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# *Committee Meeting*

of

## JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*“Commissioner of Education, Dr. Leo Klagholz and Newark State District Superintendent, Dr. Beverly Hall will present the district’s Strategic Plan”*

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**LOCATION:** Room 319  
State House  
Trenton, New Jersey

**DATE:** December 16, 1996  
10:00 a.m.

### **MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:**

Senator John H. Ewing, Chairman  
Assemblyman John A. Rocco, Vice-Chairman  
Senator Gordon A. MacInnes  
Senator Joseph A. Palaia  
Senator Ronald L. Rice  
Assemblyman Jeffrey W. Moran

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Craig A. Stanley  
District 28

Melanie M. Schulz  
Executive Director



*Meeting Recorded and Transcribed by*  
The Office of Legislative Services, Public Information Office,  
Hearing Unit, State House Annex, CN 068, Trenton, New Jersey

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Beverly L. Hall, Ed.D.

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lb: 1-80 (Internet edition 1997)

**SENATOR JOHN H. EWING (Chairman):** I apologize for being late. I was just working on something regarding the 65 orphaned students we have in the State of New Jersey, who have no parents and no residence or anything like that. DYFS is about to drop them out of the special education schools that they're in. That's what I've been working on, because we want to try and get this resolved, if we think it's necessary, in the funding bill, which the Senate Appropriations Committee will, hopefully, be releasing this afternoon. So I have to get the-- We're going to have a meeting and Commissioner Klagholz has very kindly agreed to be there.

So I apologize, and I appreciate getting this report on Newark. In spite of the publicity that comes out, I feel things are moving along.

Commissioner, good morning.

**COMMISSIONER LEO F. KLAGHOLZ:** Good morning, Senator Ewing and other members of the Joint Committee. We very much appreciate having this opportunity to report on the progress of the State-operated district of Newark.

As you know, State operation began in July of 1995. Since that time, I think that the district leadership has accomplished a great deal. The State District Superintendent, Dr. Beverly Hall, who is here this morning, and her staff have improved the facilities, reorganized the district, and redistributed resources from administration to the classroom. They have also made significant changes that are designed to improve leadership at the school level. They have engaged the local community in this process to support the needed changes. The changes have laid the foundation for improved student performance in the school district, our principle aim.

At the same time these things were being accomplished, the district was engaged in a major strategic planning process for the future. The district has now developed a plan in which it has set goals for improvements in student performance and other improvements in the system. It identifies specific targets that the district intends to reach over the next year and in subsequent years. The plan also describes the strategies that will be used to reach those targets and identifies the managers who have primary responsibility for seeing that these things happen.

The plan was developed with the participation of district and school staff, the local advisory board, representatives from the union, parents, and other members of the community. Department staff worked with the district in the process, and the State Board reviewed the plan at its December 4 meeting.

Today, Dr. Hall, the State Superintendent, has joined us to present the work of this past year and the district's strategic planning process in more detail. She and members of my senior staff will be glad to answer your questions.

I'll be testifying at Assembly Appropriations this morning. So during the process, I'll depart. With me, however, are Deputy Commissioner of Education, Richard DiPatri, and Assistant Commissioner of Field Services, Peter Contini.

At this time, I'll introduce Dr. Beverly Hall, the Superintendent of the Newark School District.

SENATOR EWING: Commissioner, I'm not sure we're going to be doing that bill this morning.

COMMISSIONER KLAGHOLZ: No. Assembly Appropriations.

SENATOR EWING: Oh. Excuse me. Pardon me.

COMMISSIONER KLAGHOLZ: I hope they are.

**DEP. COMMISSIONER RICHARD A. DiPATRI:**

There is another House, Senator.

SENATOR EWING: I thought there was only one House.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: We don't.

SENATOR EWING: Okay. (laughter)

**BEVERLY L. HALL, Ed.D.:** Good morning, Commissioner Klagholz, Senator Ewing, members of the Joint Committee, senior staff, and members of the audience.

It is my pleasure to present to you today a report on the 1995-1996 achievements and to provide you with an overview of our strategic plan. In the Newark Public Schools, we believe that student success is job one. Within the pages of the strategic plan, you will find the road map that we're following to establish standards of excellence within our schools.

In addition to raising the bar for both teacher and student performance, we have defined clear lines of responsibility and accountability throughout the plan. We are involving students, parents, teachers, administrators, union representatives, and the larger community in the process of rebuilding the Newark Public Schools. They are essential partners in this important work.

Our first-year action plan of 1995-1996 focused on six goals:

- 1) the improvement of teaching and learning;
- 2) evaluations of principals and vice-principals;

- 3) reorganization of the Central Office;
- 4) reaching the students at risk of dropping out of school;
- 5) clean and safe buildings;
- 6) parental involvement.

The plan you have received today builds on the goals and strategies that were outlined in the first-year action plan. I would like to share with you some of our achievements to date.

