

BOARD OF EDUCATION
CITY OF CHICAGO
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(Zoom)
held on
January 10, 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

Reported By: Karen Fatigato, CSR

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

MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Good evening,
everyone. Hold on, I got a little echo
happening here.

18:06:43

All right. Good evening, everyone,
welcome. Welcome to the Chicago Board of
Education Special Education Advisory Committee
Meeting. Notice of this meeting was posted on
January 8th, 2024 or at least 48 hours before
this meeting at Claremont Academy Magnet School,
the Board Office at One North Dearborn, 42 West
Madison Lobby and on the CPS Board website,
WWW.CPSBOE.ORG. Today is January 10th, 2024,
and we're holding this meeting in the Claremont
Academy Elementary School gymnasium.

18:07:29

18:07:48

I am Mary Fahey Hughes. I would also
like to acknowledge the Committee members who
are here tonight: Rachel Arfa, Barb Cohen, Dee
Fedrick, Sandra Heidt, Frank Lally, Miquel
Lewis, Christine Palmieri. And we are expecting
one more, who I will announce when she gets

18:08:07



1 here. Oh, I'm sorry, Stephanie Anderson, who
2 has joined us virtually, Jim Cavallero, who has
3 joined virtually, Alyssa Rodriguez, who has
4 joined virtually, Tracey Stelly, who has joined
5 virtually, and Kimberly Weston Dodd, who has
6 joined virtually. On behalf of the Chicago
7 Board of Education, thank you for joining us
8 tonight.

18:08:47

9 The order of the meeting will be as
10 follows: Opening remarks, announcements, public
11 participation, Committee discussion and
12 questions, and then we'll adjourn.

18:08:57

13 Before I begin, I'd like to welcome
14 Patricia Bagget Hopkins, Principal of Claremont
15 Academy Magnet School to say a few words.

18:09:13

16 PRINCIPAL HOPKINS: Thank you so much
17 and welcome to Claremont. I do appreciate
18 everyone for coming out and being a part of the
19 community.

20 I just want to tell you a little bit.
21 I am the principal of -- I have been the
22 principal of Claremont for two years, previously
23 the assistant principal. Our work here, we have
24 about 350 students, predominantly free and

18:09:31



1 reduced lunch, and the majority of our students
2 are African American and Hispanic. We do have a
3 small cluster I'd like to say of newcomers that
4 we are supporting and trying to invite them into
5 our environment and welcome them. And we also
6 here are working -- we are a STEM school so if
7 you look around the building you'll see much of
8 our STEM activity that happens.

18:10:12

9 So I just appreciate you being here.

10 And if you need anything, you can check in with
11 me or any of the security guards in the red
12 jackets. There are a few other safety points I
13 want to get to. If you need to leave, the exit
14 is in the back of the gym, the rear doors,
15 please exit through those doors. Again, if you
16 need any assistance, you can check with our
17 security officers. And restrooms are to the
18 right right outside the rear doors.

18:10:28

18:10:46

19 And at this time I want to turn it back
20 over to Chairperson Mary Fahey Hughes.

18:10:59

21 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you,
22 Principal.

23 We are happy to share that Joshua Long
24 has been selected to be the new chief of the



1 Office of Diverse Learner Supports and Services
2 and was appointed by the Board last month to
3 start January 1st, 2024. I'd like to invite
4 Chief Long to say a few words.

5 CHIEF LONG: Great. Thanks, everybody, 18:11:30
6 and welcome. It's so nice to be standing up
7 here in front of everybody. And this is day
8 seven on the job and, yeah, I really have a
9 really strong appreciation for what the chief of
10 ODLSS does. I mean, the amount of things that 18:11:45
11 I've learned that fall under the umbrella of
12 services that we offer just to students, to
13 schools, to teachers, to parents, really all the
14 stakeholders is amazing and enormous all at the
15 same time, but I am very proud to be standing 18:12:00
16 here. Thank you so much for your belief in me
17 in being the chief.

18 I had the opportunity and have had the
19 opportunity to talk a lot about just being
20 selected for this role. I was on WBEZ today and 18:12:11
21 spoke about the role also and just, you know, if
22 you listened, it wasn't amazing or anything like
23 that, but if you listened what you would hear is
24 something that I've been saying a lot to people,



1 is that my department is here for one reason and
2 that's to serve students with special needs.
3 And in serving students with special needs what
4 that means is that we're here to support those
5 students and also to support the teachers and 18:12:36
6 the paraprofessionals and to support the
7 principals in helping them coach and train and
8 lead those individuals. We're also here for
9 families to help make, you know, the lives of
10 the students with disabilities as best as 18:12:49
11 possible.

12 One thing that I'm really focusing on
13 within my department, which is just one of them
14 among quite a few things is just really our
15 culture of customer service. You know, as a 18:12:58
16 principal of South Side Occupational Academy, a
17 school for students with special needs for 14
18 years, the couple of times that we needed to
19 reach out to some folks from the department that
20 I now lead, sometimes it was a positive 18:13:13
21 experience, sometimes it was not. And just
22 being really honest about that, you know, I've
23 been talking to all of my staff, my current
24 staff in my department, that, you know, we're



1 here for one purpose, and it's not that people
2 should feel lucky to be talking to us as much as
3 it should be that we are lucky to be serving
4 them and to be of service to them. And just
5 that mindset and that shift in making sure that
6 we're all on the same page for that service to
7 those individuals is something that's really
8 important to me. So that's something that we
9 will be talking more about and just open to
10 working with everybody and just being the best
11 environment that we possibly can be. So thank
12 you very much.

18:13:35

18:13:48

13 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you, Chief
14 Long.

15 The Special Education Advisory
16 Committee is excited to continue brainstorming
17 ways to collaborate with Chief Long to support
18 and enhance clear communication, team building
19 and the rebuilding of trust between special
20 education stakeholders and the District.

18:14:02

18:14:16

21 The next Special Education Advisory
22 Committee meeting is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on
23 Wednesday, March 6th, at -- 2024 at the Chicago
24 High School for Agriculture Sciences located at



1 3857 West 111th Street, Chicago, Illinois,
2 60655. You can find upcoming meeting
3 information at WWW.CPSBOE.ORG. We also
4 encourage you to e-mail BOESEAC@CPS.EDU with any
5 comments, questions or suggestions. We would
6 really like to hear from you.

18:14:53

7 Let's now proceed with public
8 participation. As a reminder, union
9 representatives are allotted ten minutes to
10 speak before public participation and elected
11 officials will speak after the conclusion of the
12 public participation.

18:15:06

13 The rules of public participation are
14 as follows: Members of the public who
15 registered to speak were given the option to
16 attend in person or via an electronic format.
17 Those who preferred to attend via an electronic
18 format were given information to access this
19 meeting by dialing a number and using their
20 phone. We did this so that speakers with
21 limited or no access to the Internet or who may
22 have a weak Internet connection could still
23 participate using their phones.

