18:33:36
4 students who perhaps are educated in different 18:33:38
5 environments based on where they're at now, then 18:33:41
6 that's the growth that we want to see if that's 18:33:43
7 based on what the student needs. 18:33:46

8 In terms of transportation, not 18:33:48
9 absolving myself of responsibility but just 18:33:51
10 making sure everybody is clear, the Department 18:33:54
11 of Transportation is not under the Office for 18:33:57
12 Students with Disabilities, however, we are 18:33:59
13 partners and we work together all the time. One 18:34:00
14 thing that you may be aware of as parents is 18:34:04
15 that there was some communication that came 18:34:06
16 out -- for those of you who are parents, there 18:34:08
17 was some communication that came out in July 18:34:11
18 talking about, you know, when families were 18:34:13
19 going to receive their route. This was a direct 18:34:17
20 product of our ongoing and strengthening 18:34:20
21 relationship with the Department of 18:34:23
22 Transportation where we were very clear that we 18:34:25
23 needed to get information out to parents so that 18:34:27
24 they could be well-informed as soon as possible. 18:34:29



1 You know, the goal for the Department 18:34:31
2 of Transportation in Chicago Public Schools is 18:34:34
3 to route all students with disabilities. And, 18:34:35
4 you know, some of the challenges that are being 18:34:38
5 faced by the District is that they have more and 18:34:41
6 more students who are eligible and opting in to 18:34:45
7 transportation services. I will say after 18:34:48
8 meeting with their team prior to this meeting, 18:34:50
9 they had 2200 more students to route than last 18:34:53
10 year and have actually routed over 2,000 more 18:34:56
11 students this time this year than they did this 18:35:00
12 time last year. So there are improvements. Are 18:35:03
13 we at zero students who still need to be routed? 18:35:05
14 Absolutely not, but there are improvements based 18:35:09
15 on what we had last year. 18:35:11

16 You know, when we came out of the 18:35:12
17 pandemic what we all heard a lot about was that 18:35:14
18 there was a bus driver shortage. Well, they've 18:35:17
19 been working on that and now this year there was 18:35:20
20 another curve ball that negatively impacted our 18:35:22
21 students with disabilities. There was a strike 18:35:24
22 with one of the paratransit companies, and that 18:35:26
23 paratransit company had 45 percent of the routes 18:35:28
24 for students who needed paratransit routes. And 18:35:32



1 that happened right before school started in 18:35:35
2 addition to another paratransit company that had 18:35:38
3 10 percent of their routes who decided they were 18:35:40
4 no longer going to serve K-12 Chicago Public 18:35:43
5 Schools. So just doing the math that's 55 18:35:47
6 percent of the routes, of the paratransit 18:35:51
7 routes. 18:35:53

8 Now, not providing an excuse, it's 18:35:53
9 still not -- you know, we need to be at zero, 18:35:56
10 but we're not there, we still have students who 18:35:58
11 are waiting on routes. But I'm just trying to 18:36:01
12 inform you all that that's what happened at the 18:36:03
13 start of this school year. 18:36:04

14 Continuing to talk about 18:36:07
15 transportation, another thing just to put into 18:36:08
16 perspective is that the goal is that all routes 18:36:11
17 are no longer than 60 minutes. So one thing 18:36:15
18 that I heard a lot about and wondered about as a 18:36:18
19 principal was that we would have these really 18:36:21
20 large buses and they would have about seven to 18:36:23
21 ten kids on them. And now thinking about that, 18:36:26
22 you know, every student gets three minutes 18:36:29
23 per -- when you go to the stop, so you only stay 18:36:33
24 there for three minutes, but if you're in a 18:36:37



1 wheelchair you get five. So if we have ten 18:36:39
2 students on a route, everything is perfect and 18:36:43
3 it only takes three minutes, that's 30 minutes 18:36:45
4 to pick up the kids. Now, you still have to get 18:36:47
5 to school, you can't really factor in any 18:36:48
6 inclement weather. There's times when students 18:36:51
7 need longer because, I mean, just like a teacher 18:36:55
8 and paraprofessionals in the school the bus 18:36:57
9 driver and the bus aide form relationships with 18:36:59
10 the families. So if they know that the kid 18:37:01
11 typically comes to school and they're going to 18:37:03
12 be coming out soon, then, of course, they're 18:37:06
13 going to give them a few minutes longer. But 18:37:08
14 these are all things that really impact the 18:37:11
15 routes and being on time and getting things done 18:37:12
16 and are impacting them forming the routes now. 18:37:14
17 Our response to the Department of 18:37:17
18 Transportation has continued for this year is 18:37:18
19 the financial incentive program or the stipend 18:37:22
20 as we called it before. And so students who are 18:37:25
21 within this program, students who are greater 18:37:27
22 than five miles from the school and not routed 18:37:29
23 are eligible for this. And also students who 18:37:31
24 are eligible for transportation who have not yet 18:37:35



1	been routed are also eligible for this.	18:37:38
2	And one last thing that I want to talk	18:37:41
3	about is special education positions for this	18:37:43
4	year. So as I've mentioned before we do have a	18:37:45
5	formula that we use to determine the amount of	18:37:48
6	teacher and paraprofessional positions that we	18:37:52
7	provided to schools. We provided this during	18:37:54
8	budgeting season and also did a cushion to	18:37:57
9	account for any growth. Our goal with this was	18:38:01
10	to staff schools during budgeting with the	18:38:04
11	positions that they needed based on last year's	18:38:06
12	data for their highest point to take away any of	18:38:09
13	that inconsistency or, you know, just basically	18:38:14
14	not having the staff that they needed to educate	18:38:18
15	those students by making them appeal and look	18:38:21
16	for positions for the entire school year. And	18:38:24
17	so we had held strong with that model. We did	18:38:26
18	have appeals that were submitted by principals	18:38:30
19	and school teams over the summer. We went	18:38:33
20	through all those appeals and continue to go	18:38:36
21	through those. 20th day is coming up, which	18:38:38
22	likely you're familiar with that. We're going	18:38:42
23	to have a process that will be announced to	18:38:43
24	principals later this week. And we will	18:38:45



1 continue to update. We created, just in an 18:38:47
2 effort to be transparent, we created a school 18:38:50
3 facing calculator that's in as a sim, that's 18:38:53
4 that internal database, to show principals how 18:38:57
5 many positions they need and how many they have 18:39:00
6 with the effort of -- the intent of not having 18:39:02
7 them always have to do an appeal each time they 18:39:05
8 might need a new position. 18:39:09
9 So that's it from me. Anybody have any 18:39:10
10 questions? 18:39:14
11 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Yes, Sandra, go 18:39:15
12 ahead. 18:39:18
13 MS. HEIDT: More of a statement. I 18:39:20
14 know you're working hard on these deliverables, 18:39:21
15 especially with the development of PUNS, but 18:39:23
16 2023-2024 there's legislation that districts 18:39:26
17 should also provide able account information. 18:39:31
18 So if nothing else, maybe you can get some 18:39:34
19 flyers from the state and then have case 18:39:37
20 managers at these meetings share this with 18:39:40
21 families. 18:39:43
22 CHIEF LONG: Thank you. 18:39:44
23 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Go ahead. Go 18:39:45
24 ahead, Dee. 18:39:50



1 MS. FEDRICK: This is exciting that OSD 18:39:52
2 staff will be going out to visit the cluster 18:39:58
3 programs because that's something that teachers 18:40:01
4 have been asking for for many, many years, so 18:40:05
5 this is exciting. 18:40:09