We decentralized authority and responsibility in the Newark Public Schools by establishing five school leadership teams, under the direction of five assistant superintendents, to work with principals and vice-principals.

We assessed 197 principals and vice-principals in the 1995-1996 school year. By the end of that school year, we had 37 vacancies to fill, composed of 19 principal and 18 vice-principal slots. To date, we have appointed 17 new principals and 14 new vice-principals. We will appoint 2 new principals and 4 new vice-principals in the coming months. A principal selection process was established involving parents, teachers, administrators, and union representatives. In addition, newly assigned principals and vice-principals will continue to be assessed.

A Principals Leadership Institute was designed to involve principals and vice-principals in planning for their own professional development.

Parents became an important part of the school core teams that are helping to fulfill our goal of school-based planning. They are also participating in the parent volunteer academy and on districtwide committees dealing with every topic from bilingual education to discipline.

The Newark business and foundation community also responded positively to our school reform efforts with a variety of grants and awards that have enabled us to pursue our goals aggressively. This support has culminated in the establishment of the Newark Fund for Excellence in public education, which has generated commitments that exceed \$6 million from Victoria, Prudential, and other foundations.

To better provide a safe environment of students, we undertook a six-week, crash repair program in the summer of 1995 to prepare all schools for reopening.

We reviewed our security practices and hired an additional 25 guards to supplement our security force for the 1995-1996 school year. We are also meeting on a regular basis with the Newark Police Department to gain their assistance in providing safe passages for our students.

Even as we implemented our first-year action plan, we set the wheels of reorganization in motion. The reorganization of the central administration was the watershed event of our first year. We reduced wasteful spending by eliminating more than 600 excess positions in noninstructional areas. As a result, we were able to redirect \$26 million toward the classroom and support programs for children.

Last year, because administrative costs exceeded State guidelines, the district was penalized more than \$2 million by the State Department of Education. This year Newark was not fined, because we have started putting our fiscal house in order.

Reorganization was not an easy decision. But as was well documented, the State intervention occurred because our children were failing

miserably. By cutting administrative fat through reorganization and redirecting money to children in the classroom, we gave an important signal to the Newark school community that student success is indeed job one.

The planning involved in the reorganization enabled us to lay the groundwork for the entire strategic plan. Drafts of the plan were critiqued by the advisory board and the public. This strategic plan for systemic reform will guide us as we strive to provide a rich educational environment for all students. In addition, strategies that will eliminate the deficiencies identified in the Comprehensive Compliance Investigation Report and failed monitoring indicators are noted in Appendix A of the strategic plan.

I should note here that we have placed an emphasis on weeding out corruption. To that end, we have established a new office of special investigations which is responsible for eradicating fraud, waste, and abuse.

Six district priorities for 1996-1997 have been culled from the 11 objectives in the strategic plan. We consider all of our objectives important, but we also know realistically that we would be wise to identify priorities, difficult as that may be. Our six priorities this year are:

- 1) pupil performance improvement;
- 2) school restructuring;
- 3) integration of technology in the classroom;
- 4) staff development;
- 5) programs for special populations;
- 6) improved delivery of goods, services, and resources.

We have established benchmarks for each year prior to the year 2000. We believe the strategies we implement each year will bring us closer to reaching our objectives.

For example, to improve pupil performance, we will align the language arts and math curriculum with the State core curriculum standards by June. We have changed our *K* to eight reading series to support the more demanding curriculum. We will also offer more classes in algebra and more programs for the gifted and talented students. In addition, the district will provide students with more Scholastic Achievement Test courses and advanced placement classes.

Restructuring primary, middle, and secondary school programs to address the developmental needs of each level is our second priority. We have already begun by providing for the enrollment of 100 percent of eligible students in all-day kindergarten. We have also redirected resources to guidance, resulting in 21 additional guidance service providers in elementary schools. By June, we will have published recommendations for restructuring middle grades and planned for a 1998 middle school pilot.

We have developed a four-year, \$35 million technology plan to effectively integrate the latest technology into instructional programs, which is the basis of our third priority. By the year 2000, all 12th-grade graduating students will be able to use technology to solve problems and access and analyze information. A portion of the plan is being implemented this year and will enable us to identify the essential technology skills needed by students in grades four, eight, and twelve. In the first year, distributed networks and/or

stand-alone computers are planned for 10 schools, and an interactive television classroom is on site at Technology High School.

Staff development is our fourth priority. In three years time, we expect that all classroom teachers will be able to effectively implement aspects of the core curriculum content standards. This year, in addition to the Principals Leadership Institute, we will continue collaborative activities with institutions of higher learning, including Montclair State and Rutgers University. We will work with staff developers now placed in 90 percent of the schools to train and coach teachers in an array of strategies.

Our fifth priority this year is to provide appropriate instructional programs for special education students. We are committed to providing every child with an access to an appropriate education that prepares him or her for a productive life. Special education students will be placed in the least-restrictive environment, included with their nondisabled peers in extracurricular activities. We also plan to provide our bilingual students with effective instruction to ensure their successful transition to English-language classes.