18:15:17

18:15:30

24 For the record I would like to note



1 that advance registration to speak at this
2 Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting
3 began on Monday, January 8th, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.
4 and closed on Tuesday, January 9th, 2024 at
5 5:00 p.m. or until five slots for speakers and
6 100 slots for observers filled, whichever
7 occurred first. Individuals who registered to
8 speak will have two minutes to comment, and I
9 will call speakers in the order of registration.
10 Members of the public may submit written
11 comments via the Written Comments Form on the
12 Board's website at WWW.CPSBOE.ORG or mail your
13 comments to One North Dearborn, Suite 950, by
14 5:00 p.m., Thursday, January 11th, 2024.

18:15:58

18:16:13

15 Before we begin calling registered
16 speakers from the speakers' list, we do have
17 union rep who would like to address the Board.
18 We will begin with Stacia Scott, SEIU 73
19 Executive Vice President, who is here in person.

18:16:34

20 MS. SCOTT: Oh, I don't need to be on
21 camera, I'm okay with that.

18:17:02

22 Hi, everybody, so my name is Stacia
23 Scott Kennedy, I'm the Executive Vice President
24 for SEIU Local 73. We represent around 6,000



1 special education classroom assistants, upwards
2 of about 600 bus aides, so I wanted to take the
3 time to come and address you all tonight because
4 we're actually in the throws of contract
5 negotiations and so there's a couple of pieces 18:17:27
6 that I wanted to educate the Advisory Committee
7 on and hopefully find some allies because we
8 think that we have some goals in bargaining that
9 will help special education overall, especially
10 when it comes to our SECAs and our bus aides. 18:17:40
11 So let's get into it.

12 So we surveyed about a thousand special
13 education classroom assistants, out of that
14 survey 40 percent stated that they've been
15 pulled to teach. So this is over the last year. 18:17:52
16 75 percent have been pulled at one time or
17 another to work outside of their job duties.
18 And so when our special education classroom
19 assistants are pulled, that means that they're
20 being pulled from their assigned students and 18:18:06
21 the required services that the children deserve
22 and need.

23 So one of the things that we're trying
24 to address at the bargaining table is to clean



1 up the job description as well as the job duties
2 in the contract. So in talks that we had with
3 the interim chief of ODLSS, it was clear that
4 ODLSS can advise and they can give advice to the
5 principals, but when it's in the contract it
6 makes it harder to slip out of what the contract
7 says. So one of our goals with SECA duties is
8 to expand upon the word emergency. And so it
9 says that SECAs can be pulled in the sense of an
10 emergency situation. Well, what we find across
11 the District is that the word emergency creates
12 a gray area in which special education classroom
13 assistants are pulled for any rhyme or reason
14 that the admin might have. So what we want to
15 do is we want to define and clear up that
16 language so that our SECAs are providing the
17 services that are needed for the children.

18:18:27

18:18:44

18:18:59

18 The other part of the survey was around
19 training. So close to 70 percent of the SECAs
20 that we surveyed stated that they never received
21 new hire orientation or training. And so what
22 that means now is over 600 schools roughly, and
23 so you have 600 variations of what a new hire
24 orientation would look like. And so what we're

18:19:12



1 pushing for at the bargaining table is to create
2 a centralized new hire orientation and training
3 so that they are, one, clear on what their
4 rights and responsibilities are, but, two, clear
5 on what the children that they serve rights
6 and -- rights under the law are as well.

18:19:41

7 We think that centralized training for
8 SECAs not just for new hires but overall with
9 more advanced skill development catered to
10 specialties that they might have, depending on
11 who they're one-on-one or the cluster program
12 that they're in, who they serve, would also
13 benefit the SECAs. 71 percent stated that they
14 struggle with burnout and exhaustion. So
15 working hands-on day-to-day with children can be
16 emotionally and physically exhausting for
17 special education classroom assistants, we think
18 that more professional development opportunities
19 and training in support will go a long way on
20 that front.

18:19:54

18:20:07

18:20:21

21 The other piece for special education
22 classroom assistants is around IEP meetings. So
23 a number of our special education classroom
24 assistants are not allowed or permitted to join



1 the IEP team for the meetings, even though
2 they're the front line of defense and advocacy a
3 lot of the time in the school buildings. And so
4 our SECAs want the ability to request to attend
5 the IEP meetings, not necessarily that it has to 18:20:45
6 be mandatory for all SECAs, but if they feel
7 that there is a certain aspect that they want to
8 be able to advocate for the child or children
9 that they serve that they would be relieved to
10 go to the IEP and be able to advocate and work 18:20:58
11 closer with the parents.

12 So those are some of the main issues
13 when it comes to SECAs and what we're trying to
14 fight for in the contract negotiations. We're
15 excited to welcome the new chief, Joshua Long, 18:21:14
16 and hope to build a partnership with -- it's
17 kind of weird to talk with my back to you, but
18 we hope to build a partnership with you so that
19 we can start to address these issues. And we
20 feel that by centralizing some of these aspects 18:21:28
21 we can account for many some of the liabilities
22 that happen when we have the variations across
23 the District.

24 So with our bus aides we've been able



1 to land language around training for bus aides,
2 which we're excited about, and we started doing
3 the new hire orientations for bus aides. So we
4 represent the CPS bus aides. There are vendor
5 aids in some instances, but we represent the
6 Chicago Public Schools bus aides.

18:21:55

7 So with the bus aides one of the main
8 sticking points is around hours and how the
9 routes are assigned. And so the way that the
10 routes are assigned now it's based on
11 evaluations and attendance and it's not
12 necessarily based on years of service. So a bus
13 aide with the current contract language could
14 receive four hours, six hours or eight hours.
15 So you could be a 25-year veteran CPS employee
16 and never know year to year if you're going to
17 get four hours of work or six hours of work. So
18 we're hoping to stabilize that and make it more
19 concrete so that years of service to the
20 District matters, not just as a thanks so much
21 but financially as a reward as well for their
22 hours.

18:22:07

18:22:19

18:22:33

23 So those are some of the main issues
24 that we're having in contract negotiations.



1 We've started bargaining at the end of May so
2 we're about six months in, but I wanted to brief
3 you all so that you have an idea. And then I
4 have business cards for you all because I'd like
5 to talk to a lot of you. Do I give them to you
6 all directly?

18:22:56

7 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: You can give them
8 to Vincencia.

9 MS. SCOTT: Well, I don't have them
10 right on me.

18:23:06

11 But I appreciate this Advisory
12 Committee and the work that you all have done.
13 And I know one of our members, Kimberly Dodd
14 Weston, has been with you all. So I appreciate
15 this body, and I hope to work with you all in
16 the future.

18:23:17

17 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you,
18 Ms. Scott, I appreciate you.

19 All right. I have been told there is
20 one public participant registered to speak who
21 is online -- correct that, there are two
22 registered to speak who is online. Once you
23 hear your name, please -- sorry, I will call
24 your name and number when it is your turn to

18:23:26



1 speak. For speakers joining us virtually, to
2 unmute, please press star 6. Once you hear your
3 name, please state your name for the record,
4 then the two-minute timer will start. Once the
5 two-minute timer -- two minutes are over please
6 proceed to conclude your remarks to allow for
7 the next speaker to begin. Thank you.