6 So I just want to know who will be 18:40:11
7 doing the site visits? Is it going to be like 18:40:14
8 the Katz team or like student assignment, the 18:40:18
9 student assignment people or DRs or who? I 18:40:22
10 just -- because this is exciting. 18:40:26

11 CHIEF LONG: Thanks, Dee. It will be 18:40:28
12 the District Representatives, the DRs, and the 18:40:31
13 special education administrators. And together 18:40:34
14 they are on a team designed to support students 18:40:37
15 in the classroom. So they'll work together on 18:40:41
16 that. 18:40:45

17 MS. FEDRICK: So will they then work in 18:40:46
18 collaboration with school assignment to kind of 18:40:48
19 let them know like maybe this wouldn't be the 18:40:50
20 best? Just because I think about two of the 18:40:54
21 schools where I currently go where it's a lot of 18:40:57
22 runners in the classroom. And then I have one 18:41:00
23 student who is wheelchair bound. And I just 18:41:03
24 worry about them running over her or going to 18:41:05



1 I like do something to her. So it would be nice 18:41:08
2 just if they could see the different type of 18:41:11
3 programs and like let school assignment know 18:41:14
4 because school assignment I think -- I don't 18:41:19
5 know what formula or what they use. 18:41:20
6 CHIEF LONG: Yeah, that's a good point. 18:41:23
7 And definitely looking at the environment and 18:41:25
8 thinking about the space and the students who 18:41:27
9 are there, absolutely. 18:41:28
10 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Go ahead, Barb. 18:41:30
11 MS. COHEN: Hi. I first want to say 18:41:32
12 I'm really excited about the changes, really 18:41:36
13 happy to see a lot of them. I have two 18:41:38
14 questions, one is a yes/no, and the other one is 18:41:40
15 a little more detailed. 18:41:43
16 So the yes/no question is, in terms of 18:41:44
17 the slide about cluster enrollment, you said 18:41:47
18 that OSD guidance for cluster placement is 18:41:50
19 complete and will be shared with case managers 18:41:53
20 and IEP teams. Does the IEP team that it's 18:41:56
21 going to be shared with include the parents, in 18:42:00
22 other words, can we see it? 18:42:03
23 CHIEF LONG: Of course, it will be -- 18:42:04
24 well, you said yes/no. But, of course, it will 18:42:05



1 be transparent, so we'll put it out there. Yes, 18:42:07
2 of course. And it really clearly it is 18:42:11
3 guidance, it is not criteria. 18:42:13

4 MS. COHEN: I understand. 18:42:16

5 And my next question, you know quite 18:42:18
6 well that I'm really interested in professional 18:42:22
7 development, and I noticed on the least 18:42:24
8 restrictive environment slide that you said 18:42:27
9 you're doing paraprofessional training, and I'm 18:42:29
10 just wondering if you can describe to us what 18:42:31
11 that is going to involve? 18:42:35

12 CHIEF LONG: Yeah, so that is still 18:42:37
13 evolving, but what we're going to start with is 18:42:38
14 the new contract. And believe it or not, I 18:42:41
15 think there's a lot of growth that we can do in 18:42:44
16 terms of supporting paraprofessionals as the 18:42:46
17 Office for Students with Disabilities. You 18:42:49
18 know, I bring to this role a lot of experience 18:42:51
19 and really building a lot of relationships here 18:42:54
20 at South Side with paraprofessionals and so, of 18:42:56
21 course, have things that I think worked and also 18:42:58
22 ideas that I think we could do better. 18:43:01

23 We want to start with a contract though 18:43:03
24 and really frame out what that means for the 18:43:05



1 paraprofessionals but then not just the 18:43:07
2 paraprofessionals we are building on a training 18:43:09
3 for parents and for principals and for teachers 18:43:11
4 too. Once we have that then what we'll start 18:43:14
5 looking at is we've heard from paraprofessionals 18:43:18
6 that they want training on different 18:43:21
7 disabilities types, so we're going to -- and 18:43:23
8 profiles and characteristics and behaviors, so 18:43:25
9 that's already in place. And then as time goes 18:43:28
10 on, you know, we can start thinking about data 18:43:32
11 collection, student behavior management, 18:43:35
12 supporting classroom instruction, forming closer 18:43:37
13 relationships with a teacher and reinforcing 18:43:41
14 instruction, so things like that, but 18:43:43
15 absolutely. 18:43:46
16 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Go ahead, Nicole. 18:43:50
17 MS. SHEPARD: With the survey being 18:43:53
18 perpetually open, I was wondering is there a 18:43:58
19 plan to periodically sort of collate, summarize 18:44:01
20 and present like feedback in that period to this 18:44:06
21 body or the FAB or whatever venue you guys are 18:44:10
22 thinking? 18:44:15
23 CHIEF LONG: That's a good thought. 18:44:19
24 One thing that we had considered was perhaps on 18:44:20



1 the questions for parents is, you know, maybe it 18:44:25
2 would be a good idea to use a different form but 18:44:30
3 then ask those same questions and maybe really 18:44:33
4 try to roll it out to parents maybe two points 18:44:36
5 in the year and then, you know, we can kind of 18:44:39
6 look at, you know, maybe a semester, you know, 18:44:41
7 and maybe that's more of a satisfaction survey 18:44:42
8 from parents if it's just parents. But we are 18:44:46
9 still thinking about that, so open to ideas for 18:44:49
10 sure. 18:44:53

11 MS. SHEPARD: Okay. And super excited 18:44:56
12 to see some of the stuff that's going to be 18:44:57
13 added to the IEP and the IEP meeting. One thing 18:44:59
14 that I hear a lot from parents is just feeling 18:45:02
15 very strained with IEP meeting length, just not 18:45:06
16 feeling -- there's so much to get through, not 18:45:11
17 that I would want to cut PUNS or anything like 18:45:16
18 that but, you know, being told, you know, we can 18:45:19
19 only give you an hour or whatever it is, the 18:45:21
20 time constraint varies school by school, but 18:45:22
21 parents sort of feeling like there's not enough 18:45:29
22 time to discuss really and get into things. So 18:45:31
23 I don't know if there's guidelines around that 18:45:33
24 or what can be done during of the IEP meeting or 18:45:37



1 what you guys are thinking guidance from OSD on 18:45:39
2 that. 18:45:45

3 CHIEF LONG: Well, current guidance is, 18:45:45
4 you know, parents should know that they do not 18:45:45
5 have to complete the IEP meeting until they feel 18:45:47
6 the meeting is completed. So they're certainly 18:45:48
7 able to step aside from their meeting, ask for 18:45:51
8 it to be continued at a different time, so they 18:45:54
9 shouldn't be forced to finish that. I think we 18:45:57
10 can all sort of describe probably situations on 18:46:00
11 both ends of the spectrum. You know, there's 18:46:02
12 teachers who tell me that the IEP is too long. 18:46:06
13 There's parents who maybe say the meetings went 18:46:09
14 too long, I wish it was quicker and then vice 18:46:09
15 versa. But what I think that's really important 18:46:13
16 is the message that we are striking and making 18:46:14
17 sure that all of our staff know and explaining 18:46:17
18 to case managers is that we're here for 18:46:19
19 supporting families and students with 18:46:23
20 disabilities. And so if that means you need a 18:46:24
21 three-hour meeting to go over everything, then 18:46:26
22 you should be entitled to that. 18:46:29