Our sixth priority for the year is to ensure the efficient and equitable flow of resources to the schools. We have targeted these resources to our educational agenda. This year, we have instituted school-based budgeting to directly allocate resources to schools. The district's purchasing and warehousing policies and procedures will be updated to ensure that the most cost-effective methods are used to procure goods and services.

Human resources will establish procedures for the timely placement of staff and staffing decisions will be transferred to the school and

school leadership team level, whenever possible. The district's long-term goals -- which we are working toward year by year -- also include recruitment of an ethnically diverse staff and improved union-management communication.

An important part of our sixth priority is the creation of a communication network, including districtwide E-mail. We will also establish a student information system for tracking an array of student performance indicators, including attendance, dropout rates, and test scores. We will be overhauling our administrative technology to support these efforts and create a business environment that helps schools do their job. There are five other objectives described in our strategic plan. Although they are not among our identified priorities, the work we do in these areas is critical to fulfilling our goal of improving teaching and learning throughout the district.

The first objective outlines our plan to establish efficient and effective school core teams, the district's vehicle for realizing school-based planning and building staff capacity to make decisions. Three objectives -- seven, eight, and nine -- address the streamlining organization procedures to create a more efficient school system focused on the needs of the classroom. These objectives also address the need to bring all of our facilities up to standard. We anticipate this will cost over \$200 million.

In four years, all school buildings will be clean, secure, safe, and provide an educationally sound and attractive environment in which to teach and learn. Fifty-eight additional security guards were already hired this year.

Our eighth objective is to meet the State standard and beyond in achieving parity in business opportunities for local residents and ethnic

minorities in accordance with all State and Federal contracting, purchasing, and bidding regulations.

Our ninth objective is to reallocate an even greater percentage of budget resources to instructional areas. We will accomplish this by continued compliance with State standards for administrative cost by addressing all CCI findings related to business and finance and, therefore, reaching the certification standards related to financial controls, cash investments, and financial reporting.

Our eleventh and last objective is to build the capacity of advisory board members, teachers, parents, and the community to make informed decisions and to work effectively together.

By July 2000, the Newark Board of Education will be reestablished as a result of demonstration of thoroughly efficient and effective governance practices at the district and school levels, and as evidenced by an annual assessment of progress and the issuance of State certification. We also anticipate that a comprehensive parent program will be in operation in every school.

I believe the strategic plan places the Newark Public Schools firmly on the road to excellence and provides a clear network of accountability for the efficient administration of the district and the fulfillment of the highest aspirations of the Newark school community.

Thank you.

SENATOR EWING: Thank you, Dr. Hall.

One thing -- I'll ask the other members first, but one question I want to bring up right away is you say by July 2000 the Newark Board of Education will be reestablished. That is one of your goals.

DR. HALL: That's right.

SENATOR EWING: Because I don't want the public to get to the year 2000 and find tragically they can't do it. And then they say, "What the hell, that Hall, all she does is lie all the time," that she said back then--

(interrupted by noise from the audience)

All right, we'll have no discussion from the audience, please. This is a meeting with the Joint Committee on the Public Schools.

That part, I think, you've got to change. This is one of your main goals, to get the Board reestablished by that date.

DR. HALL: I think that this is the--

SENATOR EWING: Because when something printed like this-- Anybody will say, "Look at what you said, here's the words," and it can be unfortunate.

DR. HALL: That's the goal of the strategic plan, I guess. It should have been framed that way. The goal of the strategic plan is, by the year 2000, the Board of Ed will be reestablished.

SENATOR EWING: Assemblyman Rocco.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Yes, I have just a few questions.

Dr. Hall, first to commend you on your fine work up to this point. You are working with a very, very difficult situation, attempting to deal with a district that really needs very effective leadership.

DR. HALL: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: To take some of the stands you have, I think, is commendable on your part, and I want you to know that there are those of us out here that think you're taking the challenge very well and dealing with it even under very, very adverse circumstances. So just don't think that you are alone, I guess, is what I really want to tell you.

DR. HALL: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Nothing is more important than the children of Newark and the children of the State. I'm sure you're here and we're all here for the best interests of all of these children.

Having been an elementary school principal, could you tell me just a little bit about -- and we know that reading is really the heart of any educational program because it impacts upon every other subject to such a great degree. Could you just tell me a little bit about what the reading component might look like?

DR. HALL: What the reading component might look like?

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Yes.

DR. HALL: One of the things that we have done is we have totally introduced a new reading series *K* through eight that is far more in keeping with the outcomes that we're looking for in the core content standards.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Are you using a basal?

DR. HALL: Yes, and we have used basals that are really quite focused on higher-level thinking skills that have a good literature base that really do the kinds of things that we would like for material to provide for children. In other words, not just rote memorization, or recall, but really focusing on the higher-level thinking skills.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: What basal series is that?