18:24:00

8 We are now ready to call on registered
9 speakers from the speaker list.

10 Speaker number 2, Evelyn Barragan, who
11 has joined us virtually. You can hit star 6.

18:24:19

12 MS. BARRAGAN: Hi, everyone, my name is
13 Evelyn Barragan, I am a science teacher at Rudy
14 and the member on the CTO Negotiations Committee
15 Team. I am a first-year here at Rudy, but I am
16 here to speak on the exigent need for special
17 education services at Instituto.

18:24:47

18 So as an alternative high school, our
19 student enrollment encompasses a large
20 population of students who have a wide range of
21 mental, emotional and physical disabilities. We
22 have students who are in gangs, a lot of
23 students are STLS, which means they have
24 unstable home situations, students who have

18:25:03



1 trauma, and we are currently getting an influx
2 of Venezuelan migrants. These are all examples,
3 as we have more, aside from students with
4 learning disabilities that are in clear need of
5 special education services. So it is a
6 desperation at this point that as on the Board,
7 on the Committee and I am involved in
8 negotiations, we are trying and pushing to get
9 these services for our students.

18:25:34

10 I did want to share a short story with
11 you all. Antonio was a student and a senior at
12 Rudy. He was very close to graduating. He had
13 a learning disability. He had a 504 and clearly
14 needed special education services that were not
15 provided for him due to --

18:25:54

16 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Speaker number 3,
17 you have 30 seconds remaining, please conclude
18 your comments.

18:26:14

19 MS. BARRAGAN: Thank you.

20 So he would voice constantly that he
21 struggled in school, that school wasn't for him.
22 He was the main provider at home. And
23 unfortunately, due to his involvement with gang
24 members, and that was his only way to provide at

18:26:23



1 home, unfortunately he was involved in a
2 shooting and passed away recently.

3 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you for
4 your comments.

5 MS. BARRAGAN: Unfortunately he was so 18:26:51
6 close to graduating and because he was not
7 offered those needs he could have graduated if
8 he was provided with those needs.

9 I apologize for going a little bit over
10 my time. Thank you so much for your time. And 18:27:04
11 I'm really hoping that this can help push the
12 negotiations table to get all those services
13 that all these students need so that doesn't
14 happen again.

15 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you for 18:27:15
16 your comments.

17 Speaker number 3, Kimberly Frey, who is
18 here in person.

19 MS. FREY: Hi, my name is Kimberly
20 Frey, and I am a co-chair of the CTU Legislative 18:27:33
21 Committee, and I am also a member of CTU's
22 Special Education Committee. I have been a
23 teacher for over 20 years with the last six of
24 them spent in CPS, first as a special education



1 teacher and case manager and now currently as a
2 day-to-day guest teacher working throughout the
3 District. I have taught every subject and grade
4 level and even in therapeutic residential
5 schools throughout the years, and the most
6 glaring issues that struck me coming into CPS as
7 a veteran teacher six years ago was the lack of
8 equitable resources, professional development,
9 least restrictive environment options and most
10 of all the staffing issues.

18:27:58

18:28:12

11 I am thrilled that our new Board has
12 stated that overhauling special education is one
13 of their top priorities, and I have several
14 suggestions. There's a really long list, but
15 here's a few, sorry.

18:28:25

16 To start, the Board needs to issue a
17 directive to stop using the harmful term diverse
18 learners when referring to our students with
19 IEPs and the teachers and staff who work with
20 them. Every human being is a diverse learner
21 and this term was specifically created to
22 minimize the legal obligations that we have to
23 serve students with disabilities. It is not a
24 negative term to say that somebody has a

18:28:38



1 disability and diverse learners needs to end.

2 Next, we need to address both teacher
3 recruitment and teacher retention. While there
4 are a few promising programs, such as, the
5 teacher residency and CPS has created
6 partnerships with local universities inside the
7 city --

18:29:03

8 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Speaker number 3,
9 please conclude.

10 MS. FREY: -- CPS needs to do a better
11 job of creating recruiting partnerships with
12 universities all throughout the state and even
13 into surrounding states to include signing
14 bonuses. Getting teachers won't be enough
15 though if we can't keep them. There needs to be
16 stronger contract language supporting special
17 education teachers in the hard work that they
18 do, such as, adequate prep time, relevant
19 professional development and easing their
20 overwhelming workloads.

18:29:10

18:29:21

21 CTU's Special Education Committee has
22 drafted many of these types of proposals that
23 will be presented during upcoming contract
24 negotiations and it's vitally important that

18:29:31



1 they are considered.

2 Thank you for your time. I'm super
3 excited to see the future of special education
4 in CPS.

5 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you for
6 your comments. 18:29:47

7 We will now proceed with working group
8 updates. Each working group identified areas of
9 concern around special education in CPS and
10 drafted tangible recommendations we believe will 18:30:00
11 improve lived experiences and outcomes for
12 students with disabilities and other
13 stakeholders. The proposed deliverables have
14 been drafted to focus on decreasing opportunity
15 gaps and enhancing the educational well-being of 18:30:16
16 students with disabilities, thus they are in
17 alignment with the values and parameters for the
18 Strategic Plan which emphasizes that all
19 students should feel safe, respected and
20 welcomed. 18:30:30

21 This shift requires a vision with
22 restorative and healing-centered approaches and
23 practices and a system that recognizes,
24 celebrates and leverages the diverse strengths



1 and assets of our students, staff, families and
2 communi ties.

3 The speci fic working group will share
4 their proposed deli verables. Afterward the
5 Commi ttee will discuss and give their feedback. 18:30:53
6 Remi nder, this is an open discussion amongst the
7 Commi ttee members, we will spend about ten
8 mi nutes per working group for their update and
9 the Commi ttee di scussi on.

10 The first update is from the Cul ture of 18:31:08
11 Speci al Educati on Group. Dee Fedrick and
12 working group members, please provide an update.

13 MS. FEDRICK: Thank you, Chair Fahey.

14 The Cul ture of Speci al Educati on Work
15 Group: This working group focused on ways to 18:31:28
16 address some of the persistent remnants of the
17 poli cies and procedures that were subject of the
18 2018 ISBE inquiry, as well as some of the
19 l anguage used to describe students with
20 disabili ties in CPS. We are proposing the 18:31:41
21 fol lowi ng deli verables:

22 Change the name of the Speci al
23 Educati on Department of Chi cago Publi c School s
24 from the Offi ce of Di verse Learner Support and



1 Services to the Office of Students with
2 Disabilities.

3 Rationale: Changing the name of the
4 department provides several things:

5 Honor students with disabilities by 18:32:02
6 naming the department to accurately reflect its
7 purpose and the population it is designed to
8 serve.