23 MS. SHEPARD: Or alternatively like, 18:46:32
24 you know, now that my daughter is in 7th grade 18:46:34



1 and the team kind of knows me well, I can think 18:46:38
2 about like certain providers feel comfortable, 18:46:40
3 like what do you think about this school, like 18:46:44
4 talking about things outside the meeting via 18:46:45
5 e-mail or a phone call so once we get to the 18:46:47
6 table it's like pretty efficient with the people 18:46:49
7 who collaborate like that. Like I'm thinking 18:46:52
8 about those kind of guidelines might make 18:46:54
9 parents still feel like heard but also expedite 18:46:54
10 things. Just if that were, you know, I don't 18:46:59
11 know the tip section, if there's such a thing. 18:47:01
12 My biggest question I think from -- I 18:47:06
13 love all the -- I am going to look up this 18:47:09
14 rightful presence. I mean, I've heard of it but 18:47:11
15 I don't know the technical definition. But I 18:47:14
16 feel even with all of my background that I like 18:47:16
17 could not tell you what technically co-teaching 18:47:20
18 means. And I think parents and I feel 18:47:24
19 comfortable saying a lot of teachers aren't 18:47:32
20 really quite sure what that's supposed to look 18:47:32
21 like. I know there are different models and 18:47:33
22 different ways you can deliver it, but I just 18:47:33
23 feel as a parent I don't know what to expect 18:47:37
24 like if my child is getting per minutes in a gen 18:47:42



1 ed setting. 18:47:46

2 And so, yeah, so I don't know, I'm 18:47:46
3 happy that it's professional development, but 18:47:50
4 I'd love some -- maybe through the parent 18:47:52
5 universities or something that we could -- that 18:47:56
6 parents can sort of learn like really like what 18:47:59
7 they should be able to expect if their child is 18:48:03
8 receiving co-taught minutes. 18:48:07

9 CHIEF LONG: Yeah, that's a great idea. 18:48:09
10 I will say that, you know, acknowledging what 18:48:10
11 you said, it's a lot clearer when we think about 18:48:12
12 the relationship between a teacher and a 18:48:16
13 paraprofessional just because by design, by the 18:48:17
14 rules, the teacher introduces the instruction, 18:48:21
15 paraprofessional reinforces that. But when you 18:48:23
16 have a co-teaching relationship, you're right, 18:48:26
17 there are multiple models and often it's based 18:48:28
18 on the relationship between the co-teachers in 18:48:31
19 addition to the content being covered, the needs 18:48:34
20 of the child, perhaps even, you know, the 18:48:37
21 mandates from the school. But that is something 18:48:39
22 that really as a parent you should understand so 18:48:41
23 that's a great tip. Thank you. 18:48:44

24 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Go ahead, 18:48:47



1 Christine. 18:48:48

2 MS. PALMIERI: So I think I'm just 18:48:49
3 going to be the person to give feedback 18:48:51
4 regarding transportation and a couple of things. 18:48:53

5 So we definitely want to keep sharing 18:48:55
6 these meetings and sharing on CPS social media 18:48:57
7 and just really doing more to, quote, unquote, 18:49:01
8 market that we're here. We're so excited to see 18:49:05
9 families here. And I think if it was -- maybe 18:49:07
10 if more families were aware, we would likely 18:49:12
11 have a lot of parents here complaining about 18:49:15
12 transportation. So I'm just going to be the one 18:49:18
13 to give the feedback we've heard. 18:49:21

14 So in July, I think it was July 25th, 18:49:24
15 CPS sent out an e-mail that came from Chicago 18:49:28
16 Public Schools and it listed the FIP. So 18:49:31
17 another acronym that was the Financial Incentive 18:49:35
18 Program which internally you guys knew about, 18:49:39
19 but families hadn't known about the FIP 18:49:41
20 previously, it was always called the stipend. 18:49:45
21 The e-mail was hard to understand and it was 18:49:48
22 difficult to follow. We had made a request that 18:49:51
23 they send a follow-up e-mail out. That didn't 18:49:54
24 happen, but even more so I missed and a lot of 18:49:56



1 us missed that you -- there was a return to the 18:50:00
2 FIP but you weren't automatically eligible. And 18:50:03
3 that the District was going to determine so you 18:50:07
4 could sign up for it, but then they were going 18:50:10
5 to determine who would get the stipend to 18:50:12
6 self-transport and who would be routed. 18:50:16

7 Obviously the goal and the requirement 18:50:17
8 is to route everybody, but the confusion from 18:50:19
9 families after they signed up for the stipend 18:50:22
10 and then got a route but then weren't sure what 18:50:25
11 was happening, we never should have been in that 18:50:31
12 position. 18:50:33

13 I really appreciate things like writing 18:50:33
14 out the ongoing factors that it could take three 18:50:39
15 minutes per student, five minutes per student in 18:50:39
16 a wheelchair when my son was taking the bus. 18:50:43
17 Like three minutes is amazing. It did not take 18:50:45
18 him three minutes. So I think factors like this 18:50:49
19 are really helpful to break down. 18:50:51

20 I don't know what can be done about the 18:50:54
21 fact that transportation is not a part of Office 18:50:56
22 for Student with Disabilities. And that 18:50:59
23 connection is there, but they're not 18:51:00
24 understanding. There's a lack of understanding 18:51:03



1 of what is required to route students with 18:51:05
2 disabilities. They don't understand the impact 18:51:08
3 it's having on FAPE for a lot of families, and I 18:51:11
4 don't know how to help that. They're not a part 18:51:15
5 of the Office for Students with Disabilities, 18:51:17
6 but we need to do better. We have students who 18:51:19
7 don't have harnesses. We have students who are 18:51:22
8 not in medical transit vans. We have families 18:51:25
9 who are routed but it's routed to the wrong 18:51:28
10 school. We have families calling in to the 18:51:31
11 transportation line. I know last year when we 18:51:33
12 sort of anticipated a similar challenge, I don't 18:51:36
13 know who, but somewhere within CPS beefed up the 18:51:39
14 staffing of that transportation line. I don't 18:51:43
15 think we did that initially this year, and so 18:51:46
16 families might call into the transportation line 18:51:48
17 and wait online for like an hour or an hour and 18:51:52
18 a half. And sometimes the person who would 18:51:56
19 answer, I don't know if they were part of the 18:51:57
20 Transportation Department or if they were just 18:51:59
21 taking like messages, but they didn't have 18:52:01
22 answers. And so it's one thing to say, oh, just 18:52:04
23 go to your case manager, just go to your -- but 18:52:07
24 they were doing the same thing, they were on the 18:52:09