DR. HALL: For the kindergarten, we used Scholastic; for one to five, we used Silver Burdett; and for six to eight, we used McDougal-Littell.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Using a whole language or phonics or--

DR. HALL: A combination. I don't think we need to throw the baby out with the bathtub. I think there's a need for phonics with certain young--

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: I think a combination makes sense.

DR. HALL: That's correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: And of course, you have been there a relatively short time at this point. In dealing with the kindergarten, primary grade level, let's say first, second, we're looking to get smaller class sizes, I assume.

DR. HALL: Yes, and we've also entered into a relationship with the Bank Street College to establish 16 model kindergarten programs using most appropriate developmental instructional strategies. We have invested heavily in professional development for early childhood teachers. Part of that is because we know that regardless of the materials, if we don't deliver instruction in another way, we're going to get the same results. We're focusing quite heavily on professional development in all levels but particularly in the early childhood grades.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: There's no doubt that professional development is critical and certainly that is very good. Another thing that I

had just noticed, very quickly, your full-time kindergarten, when is that supposed to phase in?

DR. HALL: It's in. This year we were able to offer all-day kindergarten to every five-year-old.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Okay, great. And how about preschool? Are we-- What's the next step?

DR. HALL: Originally, we thought that would be our focus and then discovered that we did not have all of our five-year-olds in all-day kindergarten. So next year, we hope to focus -- if we have the resources -- on preschool.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Okay. I think some of the-- I think really if we could go after the problem at the primary, preschool level--

DR. HALL: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: --that our future will look much brighter. I think we certainly want to do what we can at the high school level, but in all reality, the more we can do at the elementary school component, the better the system is going to be in the future.

DR. HALL: Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: So I'm happy to see that you have a good focus there.

DR. HALL: Yes. I think that's where the investment has to be.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Thank you.

DR. HALL: Thank you.

SENATOR EWING: Senator Palaia.

SENATOR PALAIA: Dr. Hall--

DR. HALL: Yes.

SENATOR PALAIA: --I'm Senator Palaia.

DR. HALL: How are you?

SENATOR PALAIA: I, too, am a former elementary school principal. I can sympathize with the work you are doing there, and I commend you also.

DR. HALL: Thank you.

SENATOR PALAIA: I'd like to follow up on Dr. Rocco's statement because I'm a firm believer that you have to have preschool. You have to have preschool. You can never spend enough money in education as you spend in preschool. To me, and I'm sure you will agree, Dr. Hall, dropouts do not begin at ages 12, 13, and 14--

DR. HALL: That's correct.

SENATOR PALAIA: --dropouts begin at ages 6, 7, and 8, when they're in constant failure, and it's not a level playing field at all. It's not even close to a level playing field. I know I, for one -- in all this educational funding we're going through -- the one aspect of that that interests me the most is preschool. It might seem small to a lot of people, but to those of us in education will know that preschool-- You can never spend enough money. You have to find the facilities for it. We have to pay for the facilities, we pay for the facilities. But I would concentrate, as much as you can, on all-day kindergarten but even more so down at that three- and four-year-old level. I firmly believe, also, that even at that level, you must involve parents. You must involve the parents at that level, because-- (applause)

SENATOR EWING: Will you please-- Will the audience please keep quiet.

SENATOR PALAIA: Oh, no, Jack. They're clapping for-- Jack, they're clapping for me, that's okay. That's all right.

He's right. We have to conduct a meeting.

I believe, Dr. Hall, that if parents aren't involved there, they're not going to be involved later on. You almost have to-- You hate to do it, but you almost have to hold them up to the fact that you want your student preschool, then by darn garn, get in there and find out what your child is trying to do and then emulate that back into the home. Because that is where-- It's where it's really all about.

And again, I commend you for what you have done to this point, and I know that these problems have been going on for a long time, you are not going to correct them overnight. I would say continue on the course, and I think you will be fine.

Thank you, Senator.

DR. HALL: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR EWING: Assemblyman Moran.

ASSEMBLYMAN MORAN: Thank you, Senator.

I'm Assemblyman Moran. I'm not a retired elementary principal. I'm a central administrator for Toms River Schools, past principal of an intermediate school, and my primary responsibility in that was special education and preschool. And I tell you for those parents out there clapping, please don't clap. If there's anything that has made our preschool programs

successful, it has been the involvement of not only the parents, but of the community, as well as the teachers association, and everybody else.

So I commend you-- And I have read -- over the weekend I read the full report. I have been on this Committee from the time in which it was created, which was the Senator and the Assemblyman's authorship. I can remember going back years ago and debating those issues. But I have to tell you that reading it, it made me think of our commitment not just in Newark, but in Paterson and Jersey City. And I have had the opportunity with the Chairman and other members of the Committee-- Senator Rice has been gracious enough to have us to Newark on occasion. We've toured the schools. I've met with you -- and many of the people in the audience I recognize -- and I think we have to make a commitment.