9 It combats the stigma that is tied to
10 shrouding disabilities. 18:32:15

11 It raises the profile of students with
12 disabilities so we can be intentional about
13 removing barriers to access and fully include
14 students with disabilities.

15 And it provides clarity for families 18:32:25
16 new to CPS or new to special education in CPS
17 that if their child has a disability or
18 suspected disability there is the functioning
19 CPS office that exists to support them.

20 Second, engage school leaders in 18:32:43
21 supporting expanded acceptance and inclusion of
22 students with disabilities by:

23 Prominently placing information about
24 special education in routine e-mail



1 communications to network and school leadership.

2 Expanding professional development
3 around special education issues like least
4 restrictive environment, behavior supports and
5 the benefits of inclusion for administrators, 18:33:09
6 teachers, special education classroom assistants
7 and support staff.

8 And expanding resources for
9 establishing, where appropriate, a full
10 continuum of services in each school. 18:33:20

11 Rationale: School leaders set the tone
12 for acceptance and inclusion for students with
13 disabilities in their respective schools. It is
14 the working group's assertion that engaging
15 school leaders in the conversation around 18:33:34
16 improving the daily experience, social/emotional
17 well-being and academic outcomes of students
18 with disabilities, as well as expanding
19 inclusion will lead to a more inclusive school
20 environment that benefits the entire school 18:33:47
21 community.

22 Three: Review and recalibrate the
23 roles of the ODLSS Network District
24 Representative, known as the DR, and the Special



1 Education Administrator, known as the SEA, to
2 promote a sense of customer service toward
3 families and stakeholders, to facilitate and
4 support upholding the decisions of
5 Individualized Education Program, IEP teams,
6 especially the people who work directly with the
7 students, help families navigate the CPS special
8 education system, support teachers who are
9 experiencing specific problems in the classroom
10 because so many DRs have valuable special
11 education expertise and provide annual training
12 from ISBE for DRs.

18:34:16

18:34:29

13 Rationale: This recommendation is
14 being forwarded to begin the process of clearly
15 and intentionally transforming the role of the
16 DR to consistently be one of service and support
17 to parents and the IEP team members as they
18 navigate the special education system in CPS.

18:34:44

19 In addition, the role of the SEA needs
20 to be clearly defined and communicated to CPS
21 parents and staff so that stakeholders are aware
22 of the additional assistance available.

18:35:01

23 Four: Develop parent/guardian training
24 supported by guidance materials that are



1 accessible written at a 3rd grade reading level ,
2 produced in multiple languages and available
3 electronically and in print that provide a road
4 map and examples for navigating special
5 education in CPS and transition to adulthood,
6 including what to expect, steps to take and
7 other resources from transitioning from early
8 intervention to CPS, pre-K to kindergarten, 8th
9 grade to high school , high school to transition
10 program, transition program to post CPS,
11 policies, procedures and contact information
12 within ODLSS relating to placement,
13 transportation, augmentative communication and
14 alternative communication, vision, deaf/hard of
15 hearing, nursing, behavior, psychology, social
16 work supports, parent support specialists,
17 et cetera. A list of specific tools and
18 supports available city-wide. What are the
19 various AAC devices and software programs used
20 by students with disabilities across CPS? What
21 curriculum, access, limitations, does each
22 device and program address.

18:35:29

18:35:47

18:36:06

18:36:23

23 Rational e: Many CPS parents/guardians
24 have no idea where to even begin when navigating



1 the special education system in CPS. The
2 current ODLSS procedure manual is much too
3 dense, technical and filled with legalities for
4 many parents to understand. Sending out
5 simplified steps will provide clarity on best
6 practices for everyone involved. There can be
7 much disparity between what special education
8 tools, programs and technology are available at
9 one school versus what is available at another
10 school. Establishing a master list of
11 District-owned resources and providing that
12 information to parents and IEP teams will
13 empower to support that child with full
14 knowledge of what tools are available to do so.

18:36:55

18:37:11

15 Last one, I promise.

18:37:26

16 Five: To create a parent/guardian
17 special education satisfaction survey.

18 Rationale: As a show of good faith,
19 deep inquiry and desire to get honest feedback,
20 CPS will collect data on parent/guardian
21 experience and satisfaction with special
22 education within the District. With this data
23 and the attention of rebuilding trust, the
24 District will be able to identify areas of

18:37:39



1 concern that may require additional focus and
2 attention.

3 Thank you.

4 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you.

5 Thank you for your update. Committee
6 Members, do you have any questions or comments
7 about the culture of SPED recommendations?

18:38:01

8 MS. PALMIERI: No, I think that we are
9 just really excited specifically with number
10 one, changing the name away from use of the term
11 diverse learner and appreciated the joint goals.

18:38:17

12 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Anyone else have
13 any comments or questions?

14 MS. FEDRICK: Well, I'm excited just to
15 start working on these deliverables just because
16 just seeing a lot of just, like I said,
17 disparity across the District, it's exciting to
18 get started on this so everyone can have
19 equitable resources within their school.

18:38:36

20 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you.

18:38:53

21 Anyone else?

22 All right. This one is on me.

23 Actually, I take that back. The next update is
24 from the High School and Transition Working



1 Group. Sandra Hei dt and worki ng group members,
2 please provi de an update.

3 MS. HEI DT: Good evening, everyone, my
4 name is Sandra Hei dt, and one of my members,
5 col leagues are here wi th me today, Dr. Mi quel
6 Lewi s. 18:39:19

7 Number one: High School in Transi ti on
8 Working Group: Illi noi s State Special Educati on
9 Law requi res that the IEP, the Indi vi dual
10 Educati on Plan, wi ll be in effect when a student
11 turns 14-and-a-hal f years of age or younger i f
12 determi ned by the IEP team contain a meani ngful
13 transi ti on plan wi th: 18:39:34

14 One or I: Measurabl e post-secondary
15 goals based upon age-appropri ate transi ti on
16 assessme nts and other i nformati on availabl e
17 regardi ng the student that is relat ed to
18 trai ni ng, educati on, empl oyme nt and i ndependent
19 livi ng ski lls. 18:39:52

20 Two: The transi ti on servi ces needed to
21 assi st the student i n reachi ng those goals,
22 i ncl udi ng courses of study. The purpose of
23 reachi ng transi ti on goals is to gi ve students
24 wi th di sabi liti es the greate st chance to l i ve as 18:40:05



1 independently as possible and participate in
2 meaningful relationships, employment and other
3 activities. We are proposing the following
4 deliverables:

5 Number 1: Develop a high school
6 transition plan to be completed in the 7th grade
7 or move forward to age to create transition
8 plans from the IEP meeting before the student
9 turns 14-and-a-half to the IEP meeting before
10 the student turns 12-and-a-half for students
11 with IEPs.

12 Rationale: Moving up the date for the
13 start of a transition plan or creating a
14 discrete high school transition plan for
15 students with disabilities specifically for the
16 transition from elementary school to high school
17 would allow for IEP teams to use meaningful
18 transition data to help inform placement in an
19 appropriate high school program.