1 phone as well. 18:52:09

2 So this is all feedback, which I know 18:52:11

3 you've gotten already, but I think it would be 18:52:12

4 remiss if we didn't speak up about it. 18:52:14

5 I also think the strike is interesting, 18:52:18

6 right. We need to do better for our bus drivers 18:52:20

7 and aides, we all agree with that. They're 18:52:23

8 instrumental parts of our students' day. And 18:52:27

9 I'm interested about vendors not wanting to work 18:52:29

10 with CPS any longer. So we've talked generally 18:52:32

11 about making sure that aides have proper 18:52:34

12 treating for the students and that we're doing 18:52:37

13 enough to make this workable now that we are 18:52:40

14 only transporting students with disabilities and 18:52:43

15 students within temporary living communication. 18:52:47

16 So the communication could have been better. 18:52:49

17 MS. SHEPARD: In a GoCPS school, I 18:52:52

18 mean, so they're no longer -- 18:52:59

19 MS. PALMIERI: Well, so there's a 18:52:59

20 couple of things that we'll be chatting about 18:53:00

21 that are -- so like, for example, you know, if a 18:53:03

22 student lives within -- there are some things 18:53:03

23 that don't align with IGA in our opinion. So, 18:53:06

24 you know, if a student is required 18:53:11



1 transportation and they live within five miles 18:53:13
2 of the school, they're still required 18:53:15
3 transportation but the language in the way it's 18:53:17
4 written isn't clear. So the first line says if 18:53:21
5 you're -- you aren't eligible for the stipend if 18:53:24
6 you're only within five miles of the school. 18:53:28
7 But the second line says, you're not eligible 18:53:28
8 for the stipend if you're routed. So are we to 18:53:32
9 believe that everyone within five miles of the 18:53:35
10 school is going to be routed. So there were some 18:53:37
11 challenges that came through. So in the future 18:53:38
12 just learning about who writes those e-mails. 18:53:40
13 Is it coming from the Transportation Department 18:53:43
14 and does it need to be reviewed with a lens of 18:53:45
15 IDEA before it goes out? 18:53:49
16 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you. 18:53:52
17 Any other comments, questions? 18:53:53
18 Go ahead, Frank. 18:53:55
19 MR. LALLY: I'll just say -- so I'll 18:53:57
20 echo what others have said about the excitement 18:53:59
21 about the IEP updates. I really appreciate 18:54:02
22 though, I just want to mention, how I like 18:54:05
23 transparent this presentation has been. I think 18:54:07
24 for a while we've been asking for, and by we I 18:54:10



1 mean advocates and going back years, have been 18:54:13
2 asking for more reasoning behind decisions. And 18:54:16
3 I feel like in this presentation you've 18:54:19
4 explained, you know, some of the reasoning 18:54:21
5 behind the changes to the IEP. Some of the 18:54:24
6 things that have happened regarding 18:54:26
7 transportation I know it's not under your 18:54:28
8 umbrella. 18:54:37

9 I do have the same question that 18:54:38
10 Christine mentioned at the end regarding that 18:54:39
11 five mile area for if you're eligible for the 18:54:41
12 stipend, but if you're not -- if you don't have 18:54:45
13 a route, are you eligible to receive the 18:54:47
14 financial incentive even if you're within the 18:54:49
15 five miles. That's unclear to me. I know you 18:54:52
16 might not have the answer to that because that's 18:54:54
17 coming from their department. 18:54:56

18 But anyway, what I wanted to get across 18:54:58
19 is I appreciate how transparent you've been with 18:55:00
20 this presentation, so thank you. 18:55:03

21 CHIEF LONG: Thank you, Frank. 18:55:04

22 And I want to be really clear, 18:55:05
23 everybody. You know, I'm not trying to absolve 18:55:08
24 our office from responsibility in what's going 18:55:10



1 on with transportation. While we do not have 18:55:12
2 transportation under our office, we do work 18:55:15
3 closely together. I did see that communication 18:55:18
4 before it went out. I hear you loud and clear 18:55:21
5 that it could be better. But, yes, I was asked 18:55:23
6 to look at it, I did look at it. 18:55:26

7 I also have found places -- you know, 18:55:28
8 sometimes, you know, Frank, as you just 18:55:30
9 mentioned, a lot of times we're able to see past 18:55:33
10 forward once we realize that we've made a 18:55:37
11 mistake. 18:55:40

12 And, you know, in thinking just about 18:55:41
13 in the context of transportation, what I 18:55:42
14 realized this summer was that we didn't 18:55:44
15 necessarily do our best as an office to help 18:55:47
16 transportation. We tested students in summer 18:55:49
17 assessment up until Friday, August 2nd. We 18:55:53
18 started school right around the corner. Our 18:55:55
19 students who got tested on that last day then 18:55:57
20 had a very little bit of amount of time for 18:56:00
21 another one of my teams to then place those 18:56:03
22 students in a school and then for transportation 18:56:05
23 to even get that information to then route those 18:56:08
24 students. And so I'm not saying that we're the 18:56:10



1 cause of everything, but there's certainly 18:56:13
2 practices within my office that we can do better 18:56:15
3 and that would be doing those things better on 18:56:17
4 behalf of students with disabilities. 18:56:19

5 And to the point about the five miles, 18:56:22
6 my understanding is that Transportation was 18:56:24
7 working to transport all students with 18:56:28
8 disabilities in acknowledging there were going 18:56:30
9 to be some that were further away that needed 18:56:33
10 paratransit services that they were not going to 18:56:36
11 be routed. They'd be able to route in time. I 18:56:39
12 think what we're looking at now is, you know, 18:56:43
13 they aspired to that but that didn't happen and 18:56:46
14 so I know they're still working on that. 18:56:48

15 But I definitely hear the feedback and, 18:56:50
16 you know, we want to do better and communicate 18:56:52
17 more and be transparent, but we are trying to 18:56:55
18 work together as much as possible. 18:56:57

19 MS. PALMIERI: I think too there is 18:56:59
20 just one other piece that you mentioned. I 18:57:01
21 think there is confusion, and again we don't 18:57:03
22 know where that's coming from, but when you 18:57:05
23 change policies -- not policies, but change the 18:57:07
24 process -- it's not really a process, the 18:57:10



1 procedure, the informality of it all, so it does 18:57:12
2 seem like when a student -- now, CPS is not 18:57:15
3 bussing students who are in magnet, lottery, 18:57:18
4 selective enrollment, if they are choosing 18:57:21
5 decline of choice school, there is a group of 18:57:25
6 families that were identifying but trying to 18:57:26
7 figure out what's going on where they are a 18:57:29
8 student with a disability who requires 18:57:31
9 transportation as a related service but they're 18:57:34
10 not at their neighborhood school. So they might 18:57:36
11 be at a magnet or a choice or selective 18:57:38
12 enrollment and they're being told that they're 18:57:41
13 not eligible to receive transportation. 18:57:43

14 In my head I'm thinking, yes, in the 18:57:46
15 gen ed world that might be where that message is 18:57:48
16 coming from, but that does not apply to this 18:57:51
17 student because that student has transportation 18:57:54
18 on their IEP. We've seen some students having 18:57:56
19 it removed, and that's inappropriate unless they 18:57:59
20 don't require the service anymore. So again, 18:58:01
21 just some of those pieces of nuances this year 18:58:04
22 are having an impact. 18:58:06