I live in suburbia. I live in a community that has an excellent school district. Just because we have an excellent school district doesn't mean that we should not afford that same opportunity to the youngsters in Newark. I think we have a responsibility, and I think we have to make sure that it is handled correctly.

Rich and Peter, I think the two of you are doing an outstanding job. I think we've to work together. We have to make sure that whether it be the Legislature, the Department of Education, parents, the administration in Newark -- we have to all be on the same page. We all have to be making sure that we're doing one thing and one thing only. I have to keep on saying it because it was the Senator, when he served in the Assembly years ago with me, kept on emphasizing when we did the takeover commission legislation that we all keep on forgetting about the kids. Let's not forget about the kids. We're

all here because we care about what happens. And it's not this generation, the next generation-- It's the youngsters who are in preschool. We've to be concerned about everybody.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I have to leave to go to another hearing, but I will be back.

SENATOR EWING: Good, thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MORAN: So if you excuse me, and I'll be back shortly.

SENATOR EWING: Senator MacInnes.

SENATOR MacINNES: Thank you, Senator.

Good morning.

DR. HALL: Good morning.

SENATOR MacINNES: I had only two questions. I've got a meeting of the Environment Committee that I'm, I guess, the quorum vote for, so I will be brief.

I'd like to commend you for what you've been able to accomplish so far. I can't-- I'm not in a position to corroborate everything, but the idea of moving spending and funding from noninstructional jobs to instructional jobs in the amount of \$26 million is an objective that I share strongly.

The idea of conducting a tough review of your principals and vice-principals is an idea I commend you for carrying out. Again, I'm not in a position to say that however you did it worked, but I believe that that's at the heart of rebuilding the school system.

The words that you used to describe your objectives are the words that were used by many of your predecessors, who were operating a failed

district. Talking about in warm terms the success of every student and the capacity of kids to achieve and everything else, this has been a part of our educational rhetoric for many years. We've had dozens of silver bullets that have come along that-- We've had talking typewriters back in the '60s that were supposed to solve all these problems for kids. We've had huge investments in educational technology. Educational TV, remember that one?

We've bet on all sorts of nostrums, and yet when the record is put together over the last 30 years of this national attention, the performance of large numbers of poor kids in city schools has not reflected these efforts. The silver bullets haven't worked.

So I'd like to just know, in a paragraph, what you think you should do to set the conditions so that kids will, in fact, learn better, not that we'll say the right things about what our intentions are, because I assume, all of our intentions are honorable and constructive, but we've been hearing 30 years of intentions. And when you get down to the how you would describe what you want to see happen and how you're going to ensure that it happens in classrooms in Newark, New Jersey, what is it that you would say to parents, teachers, principals, and members of the Legislature is your vision for how this is going to happen?

DR. HALL: In a nutshell, I think we know there are no silver bullets, but the research is very clear on what makes for an effective school, what makes for an effective school district. As we examine that clearly, building leadership is critical to any school reform efforts.

SENATOR MacINNES: Principals.

DR. HALL: Principals. If you do not have in the building someone with the capacity to do all the other things -- some of which you referred to as silver bullets -- to see that those things are all functioning properly, and have the right focus, it doesn't matter what you put in there, whether it's technology, educational television, or new books. So clear is the capacity of the principal to work with staff and to make sure that all efforts are geared toward improvement of student performance is critical.

I also think that you have to provide training for all levels of staff, whether it be the principals and vice-principals, as well as for the teachers, because, unless you deliver instruction differently, the results will continue to be the same. And again, we know enough about what we should be doing in terms of teaching techniques, whether it is for the early childhood youngster or the middle school youngster or the secondary youngster. But we have to provide the training, and we have to be serious about it. Training can't be a one-shot workshop or a two-day workshop.

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, just tell me what it is that a teacher has to do? What is it that you have to teach a teacher to do?

DR. HALL: Well, the teacher has to know, for example, how to teach to higher-level thinking skills, how to teach algebra. We know that algebra is the gatekeeper of course for youngsters. In other words, youngsters who take algebra in eighth grade have a better chance of going to college and being successful.

SENATOR MacINNES: What percentage of Newark kids take algebra in the eighth grade?

DR. HALL: Last year we had three teachers trained to teach algebra I. This year we have thirty teachers, because we had a summer institute with Montclair to prepare them, and we're continuing that process. So eventually all eighth-graders in Newark will have algebra I. That's a very concrete example.

SENATOR MacINNES: And what's your base-line year? What percentage of eighth-graders took algebra I last year?

DR. HALL: About 4 percent took it last year.

SENATOR MacINNES: Four percent. What percentage of ninth-graders took algebra I last year?

DR. HALL: About 50 percent.

SENATOR MacINNES: Fifty. Okay. Good. I think that's a terrific answer. As I said, I don't know if it can be done, but I think in terms of identifying principals as the key-- Because you do have some good schools in Newark, and when you go to find out why, they turn out they have good principals who care a lot, set high standards, don't take any excuses, because that's what we've been doing for 30 years is-- (applause)

SENATOR EWING: Please. Please.