20 Number two: Allow IEP teams to place
21 students with disabilities into appropriate
22 programs based on the individual child's needs,
23 taking into account the child's strengths,
24 preferences and interests.

18:40:31

18:40:49

18:41:03

18:41:19



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Rationale: A transition plan is designed to guide programming, placement and necessary support for a student with an IEP to meet their post-secondary goals. There are programs within Chicago Public Schools that could be in alignment with a student's post-secondary goals that the current students are unable to access.

18:41:47

In addition, there is an Illinois state law that says a student in high school with an IEP may enroll in the school district's CTE program at any time if participation -- if participation in a CTE program is consistent with the student's transition goals. The current system does not allow for that. To be clear, an IEP team would place students only into the appropriate programs based on IEP team decisions. No one wants to place a student with a disability into a program in which they would not be successful at that same time -- at the same time. If a transition plan is created after high school placement, a student may be denied appropriate programs due to timing and other factors.

18:41:58

18:42:16

18:42:32



1 Number three: Compile a comprehensive
2 list of Chicago Public Schools and non Chicago
3 Public School transition programs available to
4 CPS students for super senior transitional
5 education, including:

18:43:01

6 A: The name.

7 B: Location.

8 C: The types of programs offered at
9 each school, i.e., CTE, community-based
10 instruction, arts, college preparatory classes,
11 internships, et cetera.

18:43:12

12 D: Community business partners like
13 Department of Human Services or Department of
14 Resource -- Workforce Development.

15 E: Typical scope and sequence of
16 classes.

18:43:27

17 F: Certification opportunities, i.e.,
18 OSHA, food service sanitation, cosmetology,
19 licensure, et cetera.

20 Rationale: Information about post 12th
21 grade transition programs is difficult to find
22 for students other than those who are coming out
23 of cluster programs. Students, parents and
24 guardians and IEP teams need to know

18:43:40



1 post-secondary possibilities to make informed
2 decisions about whether or not a student should
3 be granted a diploma or spend another year or
4 two in a transition program.

5 Four: Develop a policy and procedure
6 that allows for students with IEPs to transfer
7 high school programs if such a program becomes
8 inappropriate.

9 Rationale: High school is a time of
10 great growth and change while remaining in a
11 given program with all appropriate special
12 education support in place for the entirety of
13 9th through 12th grade should be the goal.
14 Students with IEPs should be allowed to change
15 programs based on current transition goals.

16 Thank you, that ends that report.

17 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you.

18 Does anyone have questions or comments
19 about the High School in Transition working
20 group's work?

21 MS. COHEN: Mostly I just have a
22 comment, which is thank you, I think these are
23 fantastic deliverables. As a parent whose
24 24-year-old was not in a cluster program, I can

18:44:05

18:44:20

18:44:34

18:44:52



1 attest to the fact that you leave and it's very
2 unclear what's supposed to happen after that and
3 six years later now we're still trying to figure
4 out what's supposed to happen after that.

5 One thing -- one quick suggestion I 18:45:19
6 have for you in the list that you're creating is
7 to include the Department of Rehabilitation
8 Services because they are supposed to, just an
9 FYI, be available to create an individualized
10 plan of employment for students with 18:45:33
11 disabilities, and that includes them paying for
12 community college for any student in Illinois
13 who attends a community college and has an IEP.
14 So I think it's important to keep that in mind.

15 And I also want to reiterate something 18:45:49
16 you said, that for students where a CTE program
17 in the city might be appropriate for them, they
18 need to be considered at any point in their high
19 school career, not just when they're going into
20 9th grade. And if it's not appropriate, I'm 18:46:04
21 just going to say as someone who sees a lot of
22 IEPs, it should not be part of their transition
23 planning. If a student has a goal that they're
24 going to become a doctor but they're not even



1 appropriate for an allied health science CTE
2 program, then they shouldn't have a goal saying
3 that they're going to become a doctor.

4 So I'm really excited to see what you
5 come up with. Thank you. 18:46:28

6 MS. HEIDT: Thank you. Actually, I'm a
7 parent of special needs son, 21-year-old, so a
8 lot of this came with us talking and discussing
9 some of the same things that you just mentioned.
10 So work in progress, but we got a good team. 18:46:42
11 Thank you care. Care that was the lady that did
12 this.

13 MS. FEDRICK: I like this because I
14 come across a lot of parents who even -- they
15 think that because a child is now in 12th grade 18:46:52
16 that that's it. They don't know options and
17 different programs around CPS. So giving
18 parents that option and that list and having the
19 knowledge will go a long way, even programs that
20 are available after they graduate CPS. 18:47:10

21 MS. HEIDT: And that plays into your
22 training that your group talked about.

23 MS. FEDRICK: Yeah, a list, a
24 comprehensive list of what's out there.



1 MS. HEIDT: Yes.

2 MR. LALLY: I'd just like to say, to
3 echo what some others have said, I'm most
4 excited about number three, which is developing
5 the comprehensive list. 18:47:32

6 And I'm just curious, I know this is
7 kind of in its infancy, but I'm not on this
8 working group, but I'd be happy to participate
9 in helping develop that or working on that. But
10 I'd love to follow up on how we can make that 18:47:44
11 comprehensive list a reality because I think it
12 will take some time.

13 MS. HEIDT: Thank you.

14 MS. FEDRICK: One thing that should be
15 brought up too is that you were speaking about 18:47:55
16 the Department of Rehabilitation. You know, at
17 a lot of the IEP meetings, they're not there,
18 and I think that's something that we all need to
19 be transparent about is that DORS is not always
20 there and they need to be. 18:48:10

21 MS. HEIDT: And then the knowledge that
22 they're just now receiving regarding puns or
23 regarding, you know, able accounts so they will
24 have some type of financial stability as they



1 get older, there's so much information. We
2 talked about guardianship versus self -- you
3 know, supporting decision making. I mean, you
4 know, a lot of parents don't know so, you know,
5 we jump straight to guardianship, although our
6 loved one with a disability may be able to
7 advocate a little bit for themselves and just
8 need some supports. If parents are aware of
9 this before that 18 years of age, then they'll
10 have some options or choices. It's great, we're
11 all working together.

18:48:34

18:48:47

12 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: I think -- oh, go
13 ahead, Rachel.

14 MS. ARFA: Hi, this is Rachel. I think
15 this is good to include -- to teach students
16 with disabilities about the possibilities, for
17 example, (inaudible) the process -- rather to
18 disclose your disability and how to ask for an
19 application for reasonable accommodation, I
20 think that would be a huge benefit to the
21 student as we think about transition from high
22 school to whatever their next step. I would
23 love to see students be prepared with how to
24 advocate (inaudible) and how to navigate that.

18:49:03

18:49:21



1 I think that would be a huge asset to include
2 for them.

3 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Anyone else?
4 Go ahead.