23 CHIEF LONG: I know less about that, 18:58:10
24 Christine, so thanks for telling me. I'll look 18:58:11



1 into that. 18:58:14

2 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Yes, please. 18:58:15

3 MS. FEDRICK: I also -- I have one more 18:58:19

4 question, it was following up with the caller -- 18:58:21

5 the speaker, sorry, the speaker, how she was 18:58:26

6 talking about special education cuts, but we 18:58:27

7 opened all those new cluster programs so do we 18:58:31

8 have any feedback because I know there was a 18:58:36

9 shortage on special education teachers? Do we 18:58:38

10 have any feedback on the new cluster programs 18:58:42

11 that were opened and are they like fully 18:58:45

12 staffed? Because it just -- you all see how it 18:58:48

13 doesn't -- it's not making sense. 18:58:51

14 MS. SHEPARD: Dee, my question was 18:58:59

15 like -- my last question was sort of I've gotten 18:59:01

16 very confused because I know with the new 18:59:03

17 funding program from the gen ed side, and I know 18:59:05

18 at the Board people come to talk about it, about 18:59:08

19 losing positions, but when I've talked to people 18:59:11

20 they'll say, oh, my LSC said because of the new 18:59:14

21 budget we lost three paras. But I'm like that's 18:59:17

22 not how this works, like at least from my 18:59:20

23 understanding, it's like -- unless those kids 18:59:23

24 like left, you know. 18:59:26



1 So I think -- and obviously it could 18:59:27
2 just be a misunderstanding because if you're not 18:59:29
3 in the world -- of this world it's a lot of 18:59:31
4 stuff to understand. But when I was listening 18:59:33
5 to the caller saying like we lost a SPED 18:59:36
6 teacher, but I'm thinking like looking at this 18:59:38
7 page like that shouldn't -- I mean, unless the 18:59:40
8 minutes and the needs changed like that 18:59:43
9 shouldn't be a thing, you know. So I guess I'm 18:59:46
10 confused because I think people come to the 18:59:49
11 Board a lot or come to call in about that here. 18:59:51
12 MS. PALMIERI: Do you think there's -- 18:59:58
13 so like if we tie it to some things that we're 18:59:59
14 seeing. So another transportation piece is 19:00:01
15 there stacking routes -- that's not working 19:00:04
16 well. When you're looking at staffing your 19:00:07
17 classrooms and staffing a school, you've said 19:00:10
18 this multiple times is an art and it's really 19:00:13
19 challenging, but we are hearing a lot of what 19:00:15
20 the caller stated where one special education 19:00:17
21 teacher is teaching multiple subjects in one 19:00:20
22 block of time. That seems to be -- and if that 19:00:23
23 teacher is able to do that, then you're going to 19:00:28
24 have one less special ed teacher in your 19:00:31



1 building, right. But when you implement that, 19:00:33
2 it's not working. 19:00:35

3 So maybe if there's any -- that's the 19:00:35
4 third or fourth time we've heard something like 19:00:38
5 that about a special ed teacher having a 19:00:41
6 schedule that's not manageable where they can't 19:00:43
7 meet the students' needs but it's expected. So, 19:00:47
8 you know, not necessarily even in a resource 19:00:49
9 environment where they only have like two or 19:00:51
10 three kids with a grade band, sure, you can work 19:00:54
11 on separate goals. 19:00:57

12 So I don't know if that's making any 19:00:58
13 sense, but if there's something that is 19:01:00
14 different about the way you're looking at 19:01:01
15 scheduling this year that got misinterpreted. 19:01:03

16 CHIEF LONG: I can't speak to how 19:01:06
17 principals or the scheduler is scheduling the 19:01:08
18 students, you know, and the teachers. 19:01:11

19 What I can say is that our allocations 19:01:13
20 of positions are consistent. They're based on 19:01:16
21 student need. They're based on best practices 19:01:18
22 for scheduling. It's something that, you know, 19:01:20
23 we've rolled out across all schools. And while 19:01:23
24 some schools may still be working through, you 19:01:26



1 know, how to schedule the students in line with, 19:01:29
2 you know, what we have said as best practice, 19:01:31
3 you know, by and large we're finding that 19:01:34
4 schools are able to do this. And, you know, 19:01:37
5 while we do hear from some teachers like the 19:01:41
6 caller, that's not really the majority of people 19:01:45
7 that we're hearing from. 19:01:48
8 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Yes. 19:01:51
9 MS. FEDRICK: This is my last comment, 19:01:53
10 I promise. 19:01:55
11 I just also want to say that I was 19:01:56
12 happy to see that they're going to now be 19:01:57
13 following up with placement letters for students 19:02:00
14 who like drop the ball because it was a lot of 19:02:02
15 newcomers at one time we were evaluating. And 19:02:06
16 one still I wake up in the middle of the night 19:02:10
17 thinking about her and her tragic story of 19:02:13
18 coming to the United States and because no one 19:02:16
19 followed up with her she's just now in the 19:02:20
20 ether. And it's just nice to know that we're 19:02:26
21 going to be able to follow up with the families, 19:02:28
22 so I like that. 19:02:30
23 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you. 19:02:33
24 MS. PALMIERI: The other thing about 19:02:35



1 that too is like so if a family can't get to 19:02:36
2 school, let's say they're placed in a specialty 19:02:38
3 high school like Vaughn and you haven't been 19:02:42
4 routed or you were routed and the bus is not 19:02:44
5 coming up or you were forced into the stipend 19:02:48
6 because you were not able to be given a route, 19:02:52
7 if those students aren't showing up they're 19:02:53
8 getting that notice right around now if we're at 19:02:55
9 the 20th day that they're going to lose their 19:03:00
10 spot. And those students oftentimes don't come 19:03:02
11 back. So it's a good circle back around for 19:03:04
12 that reason too. 19:03:07
13 MS. FEDRICK: Covering all bases. 19:03:08
14 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Okay. Any other 19:03:11
15 comments or questions? 19:03:12
16 All right. Thank you, Chief Long. 19:03:14
17 CHIEF LONG: Thank you. 19:03:18
18 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Appreciate it. 19:03:19
19 We are going to -- did any of the 19:03:19
20 public speakers come in? Okay. Great, number 19:03:25
21 3. 19:03:30
22 So may I hear from Annette Applebee. 19:03:31
23 Hi there. You have 3 minutes to speak. Thank 19:03:36
24 you. 19:03:48



1 MS. APPLEBEE: Hello, everybody. As 19:03:48
2 she said, I'm Annette Applebee. And my only 19:03:53
3 concern is I'm a SECA at one of the schools, and 19:03:57
4 I have an issue with SECAs being pulled out of 19:04:00
5 the classroom and we supposed to be in the 19:04:03
6 classroom with the students. And if we getting 19:04:05
7 pulled out to go to another classroom for 19:04:08
8 another student or going out to take attendance 19:04:10
9 for another class or going to grade-level 19:04:15
10 meeting, that's taking away from the minutes 19:04:18
11 from the kids. 19:04:21

12 And for some reason this year I think 19:04:22
13 the school I'm at we have a lot of kids that is 19:04:26
14 coming in with IEPs. And I might have one 19:04:30
15 student that I'm dedicated to but I help all of 19:04:35
16 the kids in the room and they all need help, you 19:04:37
17 know. So if we out of the room, how are they 19:04:39
18 getting their minutes? Whether we're with one 19:04:42
19 student, two students or whatever, we need to be 19:04:44
20 in the classroom. And I think it's just 19:04:46
21 important that we stay in the classroom. Like 19:04:48
22 if it's meetings, you can do that after work. I 19:04:52
23 feel, you know, after work, not on our lunch 19:04:56
24 break but after work. But I just feel like it's 19:04:59



1 important for those students to get the minutes 19:05:02
2 that they deserve and that they need because 19:05:04
3 they need help in all areas and we are there to 19:05:07
4 support them. 19:05:11

5 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you so 19:05:13
6 much, appreciate your comments. 19:05:14

7 MS. RAWLS: I also had a question. 19:05:21
8 Chief Long, who could the SECAs speak with at 19:05:23
9 your office to get support with being pulled out 19:05:25
10 of the classroom and asked to work outside our 19:05:28
11 job descriptions on a daily basis? 19:05:29