SENATOR MacINNES: --tattooing excuses for professional educators on the head of poor kids in cities. We've been saying culturally disadvantaged, educationally deficient, at risk -- another term that we should get out of our vocabulary -- because it all says kids can't learn if they're poor, black, or Latino and live in cities. It's a crime. It's beyond tragedy.

Second question. That was my first question. I only have two. There will be one or two subparts to it.

SENATOR EWING: Okay.

SENATOR MacINNES: The Legislature is considering for adoption S-40 to rewrite the school aid formula and to rewrite the rules of governance, and it's called a comprehensive educational plan. It looks like the status quo to me, but that's an editorial comment, and you don't have to respond to that. The S-40 will guide how you are going to be able to do the job that you've laid out in all these pages. Can you tell me the impact of the school aid formula for Newark contained in S-40 and how that impacts on your efforts next year, which will be the first year in which the formula will take hold?

DR. HALL: Well, clearly, as I have said many times before, I continue to hope, because it's in your hands at the moment, that we can maintain at least the current levels of funding in the Newark Public Schools.

SENATOR MacINNES: In the absence of that -- and I guess the Assembly Appropriations Committee is meeting as we speak and that may be the last chance. I don't know, by the way, what's Commissioner Klagholz's request to the Committee in terms of Superintendent Hall's desire? Is Commissioner Klagholz supporting restoration of safe, harmless assistance to Newark?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Senator, the Commissioner recommended a plan -- as you called it, a comprehensive plan -- for 600 school districts.

SENATOR MacINNES: Right.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: And based on a per pupil expenditure, and in that there were a number of districts that received more

aid and less, and Newark was one that received less. And so there is no change to his recommendation to the--

SENATOR MacINNES: The Commissioner is guided by the formula, and even though it is the school district that educates -- what? -- 16 percent of the special needs students in this State, which is why we are going through this process, and is the direct responsibility of the Commissioner, he does not want to see that formula changed to meet Superintendent Hall's hopes. And so he's not going to be testifying--

SENATOR EWING: Well, let me interrupt you a minute. I believe that there is a surplus in Newark that will be used to make up. Am I right or wrong?

DR. HALL: Senator, our surplus is decreasing significantly at the moment.

SENATOR EWING: What?

DR. HALL: It has decreased significantly. We only have a \$13 million surplus at the moment, because of mandated cost increases it has--

SENATOR EWING: Right.

DR. HALL: --eaten into the surplus.

SENATOR MacINNES: Thirteen million out of-- What's your budget?

DR. HALL: Five hundred and fifty.

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, my math isn't very good, but that sounds like a -- what? -- 2 percent or 3 percent surplus.

DR. HALL: Very small.

SENATOR MacINNES: Say 6 percent, 5 percent surplus.

The second part of my question, having to do with S-40, is your discovery that you couldn't move to an early childhood program involving presumably four-year-olds because not all Newark kids at the age of five had full-day kindergarten available to them.

DR. HALL: That's right.

SENATOR MacINNES: Looking forward to next year, what is your facilities inventory for providing early childhood programs, for at least the four-year-olds, for all those who would be eligible under the S-40?

DR. HALL: Well, first of all, we currently have 38 classes for four-year-olds functioning, 17 of which are subcontracted out.

SENATOR MacINNES: You have how many?

DR. HALL: Thirty-eight.

SENATOR MacINNES: What's the average class size?

DR. HALL: That group, I would say somewhere between 15--

SENATOR MacINNES: Fifteen.

DR. HALL: Fifteen.

SENATOR MacINNES: So you have, again my math is lousy, but you have 38-- You have 500 kids maybe.

DR. HALL: Right. But let me answer--

SENATOR MacINNES: What's the universe of four-year-olds in Newark now?

DR. HALL: If we use the five-year-olds as a projection, I would say we have-- We probably need to place about 2000 altogether.

SENATOR MacINNES: So we're about one-quarter the way to the goal already, and in meeting the balance of the three-quarters of the kids,

who otherwise won't have this available, what is your capacity to provide the facilities required?

DR. HALL: Again, it varies depending on the section of the city. Newark Public Schools as you know has suffered a tremendous enrollment decline.

SENATOR MacINNES: Right.

DR. HALL: So there are certain areas where we would be able to find the space. There are other areas--

SENATOR MacINNES: In public schools.

DR. HALL: In public schools. There are other areas, even with our five-year-olds, that we had to go outside of the school and find other locations. So we would have to do the same thing there in order to provide for them.

SENATOR MacINNES: Add all that together and what is your-- What inventory do you have in place right now of classroom space that's divided up for only 15 kids, or so, for meeting the goal next year of housing four-year-old kids in an early childhood program?

DR. HALL: We have a report that's due on my desk in January done on all of the facilities which would provide the answer.