5 MR. LEWIS: I just want to acknowledge 18:49:51
6 what a privilege it's been to serve on this
7 working group alongside these experts, having
8 Ms. Heidt and, you, Chairwoman Fahey Hughes, to
9 help me understand the importance of this work
10 was a welcomed experience and to hear the 18:50:05
11 feedback from our colleagues affirms how
12 important this work is.

13 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you.

14 I think one of the themes we come
15 across in these lists of deliverables is how -- 18:50:17
16 how much information there is and how it is
17 currently not accessible in readable format, in
18 simple language, and I think all of this
19 information can be run through that filter so
20 that families have options and know what the 18:50:43
21 options are.

22 All right. Anything else?

23 So the next update is from the Least
24 Restrictive Environment Working Group. Alyssa



1 Rodriguez and working group members, please
2 provide an update. Alyssa is online.

3 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Mary, can you read it
4 for me just because I am stuck in traffic trying
5 to get home, and I'm participating while driving
6 and not trying to get in trouble. 18:51:15

7 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: No problem.

8 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. I'm so
9 sorry, I got stuck in a big pocket of traffic,
10 everybody. 18:51:27

11 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: All right.

12 So the Least Restrictive Environment
13 Working Group: The Individuals with
14 Disabilities Education Act, IDEA, tells us that
15 students with an IEP must be included and learn
16 alongside their typically functioning peers to
17 the greatest extent possible in the least
18 restrictive environment, that's LRE going
19 forward, as long as the student with the IEP can
20 learn within that environment. To be moved to a
21 more restrictive environment, the District must
22 justify why a specific child is unable to learn
23 in the LRE. CPS is seeing an alarming increase
24 in the number of students who require a 18:51:41
18:51:56



1 dedicated SECA, as well as students who are
2 being educated in the most restrictive
3 environment where 60 percent or more of a
4 child's school day is spent outside the general
5 education classroom. The most common cause of
6 this trend toward more restrictive environments
7 relates to students engaging in behaviors
8 related to their disabilities that disrupt the
9 learning environment. We are proposing the
10 following deliverables:

18:52:22

18:52:37

11 One: Develop and fully staff a robust
12 behavior specialist-led behavior intervention
13 program to provide training for general
14 education and special education teaching staff
15 and SECAs on best practices to address behaviors
16 that interfere with students' learning and the
17 supports available to students in tier one. And
18 direct board -- and direct board certified
19 analyst or BCBA directed behavior specialist
20 classroom support in developing behavioral
21 interventions in management plans for individual
22 students.

18:52:53

18:53:13

23 The rationale for this is students,
24 teachers and SECAs, related service providers



1 and administrators need additional support to
2 help students decrease disruptive behaviors so
3 that students can remain in the LRE. There are
4 evidence-based interventions that are effective
5 ways to improve behaviors, but the District has
6 to invest in expanded resources to address the
7 high need.

18:53:41

8 In addition, younger students are being
9 diagnosed with much more significant
10 disabilities and are going from a blended pre-K
11 classroom directly into LRE three cluster
12 programs.

18:53:52

13 Number two: Expanded SECA training
14 that is grounded in establishing trusting and
15 supportive relationships with students, parents
16 and guardians and IEP teams, including best
17 practices around minimizing disruptive and
18 disengaged behaviors, physical restraint and
19 time out, de-escalation, appropriate fading of
20 supports, a SECA's purpose in dealing with
21 individual students and the level of student
22 support needed based on the significance and
23 type of each students' disability.

18:54:08

18:54:27

24 The rationale for this is that CPS



1 needs SECAs adequately trained so they have
2 explicit knowledge of the interventions that
3 support keeping students in the LRE. SECAs are
4 often the school staff who have the most direct
5 interactions with students with IEPs who have
6 behavior challenges, yet they are provided with
7 very little training on their purpose and best
8 practices within their job.

18:54:57

9 Number three: Develop accessible and
10 proactive Parent Know Your Rights handouts and
11 digital materials about LRE, including CPS
12 policies and procedures for IEP teams in making
13 LRE decisions, a complete and current list of
14 the continuum of services available at each
15 school, materials for parents with examples of
16 supports available to keep students engaged
17 within the LRE, including behavior plans, safety
18 plans, SECA supports available, whether to
19 keep -- help keep students on task or to provide
20 sensory breaks, working with small groups to
21 allow a special ed teacher direct instruction
22 with other small groups, for example, and BCBA
23 intervention.

18:55:11

18:55:28

18:55:47

24 D: A complete and current list and



1 interactive map of cluster programs, locations
2 and designations and an explanation of the
3 placement process and next steps for parents who
4 believe placement may be inappropriate.

5 The rationale for this is that 18:56:16
6 information on placement options within
7 individual schools is often completely opaque.
8 To best support their children and make informed
9 choices about their child's school, parents and
10 guardians should be able to find out what 18:56:30
11 placement options are available at a given
12 school, such as:

13 One: Is there a co-teaching model
14 being used and for what grades?

15 Two: Are there push-in services 18:56:41
16 available?

17 Three: Are there pull-out services
18 available?

19 Four: Are there non-cluster
20 instructional LRE three classrooms available? 18:56:50

21 Five: Are there cluster programs
22 available, and if so, what populations are
23 served in those cluster programs?

24 And that's what I have for the LRE



1 Working Group. Any questions or comments on
2 these proposals?

3 MS. COHEN: I have a question -- well,
4 a comment that's really a question for CPS that
5 I hope will be addressed, which is that the 18:57:20
6 procedural manual says that every school in CPS
7 offers the full continuum on the LRE spectrum
8 from LRE one to two to three, and I'm -- it says
9 here that we need to figure out which schools
10 don't do that, but CPS has a policy that they 18:57:39
11 say that they do offer that, and I think that's
12 not always accurate for schools that have
13 eliminated all resource rooms and offer only a
14 co-teaching model, so it seems like something
15 that CPS should easily get on board with since 18:57:56
16 it's their policy.

17 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you.

18 MS. PALMIERI: I think I would just say
19 in regards to the BCBA support, we have
20 advocated -- families have advocated and 18:58:07
21 especially SPEACC as a group, the Special
22 Education Advocacy Coalition of Chicago, who
23 called for the ISBE inquiry with CPS to increase
24 the number of BCBA's in the SBSS Department, the



1 Student Behavioral Support Services Department.
2 So years ago Erin Miller was the manager and she
3 did have a lot of trainings that SECA teachers
4 could access. I'm not sure of the status of
5 those now.

18:58:37

6 Also, we have to make sure that SECAs
7 and staff can be relieved to be able to attend
8 the training, but having her support or support
9 from their team has been life changing for a lot
10 of students, including my own at one time. We
11 have been advocating for a BCBA per network, and
12 I think that the -- you know, ODLSS previously
13 was on board for that, but one of my main
14 concerns was that they felt like that BCBA could
15 be used to respond to crises. When a student is
16 in crises, it is far too late to be able to
17 provide the positive behavioral interventions
18 and supports needed. So we want to ensure that
19 the BCBAs are available and accessible to
20 support the teams and support the students far
21 before they get to that point.