12 CHIEF LONG: Honestly, they should 19:05:36
13 speak to their union rep if they have concerns. 19:05:39

14 MS. RAWLS: I am the union rep. 19:05:43

15 CHIEF LONG: That's who they should 19:05:45
16 talk to. 19:05:47

17 MS. PALMIERI: Well, for example, for 19:05:48
18 principal newsletters, has it gone out in 19:05:49
19 principal newsletters like, guidance, do not use 19:05:52
20 your SECAs that are dedicated to student minutes 19:05:55
21 for like door duty, lunch duty, et cetera? 19:05:57

22 CHIEF LONG: So that's part of the 19:05:59
23 training that I was talking about that we're 19:06:01
24 going to be doing. I can't speak to what 19:06:02



1 principals have done, there's so many of them, 19:06:05
2 so I really have way of saying. And, yes, union 19:06:07
3 rep is a huge support, and that's something that 19:06:11
4 I know our paraprofessionals always look towards 19:06:13
5 for support. 19:06:16

6 I also think there's a lot of space to 19:06:16
7 talk to the principal. I always had an open 19:06:18
8 door approach. I had a window on my door for 19:06:22
9 when the door was closed, so come on in, let's 19:06:23
10 talk about it. I think that's a great space. 19:06:25
11 But some schools, you know, the 19:06:26
12 paraprofessionals are scheduled by case managers 19:06:28
13 or perhaps by the assistant principals, so my 19:06:32
14 answer is going to be somewhat dependent on what 19:06:35
15 the structure is at the school. But ultimately 19:06:37
16 if the paraprofessional feels like their rights 19:06:40
17 about being violated, then that's where you 19:06:40
18 would come in. 19:06:45

19 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Okay. Thank you. 19:06:45
20 That's it for the speakers, I believe. Thank 19:06:46
21 you. 19:06:48

22 So we are going to take a few minutes 19:06:51
23 now and discuss the least restrictive 19:06:55
24 environment issue and maybe ways to shift the 19:07:00



1 narrative about how LRE tends to work in CPS. 19:07:06
2 So we can kind of start the conversation about 19:07:12
3 having a more fluid LRE structure or a tendency 19:07:17
4 to move students when appropriate from a more 19:07:25
5 restrictive environment to a less restrictive 19:07:30
6 environment as a matter of course. So any 19:07:32
7 thoughts you have on that issue, I'd love to 19:07:38
8 hear it. 19:07:42

9 Yes, go ahead, Barb. 19:07:44

10 MS. COHEN: So Chief Long has heard all 19:07:45
11 of my thoughts a million times, but there's 19:07:49
12 always a million and one. I really like the 19:07:52
13 term rightful presence, and I'm not familiar 19:07:55
14 with it but think about it as being very 19:07:57
15 meaningful. And I'd like to say that the one 19:08:02
16 group of students that don't experience rightful 19:08:07
17 presence at this point are pre-K students in 19:08:12
18 general education who do not have students with 19:08:17
19 IEPs in their classrooms because the way the 19:08:20
20 structure works right now they are not allowed 19:08:24
21 to have students with IEPs in their classrooms 19:08:27
22 unless that classroom is a blended classroom and 19:08:30
23 has two teachers in it. 19:08:33

24 So as a person who has a child with a 19:08:35



1 significant disability and a child who does not 19:08:40
2 have a significant disability, and they're both 19:08:44
3 in their 20s now, I can tell you that there's a 19:08:45
4 lot of value to living with somebody who has a 19:08:49
5 significant disability. And I watched it all 19:08:51
6 through -- my older daughter has the -- is 19:08:55
7 autistic. I watched it all through my younger 19:08:59
8 daughter's childhood how she interacted with 19:09:02
9 other people in her classroom, how she spoke 19:09:05
10 about the other students in her classroom and 19:09:07
11 how she thinks about what it means to be 19:09:09
12 included in this world. And I think that 19:09:12
13 preschool students who aren't getting exposed to 19:09:17
14 students with disabilities are losing out. And 19:09:20
15 they also are not experiencing the rightful 19:09:25
16 presence of students with disabilities and vice 19:09:27
17 versa. So I'd really like to press the 19:09:31
18 rethinking of how pre-K is structured. 19:09:35
19 And that's my biggest comment. I think 19:09:38
20 that I'm looking forward to seeing the guidance, 19:09:40
21 not the criteria, but the guidance about 19:09:45
22 placement in cluster programs and thinking 19:09:50
23 about -- more about mobility in and out of the 19:09:54
24 cluster programs and what they were originally 19:09:59



1 designed to accomplish for a student and whether 19:10:02
2 or not that cannot be accomplished in a less 19:10:06
3 restrictive environment. 19:10:10

4 We all know what the law around LRE is, 19:10:12
5 I'm not going to repeat it for anyone. But I 19:10:16
6 think that using the term rightful presence 19:10:18
7 is -- if it's used consistently is going to be a 19:10:20
8 huge mind shift about thinking these students 19:10:24
9 are rightfully in a less restrictive environment 19:10:27
10 if they can thrive in that environment. And 19:10:32
11 it's our responsibility as adults to teach them, 19:10:35
12 just as it's our responsibility as adults to 19:10:39
13 teach all of the other students in our class. 19:10:42

14 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you. 19:10:45

15 Any other thoughts? 19:10:47

16 Yes, go ahead Dee. 19:10:47

17 MS. FEDRICK: So, Josh, do you see the 19:10:49
18 majority of the kids coming in automatically 19:10:52
19 placed in cluster, so the kids that are being 19:10:56
20 evaluated like those kids that are coming in 19:10:58
21 from early intervention that are being placed in 19:11:01
22 cluster? 19:11:05

23 So one thing for me being an early 19:11:11
24 intervention provider, one thing that I always 19:11:14



1 try to push for, I advocate for the parents. 19:11:16
2 And I can think of two parents right now, one 19:11:19
3 who has spoken at our Committee meetings, but 19:11:22
4 they fought. And I see nothing wrong with just 19:11:25
5 giving the child the chance because I could 19:11:30
6 speak on behalf of probably a lot of teachers 19:11:37
7 when I say once a kid is in cluster, we 19:11:40
8 really -- getting them out, I seldom see it. 19:11:43
9 So I would like to maybe push for, like 19:11:49
10 you said, looking at maybe that guidance in the 19:11:53
11 procedural manual about how we're just going to 19:11:56
12 give the kids a chance first because a lot of 19:11:58
13 times I'll admit on my end sometimes taking that 19:12:01
14 data is hard, but I'd rather have the kid have a 19:12:05
15 chance. 19:12:09
16 MS. SHEPARD: Well, I think, you know, 19:12:14
17 speaking from the perspective of a mom of a 19:12:16
18 child with significant disabilities of various 19:12:18
19 kinds, I just want to push really -- I really 19:12:22
20 think that if we're not -- if not pre-K, if not 19:12:26
21 kindergarten, if not primary, like when? Like 19:12:29
22 it only gets more difficult. And I think that 19:12:32
23 it is really sold to parents of children with 19:12:37
24 significant disabilities as your child will feel 19:12:41