SENATOR MacINNES: Okay, so you don't have the answer right now?

DR. HALL: So we don't have the answer today, no.

SENATOR MacINNES: And as you look at the S-40--

DR. HALL: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: --if you don't have the facilities in place next year, do you understand that the money, nevertheless, comes to Newark and is deposited in your bank, or is it held by the Treasurer?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: I believe it will be sent to the districts.

DR. HALL: The money comes to us.

SENATOR MacINNES: So you'll have the money. What will you do with that money-- Let's assume you can only get half the kids, who are four years old, in the early childhood programs, and therefore, you have some large amount of money that's not being spent for that purpose. If you have that, what will you do with that money? Is that stored away in a bank someplace for your facilities problem or what?

**ASSIST. COMMISSIONER PETER CONTINI:** Actually, Senator, they're both-- The funding for early childhood and demonstrably effective are categorical in nature. If the district -- because of the constraints that you mentioned -- could not fully utilize all their childhood money in their first year, they have two options. One would be as you determined it or described it, it could bank those funds, in other words, hold those funds in order to address facility needs or expansion of program, or request those funds to be used in other demonstrably effective programs, like kindergarten programs or throughout the K through 12 program.

SENATOR MacINNES: What's your predilection about that, Superintendent Hall, if you haven't yet come to a firm conclusion?

SENATOR EWING: Excuse me for interrupting on this a minute, but the bill has not been finalized on that early childhood part.

SENATOR MacINNES: Subject to a radical change between now and--

SENATOR EWING: Now it's subject to some change, and what it will be, we don't know.

SENATOR MacINNES: Okay. Well, we can only talk about what we know, which is the bill in its present form.

SENATOR EWING: I just want-- I don't want you to be banking on something--

SENATOR MacINNES: No. Of course, I expect radical changes between now and Thursday.

DR. HALL: My hope would be that we could provide for the four-year-olds, because I, too, share the sentiments that were expressed earlier by the other two Senators that the earlier we get our youngsters, then the better our chances are of really starting them off on the right track. So we will be making every effort to find the space and to get our four-year-olds in all-day prekindergarten.

SENATOR MacINNES: So then in terms of the new money that you'll have available to you -- given the fact that you're going to suffer a loss in operating funds -- how many millions of dollars will you lose under the present formula at S-40?

DR. HALL: Thirty. Thirty million.

SENATOR MacINNES: The Education Law Center is suggesting that, in fact, when you go through the entire formula and take into account facilities and special education, your loss will be greater than that. Do you disagree with their assessment?

DR. HALL: No, I don't disagree with it. I think it probably will be larger, if that were to be the final--

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, that's all we know right now. They say the number may be as high as \$64 million. Is that-- I seem to recall that, is that a number that's close to your estimate?

DR. HALL: I actually am trying to, again, remain optimistic that we will not have anything of that proportion, because as I have said before, we really would like to not have to deal with that.

SENATOR MacINNES: I'm certain of your hope about this. I'm trying to--

DR. HALL: I know.

SENATOR MacINNES: But I'm assessing this in terms of probabilities, Dr. Hall. I'm afraid that your hopes are not likely to be realized.

DR. HALL: We would have to look at a lot of noninstructional areas. Again, very specifically, we'd have to look at food service, we'd have to look at insurance. We'd have to look at a lot of those areas before we look at the programs that directly impact the children.

SENATOR MacINNES: What's your present enrollment? There's a reason-- This is not-- Is it 40-something thousand?

MR. DiPATRI: Forty-six--

SENATOR MacINNES: Forty-six thousand kids are now *K* through 12.

In terms of your new money, Dr. Hall--

DR. HALL: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: --you are saying that you want to put -- direct all of that new money, to the extent that you are able to, to children who are not yet in your school system? And you would not, therefore, use any of this money -- given your facilities problem -- to address the needs of the 46,000 kids, who are presently in the school system? Many of them are only a year older than the kids who would benefit from the early childhood program. That's the sense I get from you. I just want to confirm that that's a correct sense.

DR. HALL: The sense is that I do want to continue the emphasis on the early childhood program, that we do have some authorized bonds that haven't been issued that we can look to to help us with facilities, and we would just have to look to make sure that we maximize whatever dollars we do have in terms of providing a support for the teaching and learning aspect for the other youngsters.

SENATOR MacINNES: Would it be easier-- I had an amendment that 40 percent of the Senate Education Committee supported in a very close vote, but we needed 51 percent that would have permitted districts, such as Newark, which face one pot of new money-- Everything else is either held-- In fact, the increase in funding for the special needs district is made up of almost entirely of the early childhood program. In terms of regular aid, most of the districts are suffering a real loss of money, not as great as Newark's, but a real loss when you adjust for inflation.

My amendment would have allowed you to combine the early childhood and the demonstrably effective program so that if it was your philosophy and conclusion that the money could be better spent in programs

addressing the needs of the 46,000 kids who are now in school, you could do that. Would that make sense in terms of providing greater flexibility and some hope of new programming for the kids who are now in school, as opposed to the kids coming along?