18:58:51

18:59:09

18:59:27

22 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Go ahead, Dee.

23 MS. FEDRICK: What concerns me is
24 the -- I like the idea of the placement in



1 letting parents know, but as quick as a SECA --
2 having those options available to parents for
3 them to see is nice and dandy, but all those
4 slots may be taken at that school. So it would
5 be like a parent, you know, getting all their
6 hopes up only to be shattered. Oh, well my kid
7 could go to this school, it's right down the
8 street. But guess what? There are no slots
9 available. So then they're going to -- it's
10 like they'll be fishing, on a fishing
11 expedition. So it's like it's going to be
12 challenging.

18:59:56

19:00:08

13 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: I understand it
14 will be challenging. I think our intent is to
15 be as transparent as possible and give parents
16 the information on the schools, even if they may
17 not be able to get into a specific school, just
18 to err on the side of transparency and
19 communication and be generous with the
20 information about options available to families.

19:00:19

19:00:40

21 MS. PALMIERI: At one point we were
22 talking about having a live document. So if
23 it's -- say it's like a city-wide team or
24 placement office has a live document --



1 MS. FEDRICK: We're not allowed to.

2 MS. PALMIERI: Well, we wouldn't have

3 it but CPS would. Even before that the only

4 person who had an understanding of seats that

5 were available was the placement manager. So 19:01:02

6 now they've talked about having a living

7 document. So if you go to the city -- I

8 believe, if you go through the city-wide

9 assessment team, for example, and your student

10 is identified for a cluster program, you should 19:01:13

11 be able to receive placement in that moment,

12 someone should be able to see what's available

13 for seats.

14 So I think that the District, maybe we

15 can keep talking about it further, I think at 19:01:23

16 one point that was one of their goals, to make

17 it more transparent even for internally because

18 placement was taking so long to --

19 MS. FEDRICK: Yeah, because I remember

20 when we had to cut out talking about placement, 19:01:37

21 it was just like --

22 MS. PALMIERI: Yeah, or you would call

23 a school and be like do you have a cluster? And

24 they're like, I don't know if we're allowed to



1 answer that or not. It's like ridiculous.

2 MS. COHEN: I'd also have a quick
3 little request for this Committee, this working
4 group, which is to press CPS to say explicitly
5 one way or the other whether or not cluster
6 programs are only supposed to be for students
7 who require a significantly modified curriculum.
8 We really need a straight answer on that.

19:02:02

9 MS. HEIDT: Quickly, a quick fix, I was
10 really focusing on number three, and they talked
11 about SECA supports. A quick fix, there's a
12 section in the IEP that says, you know, supports
13 for school personnel, and I fortunately read my
14 IEP, although I was always told that many
15 parents didn't, so maybe a quick fix would be to
16 train IEPs when they come into the high school,
17 freshman level, give them a quick tutorial
18 training about the IEPs. We all know what they
19 are because of our training, our education, you
20 know, having loved ones in the school. But why
21 not give the parents a brief tutorial about what
22 this is, what that is, and then they may be able
23 to ask the team to assist in that area on behalf
24 of their child?

19:02:19

19:02:38

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MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you.

Does anyone -- go ahead, Rachel.

MS. ARFA: This is Rachel. I think that providing (inaudible) in cultural (inaudible) think about students with disabilities who are new arrivals who are coming into our system and have to be provided the support (inaudible) and trying to adapt here in our city. So I think that that would be really to them (inaudible) expertise consider students with disabilities.

19:03:20

19:03:42

MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you.

Any other comments on this subject?

All right. Moving on, the next update is from the Literacy Working Group. Barb Cohen, please share.

19:04:00

MS. COHEN: This working group recognizes literacy as a complex, expansive issue requiring coordination among many departments and stakeholders, but we also recognize the need to start somewhere within our purview. We're proposing the following three deliverables:

19:04:14

The first is create a public awareness



1 campaign for CPS general education teachers and
2 parents/caregivers to increase understanding of
3 the signs of specific learning disabilities
4 among students.

5 And what we're thinking about with that
6 specifically is a piece of paper that's posted
7 in the office in each school that describes the
8 characteristics that are often associated with
9 dyslexia. Many of those characteristics are
10 apparent in preschoolers, and it's important for
11 parents and for teachers of gen ed students who
12 are the first people who are exposed to most of
13 these students to see what some of the flags are
14 to know whether or not a student requires a
15 further evaluation.

16 The second deliverable that we're --
17 we'd like to work on is development of a
18 Frequently Asked Questions document related to
19 supports for students with specific learning
20 disabilities, appropriate interventions and
21 guidance around identification and intervention
22 for parents and CPS staff.

23 The rationale is that many parents who
24 have students with specific learning

19:04:36

19:04:54

19:05:09

19:05:25



1 disabilities have said that they did not get
2 helpful information from CPS when trying to get
3 support for their children. Developing this
4 resource is an issue of equity, transparency and
5 education of stakeholders.

19:05:48

6 And it's important to note that some of
7 the criteria for eligibility under specific
8 learning disability are different from other
9 categories of eligibility in an IEP so it's
10 helpful for parents to understand that.

19:06:01

11 It's also helpful for parents to
12 understand what appropriate interventions look
13 like so that they know whether or not the goals
14 in their students' IEP makes sense and whether
15 or not the strategies to achieve those goals are
16 appropriate with the disability the student has.

19:06:14

17 And our last proposed deliverable is to
18 pilot a summer literacy program using
19 research-based instruction that has been shown
20 to be effective for students with a specific
21 learning disability in reading. Students
22 qualify for extended school year, ESY, if
23 they're working on a critical skill or if they
24 have a concern about significant regression and

19:06:30



1 a long-term for recruitment -- for recoupment of
2 that skill. And students who have dyslexia are
3 working on a critical skill, reading, and they
4 have demonstrated through lots and lots of
5 research that if you take a pause in their
6 education, they're going to lose pretty much
7 everything they've learned because they have to
8 work so much harder to master those skills.

19:07:05

9 So we have begun conversations with
10 ODLSS about a pilot program for the summer.
11 There's a lot of work involved and a lot of
12 questions, but we're looking forward to seeing
13 what we can come up with soon.

19:07:16

14 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you, Barb.

15 Does anyone have any questions about
16 the literacy proposals or comments?

19:07:28

17 All right. Thank you. Thanks so much.

18 So we're now switching gears to focus
19 on the second discussion topic for this
20 evening's meeting, the work of the ODLSS Chief
21 Search Working Group. While the chief search is
22 complete, this working group will continue to
23 work collectively to determine how to be of
24 support throughout Chief Long's tenure.

19:07:49



1 Committee Members, let's discuss different ideas
2 of how this working group can continue to be
3 impactful within the Special Ed Advisory
4 Committee and the District. Any thoughts on how
5 we can support Chief Long going forward to put
6 you all on the spot?