1 more comfortable here. You'll have more 19:12:46
2 support. There will only be 13 kids in the 19:12:49
3 class. Instead of us as a system thinking how 19:12:52
4 can we make gen ed classrooms a place where a 19:12:55
5 child with disabilities can thrive, like 19:12:59
6 thinking about sensory, thinking about all these 19:13:04
7 other things. 19:13:06

8 And my daughter did go to gen ed -- is 19:13:07
9 in a gen ed school and I've had to push back on 19:13:10
10 that. And I'm glad it's called guidance and not 19:13:13
11 criteria because I think even the word thrive 19:13:17
12 can be loaded because what it means to thrive 19:13:20
13 for one child is different for another. You 19:13:24
14 know, what is a meaningful interaction with 19:13:28
15 peers for one child might not look like a 19:13:30
16 typical meaningful interaction but might hold a 19:13:34
17 lot of meaning for that child who might be 19:13:37
18 nonverbal or who has trouble making eye contact. 19:13:40

19 So I think we've had to push really 19:13:43
20 hard to sort of even with people who are 19:13:45
21 familiar with disability to sort of step out of 19:13:47
22 like I don't think -- what do you do when, you 19:13:49
23 know, the child -- I don't think your child is 19:13:54
24 getting enough out of this to justify being in 19:13:56



1 gen ed, you know, whereas the child believes 19:13:59
2 they are or the parents. So that's really 19:14:03
3 tricky, and I don't have an answer for that 19:14:06
4 except that some parents really, really want and 19:14:08
5 love their cluster programs, and some parents 19:14:11
6 have to fight tooth and nail to stay in their 19:14:15
7 neighborhood schools. I don't know how much 19:14:18
8 parent or family or student input can weigh on 19:14:21
9 that. 19:14:26

10 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: I think the LRE 19:14:29
11 issue with respect to clusters versus gen ed 19:14:32
12 versus co-teaching is -- has a lot to do with 19:14:37
13 just the culture of how things have worked. And 19:14:44
14 opening up those possibilities can bring about a 19:14:50
15 lot more opportunity for students to be fully 19:14:54
16 included. And even looking at things like 19:14:59
17 modification of curriculum, that there's no 19:15:04
18 reason why you couldn't have a modified 19:15:13
19 curriculum within a gen ed classroom. And if we 19:15:16
20 can be more creative in forward thinking about 19:15:19
21 it, it could make a huge difference. 19:15:24

22 Yes, go ahead, Christine. 19:15:26

23 MS. PALMIERI: And I think we're just 19:15:28
24 hoping to share feedback. I know we've talked 19:15:30



1 and really appreciated you in this role because 19:15:32
2 now we can have these conversations and -- but I 19:15:34
3 would like for any families who are watching to 19:15:38
4 be able to hear this discussion too. 19:15:40

5 So you touched on it right away is that 19:15:42
6 oftentimes families hear that the place for me 19:15:45
7 to receive the most support is in the cluster 19:15:48
8 setting, but it might not be appropriate based 19:15:51
9 on that student's needs. And we talk a lot just 19:15:53
10 from our own lens of a student with autism who 19:15:56
11 might have behavioral-based needs who might need 19:15:59
12 curriculum in a different way but does not 19:16:03
13 require significantly modified curriculum and 19:16:06
14 students who may require access to modeling 19:16:08
15 opportunities to be able to learn skills, 19:16:11
16 practice them and generalize them in a gen ed 19:16:13
17 environment. 19:16:17

18 What I have appreciated seeing some of, 19:16:18
19 but it is impacted by budget cuts and staffing 19:16:20
20 ability, is more students being identified for 19:16:23
21 the pulled out setting for social studies and 19:16:26
22 science. And so there's the continuum, and if a 19:16:30
23 student requires a pulled out intensive support 19:16:33
24 for reading, math, social studies and science, 19:16:36



1 then that's what they can receive and they can 19:16:39
2 still be at their neighborhood school. 19:16:41

3 We have so many students who are being 19:16:43
4 sent away to a school that's not their 19:16:46
5 neighborhood school. We have so many twins that 19:16:49
6 are separated oddly. It's just really upsetting 19:16:53
7 to see the process of being pulled away from 19:16:55
8 your neighborhood school to a cluster. There 19:16:58
9 are way too many examples of a family who was 19:17:01
10 identified for a cluster setting, did not 19:17:04
11 realize that that is somewhere other than their 19:17:07
12 current school. 19:17:09

13 We really appreciate looking at 19:17:10
14 opportunities to help students toe step back 19:17:12
15 into the lesser restrictive environment. We're 19:17:14
16 seeing progress on that so that's been really 19:17:17
17 great. We want families to know that you can 19:17:19
18 take opportunities to toe step trial. We've 19:17:22
19 talked to about -- students who are in a 19:17:25
20 therapeutic day school placement and 19:17:28
21 reintegration or opportunities for partial 19:17:31
22 transition, et cetera. And personally I'm still 19:17:33
23 dealing with some PTSD related to that, but we 19:17:36
24 need to make that much easier as well. And we 19:17:41



1 need to ensure that families are educated on 19:17:44
2 their opportunities and rights to be able to try 19:17:46
3 and learn in the less restrictive setting. And 19:17:48
4 obviously I think we've seen some progress in 19:17:52
5 this. 19:17:55

6 You know, we have students who may be 19:17:58
7 both in a cluster classroom and trialing in a 19:18:02
8 gen ed or a pulled out social studies or science 19:18:05
9 room in the afternoon. In the past if you tried 19:18:08
10 to do something like that your indicator would 19:18:12
11 move away from cluster and you would have to go 19:18:14
12 back to your neighborhood school. And so there 19:18:17
13 was this shift in sort of the procedure of that, 19:18:20
14 we need some more flexibility for students 19:18:22
15 moving forward. 19:18:25

16 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Go ahead, Barb. 19:18:28

17 MS. COHEN: I just want to add one more 19:18:29
18 thing. 19:18:31

19 In my experience going to an awful lot 19:18:31
20 of IEP meetings for students who have behavioral 19:18:35
21 issues and this school is interested in moving 19:18:38
22 the student out of the gen ed setting, I've 19:18:41
23 learned to ask as my first question always, can 19:18:44
24 the child read? And almost invariably the 19:18:48



1 answer is no. And these are students who are 19:18:51
2 maybe in middle school or upper elementary 19:18:55
3 grades or sometimes -- right now I've got two 17 19:18:57
4 year olds who are having problems 19:19:04
5 unsurprisingly. And it astonishes me how 19:19:07
6 quickly the team jumps to the child has 19:19:13
7 behavioral issues. When if I were in that 19:19:17
8 child's shoes, I would be incredibly frustrated 19:19:20
9 also, and I would not be functioning well in the 19:19:24
10 classroom if I was being asked to do things that 19:19:29
11 I simply could not do because I wasn't getting 19:19:32
12 the right academic supports or the right sensory 19:19:36
13 supports or the right level of calm to be 19:19:40
14 available to learn. 19:19:43
15 So I really would like before we start 19:19:45
16 moving kids to cluster programs to get a better 19:19:49
17 sense of what's causing behaviors than the 19:19:53
18 general two choices, which are seeks attention 19:19:56
19 or avoiding work because that's what we always 19:20:01
20 see with an FBA, it's either one of those. And 19:20:04
21 there's almost never any effort to get behind 19:20:09
22 why is the child -- why does the child want some 19:20:12
23 attention? It's a fair question to ask before 19:20:18
24 you say, oh, this is the kid not able to 19:20:20