19:08:21

7 MS. PALMIERI: Well, I would say that
8 if he's available it could be another
9 opportunity for stakeholder feedback, if that's
10 every infrequent or as frequent as we could
11 accommodate so that you can get feedback on how
12 things are going within the department.

19:08:38

13 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you.

14 MS. FEDRICK: I think with meeting with
15 every subcommittee just to get an update and see
16 if they have any feedback, suggestions on ways
17 for not necessarily improvement or what's being
18 heard out there in the District or how I can
19 support my fellow colleagues out there because
20 it's a lot of teachers, staff that come up to me
21 and ask for support and ask what to do and I
22 don't know where to turn to. So it would be
23 nice maybe to just meet kind of frequently and
24 say have you heard anything and just have that

19:08:56

19:09:16



1 open candid conversation.

2 MR. LALLY: If I could say something.
3 If we're discussing how this working group can
4 still be impactful moving forward, you know, we
5 have a lot of working groups here that are 19:09:43
6 really diving into some serious and deep issues,
7 but as we know you can't always project what
8 next month's concern or next month's issue would
9 be, and maybe this working group can serve as
10 more of a nimble group that could address issues 19:09:57
11 as they arise. I'm thinking now obviously
12 bussing is a long-term issue, but CPS -- there's
13 an influx of new arrivals that the city is
14 facing and Commissioner Arfa had mentioned that
15 briefly and how to support new arrival students 19:10:15
16 with disabilities, maybe that's a newer issue
17 that we can start focusing on and others as they
18 come up.

19 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you.

20 Any other thoughts? All right. Go 19:10:27
21 ahead.

22 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Can I say something,
23 Mary?

24 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Go ahead.



1 MS. RODRIGUEZ: I would also like to
2 see this new or this continued working committee
3 to maybe also take it as an opportunity of
4 making sure that we are keeping a strong pulse
5 and voice on some of the smaller groups
6 represented in ODLSS, like in particular like
7 our clinicians and the various needs that they
8 have to make sure that it's just something
9 that's a part of the conversation regularly
10 because I know that sometimes related service
11 providers tend to be a secondhand conversation
12 and just using this as an opportunity to
13 continue to bring up our related service
14 providers within higher level conversations
15 within ODLSS.

19:10:50

19:10:58

19:11:14

16 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you.
17 Anyone else online have a comment to
18 make?

19 All right. Moving on then we -- it's
20 my understanding that speaker number one has
21 arrived to speak in person, so we're going to
22 take a minute and let him get his -- speaker
23 number one, Mr. Wargowski.

19:11:34

24 MR. WARGOWSKI: First, thank you, thank



1 you for your flexibility of this father with a
2 disability who doesn't always read to the end of
3 instructions.

4 I know my time is short but not
5 allowing gen ed kids onto buses this year means 19:12:12
6 we've lost a valuable support. We lost a
7 valuable support for my son and of community and
8 friendship. And I think the increase in IEP and
9 504 transportation requests reflects that we're
10 not the only family impacted by that. If I felt 19:12:35
11 like we were the only family impacted, I'd be
12 working in a different avenue. But I'm here
13 because of our family's success story, a
14 fantastic 1st grader, 1st grade teacher and
15 early support resources at Inter-American got us 19:12:51
16 pointed in the right direction. Many other
17 aspects of life brought upset and breakdowns for
18 our son, the bus, school, the bus stop and his
19 friends there never did. The bus stop is a
20 loose knit resource of trusted friends. It's 19:13:07
21 not exactly a barber shop but it's close. And
22 the idea seems to agree with me, they say the
23 beginning point for consideration, this is LRE
24 stuff, is the appropriate way which to transport



1 a child with disabilities is the regular, i.e.,
2 non-special needs schools. This regular
3 environment must occur unless a child cannot
4 travel safely. And nothing I say --

5 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Speaker, you have 19:13:41
6 30 seconds.

7 MR. WARGOWSKI: I have 30 seconds which
8 is why I'm just done.

9 This change has cost CPS \$75,000 for my
10 family alone. We went from a student on a bus 19:13:56
11 whose cost was about \$5,000 per year, now his
12 paratransit vehicle is \$80,000 a year. And he
13 was thriving and now he's traveling alone. And
14 when I sent to SES and Charles Mayfield and
15 said, can you please put two other families in 19:14:16
16 our car because there's five seats in there, the
17 response was no because we can't put the other
18 5500 in seats. There are enough seats, but
19 there aren't enough bus drivers.

20 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you for 19:14:30
21 your comments.

22 MR. WARGOWSKI: And you know this.

23 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Yes.

24 MR. WARGOWSKI: I had some wonderful



1 things to say, but I'm not going to say them.

2 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Okay. Thank you
3 so much for being here, I appreciate your
4 comments.

5 MS. PALMIERI: I think I just had one 19:14:44
6 comment too like so there are five speaker
7 slots, and I remember going to the Board of Ed,
8 especially talking about special education
9 needs, and two minutes is really not enough
10 time. So if we can increase them moving forward 19:14:58
11 to three minutes or even, you know, because I
12 think that we want to encourage engagement, I
13 want to hear the rest of that. If we reach a
14 point where we have so many families coming that
15 the meetings are two hours long we can revisit 19:15:14
16 it, but I think for now we should extend the
17 amount of time for public comment.

18 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: Thank you.

19 MS. FEDRICK: I'm sorry for your loss,
20 but I do hear you. 19:15:26

21 MEMBER FAHEY HUGHES: So I'm going to
22 make some closing remarks just about the -- what
23 we're doing here with the subcommittee.

24 So according to National Council on



1 Disabilities, 85 percent of incarcerated youth
2 have learning and/or emotional disabilities.
3 Often behaviors that are directly related to a
4 students' disability begins a path that moves
5 students from school to the juvenile justice
6 system. The school-to-prison pipeline is real,
7 and we need to uplift and support students with
8 disabilities on a truly individual basis so that
9 we can be a part of helping to dismantle the
10 school-to-prison pipeline. That's my main point
11 I want to make.

19:16:03

19:16:20

12 And I also want to thank Interim Chief
13 Dick Smith for bringing his knowledge, patience
14 and generosity and support to ODLSS.

15 I want to thank Chief Long for throwing
16 his hat in the ring for ODLSS, Chief, for what
17 can be an extremely demanding job. We're
18 looking forward to working and collaborating.

19:16:38

19 I want to thank all our Committee
20 Members for volunteering your time and efforts
21 to help move the rudder of ODLSS in a direction
22 that improves the experience and outcomes of
23 students -- for students with disabilities in
24 CPS.

19:16:56



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I also want to thank CPS school-level staff, the teachers, SECAs and related service providers who make a positive impact in our children with disabilities to reach their unique potential every day.

19:17:24

If you are interested in continued engagement with us or have questions, comments or suggestions, please e-mail BOESEAC@CPS.EDU. If you know of people who couldn't attend tonight but would like to be engaged, please contact the Board Office at (773) 553-1600.

19:17:48

And that concludes our meeting. Thank you, everyone.

(Whereupon, these were all the 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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