1 function in the classroom. Is the kid not able 19:20:23
2 to function with this level of -- with this kind 19:20:25
3 of instruction and this kind of support in their 19:20:28
4 classroom? 19:20:30

5 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Along those 19:20:34
6 lines, I always think of the term that behavior 19:20:35
7 is communication and that there's so much we can 19:20:41
8 learn if we stop and take a look at the source 19:20:47
9 of the behavior. 19:20:53

10 So any other comments? 19:20:56

11 MS. SHEPARD: I know that a lot of 19:21:01
12 schools now, I don't know what the percentage 19:21:02
13 is, have like adopted Skyline to some extent or 19:21:04
14 whatever. And there's been some talk about how 19:21:09
15 it doesn't -- I mean, I would think because -- I 19:21:12
16 think the whole thing is that it's -- I don't 19:21:16
17 know if it's editable, but it's like an online 19:21:17
18 thing so my mind as a parent, obviously not 19:21:20
19 having the behind of scenes thing, thinking 19:21:22
20 like, well, it will be even easier now for my 19:21:26
21 daughter's SPED teacher to like adopt this, 19:21:31
22 right. Tell them to write it in 1st grade 19:21:34
23 reading level or whatever it is. But that's not 19:21:36
24 like the feedback I'm really getting that it's 19:21:38



1 not, you know. 19:21:41

2 So to my understanding like a cluster 19:21:41

3 teacher, they are the same, they're all LBS 1s, 19:21:45

4 right. So when I hear like, oh, well, you know, 19:21:48

5 I can't adapt this grade level to like 2nd 19:21:51

6 grade. But I'm like, well, what's the -- like 19:21:55

7 they're the same certification so I guess I 19:21:59

8 don't really know what that bridge is, right, so 19:22:02

9 I just like lose the hope of getting access to 19:22:03

10 grade level content at all or themes. There's 19:22:08

11 just so many questions as a parent that even 19:22:11

12 having an education background I just can't 19:22:13

13 answer for my own child. And so I think the LRE 19:22:16

14 and understanding that. And even if you are in 19:22:20

15 resource, knowing that you should -- your child 19:22:23

16 should still be getting access to grade-level 19:22:25

17 curriculum because we get told, well, I just 19:22:28

18 have to work on the goal. And I'm like, okay, 19:22:32

19 but what about like, you know, literature 19:22:36

20 and learning about social science goals and 19:22:41

21 stuff? 19:22:43

22 So I think it's -- and I think we have 19:22:43

23 to remember, just like any field, it's so easy 19:22:45

24 to like bust out the TLAs, the three letter 19:22:48



1 acronyms. And you just get lost so easily as a 19:22:55
2 parent, and so I don't know how we can have 19:22:58
3 these conversations. A lot of parents don't 19:23:00
4 even know what LRE means. So how we can figure 19:23:02
5 out how to have these conversations and help 19:23:05
6 parents advocate and know what to expect and 19:23:08
7 push for that and, I don't know, and to use 19:23:11
8 leverage the Cs. 19:23:15

9 You know, I hear like the other network 19:23:17
10 supports, math, SEL, what are they called? ISL, 19:23:22
11 instructional. You know, like they seem to be 19:23:25
12 at the school a lot. So I'm like, well, I kind 19:23:28
13 of want to see the C there too, like are they in 19:23:30
14 the classrooms? Are they in the resource rooms? 19:23:32
15 Like can they interface with parents? Like our 19:23:35
16 math ISL did like a workshop for parents on the 19:23:39
17 math curriculum, like can the C do something 19:23:43
18 like talking about what co-teaching is or 19:23:46
19 whatever? Those are all my brain dumps. 19:23:49

20 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: You mentioned 19:23:52
21 parent training, and there are things coming 19:23:53
22 through with Parent University. But I always 19:24:02
23 like to mention the Family Resource Center for 19:24:02
24 People with Disabilities, FRCD.ORG. They offer 19:24:10



1 parent training. It's free. It's a 19:24:11
2 federally-funded organization that their whole 19:24:14
3 purpose is to support families of -- support 19:24:19
4 people with disabilities. And they have a big 19:24:22
5 training piece for parents in English and in 19:24:25
6 Spanish. So it's FRCD.ORG. 19:24:31

7 MS. HEIDT: Mary, in addition to that, 19:24:41
8 there are other organizations. The Arc of 19:24:43
9 Illinois, they touch on all types of trainings 19:24:45
10 regarding IEPs and least restrictive 19:24:47
11 environment. There's Family Matters. There's 19:24:50
12 so many out there. And I usually for myself I 19:24:52
13 take -- I may take a webinar or engage in a 19:24:55
14 webinar from all the different sources because 19:24:59
15 you may hear something different from one vendor 19:25:01
16 versus, you know, from another. And then I take 19:25:04
17 all of this information and I share with 19:25:07
18 families I support too. So there are a few out 19:25:08
19 there. There are many out there. 19:25:12

20 MS. PALMIERI: And the family -- the 19:25:14
21 Family Advisory Board, the District's -- OSD's 19:25:16
22 Family Advisory Board and the FACE parent 19:25:19
23 trainings. And I think one of the things that 19:25:22
24 unique about CPS -- because cluster programs are 19:25:24



1 phenomenal, we just want to make sure the right 19:25:27
2 students are being placed there but guidance 19:25:31
3 around what significantly modified curriculum 19:25:33
4 is. So if families can have a better 19:25:36
5 understanding of that, they can have a better 19:25:39
6 understanding of whether or not cluster is 19:25:41
7 appropriate. 19:25:42

8 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Okay. Any other 19:25:43
9 thoughts before we wrap this up? 19:25:44

10 MS. PALMIERI: I am so sorry, Mary. 19:25:48

11 So a parent asked for us to give 19:25:50
12 more information on the process of having a 19:25:52
13 student with a disability represented on this 19:25:56
14 Committee. 19:25:59

15 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: So I thank you 19:26:00
16 for bringing that up because I was remiss in not 19:26:03
17 mentioning that earlier. 19:26:10

18 Right now the Board is in the process 19:26:11
19 of reviewing all their policies around 19:26:13
20 committees so it's on hold for the moment. But 19:26:17
21 I'll be sharing the process once it gets in 19:26:23
22 place or finalized. 19:26:32

23 So any other comments? 19:26:34

24 All right. Well, just to wrap up here, 19:26:39



1 if you're interested in continuing engagement 19:26:45
2 with us or have questions, comments or 19:26:47
3 suggestions, please e-mail us at 19:26:51
4 BOESEAC@CPS.EDU. 19:26:58

5 If you know of people who couldn't 19:26:59
6 attend this evening but would like to be 19:27:00
7 engaged, please contact the Board Office at 19:27:02
8 (773) 553-1600. 19:27:05

9 Thank you all for joining, and this 19:27:09
10 meeting will be posted on the website going 19:27:11
11 forward. Thank you. 19:27:15

12 (Whereupon, these were all the
13 proceedings had at this time.)

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STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS:
COUNTY OF C O O K)

Karen Fatigato, being first duly sworn,
on oath says that she is a court reporter doing
business in the City of Chicago; and that she
reported in shorthand the proceedings of said
meeting, and that the foregoing is a true and
correct transcript of her shorthand notes so
taken as aforesaid, and contains the proceedings
given at said meeting.

Karen Fatigato



Karen Fatigato, CSR
LIC. NO. 084-004072



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