DR. HALL: So clearly those kinds of suggestions were what I was looking for when I keep saying I'm hopeful that we won't take the hit.

SENATOR MacINNES: Okay, I hope you've convinced Senator Ewing, because I think maybe if we just get a couple of Republican votes over there, Jack, we could get this amendment approved. It would be a good one, I think. And now you've it from the Superintendent of the largest district in the State that that would be helpful.

Good. I have to run to an Environment--

SENATOR EWING: Thank you for telling me who she was.

Welcome, Assemblyman Stanley.

Senator Rice, do you want to--

SENATOR RICE: Yes. I only need one note up here.

First of all, how are you doing, Superintendent?

Let me just preface my remarks. I don't have a lot of questions, because I think my colleagues on both sides made some very substantive points about our district, which really reflects all the school takeover districts and those that have to be taken over in the future. I think that Senator MacInnes raised the right kinds of issues.

But I want to go on public record. I want to make it very clear to this Committee and to the people out there and to you, Superintendent, that I'm not the happiest person in the world. Takeover did not start with you

coming in. The philosophy of takeover started way back under Saul Cooperman when there were many, many complaints from that district to the State and the State never addressed the problem. We can't go back in history, but I'm just laying some foundation. When Commissioner Elders came here, he met with Mayor Sharpe James -- at least the Governor did -- and the Mayor requested takeover, also. He backpedaled a little later, but the point was he made that request.

Many people in this room today and many, many others in the City of Newark and I stood the tests, and I took the hits, because the good parents, the good teachers, the good principals, the good noninstructional workers were the ones confidentially pumping that information out of that system at the expense of losing their jobs or being disciplined -- told the State about the corruption that was alleged to be there, mismanagement, politics, and favoritism. I'm angry because we thought that this State would come in and be fair. We thought that this State would come in here-- (applause)

SENATOR EWING: I have to ask you-- Excuse me, Senator Rice. I have to ask the audience, please. This is not a board meeting in Newark. I'll have to have the room cleared if I have more problems with you, and I want that understood.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: There's no problem.

SENATOR EWING: Well, then keep quiet.

SENATOR RICE: We thought-- Many of us thought, and still believe, it's not too late to correct it, that there would be fairness. And it seems to me that the people who were principals -- and I don't know a lot of

principals-- I didn't have it all made, and I wasn't political in this system, and I don't hire workers over there. But I paid enough attention to know who was standing up for our students with no resources, trying to make systems work. Now, I also know, during this process you have for principals, that there were people who passed the test -- through the interview process, whatever it was -- only to come back and be rejected by someone else. But no one asked the community what they thought. Gordon Mayes is one of them. I use that as an example, because the public has stood up and took on Gene Campbell, etc., for our kids, and there are others. But we made the changes.

Then, I believe that we should redirect moneys that we have that's being misused or abused, but not at the expense of cold lunches and all the kinds of crap that is taking place. I thought the University High School that we keep making a model out of and the Science High Schools-- You know, at a earlier stage without books, the parents didn't tell me they had books. I had to sit with our education advisory committee only to have the students come and tell me they didn't have books at the time. I hope they have them now, because I owe them a visit and I'm a little late and I know they're disappointed, but I'm going to get there.

And then the fights and things that continuously break out at Westside, etc. Then, only recently, Senator, which I believe was corrected because I've called Becky on it-- We have a school with Creole. And the only person who spoke Creole was moved out. And the question to me was, does the Superintendent know? Who's letting her know that these things happen? So what I'm saying, and prefacing my remarks, is I'm not blaming you, because you are doing what you have to do, and you'll be there as long as we in

government allow you to be. Now tell the people in Newark not to be critical of you. Because if I was in your position and the State took \$30 million from me, and I had an ambitious plan to make the district work, and I knew I still had to do something, I would be called a bad person because I'd be hurting a lot of people in my heart I know I don't want to hurt.

So I'm blaming the State, because we can't take a \$30 million hit. I'm blaming the State, and we need to correct the legislation. Newark is a takeover district, so how can we penalize something the State owns? We should have weighed the \$2 million penalty, just to verify who was going in. Had we let the district stay at a certain level with the old guard there, yes, penalize them. But it's our money we took out.

Then, we talk about all these all-day kindergarten facilities, but what I can see -- because of whose numbers you use -- you're not getting increased funding, which means all-day kindergarten you pay from your present funding, which in my estimation means that you're going to have to cut back more in primary and secondary schools. It's just that simple.

So I'm not blaming you. You have to come and give the report. I live in Newark, and I know the good ones and the bad ones and the political ones and the Third Worlds and all the right-wingers and left-wingers and all the crazies up there and all the-- You name it, whatever label you want to give them, I know them. They know I don't play with them. But I'm hurting inside, and I want the Committee to know I'm going to continue to take on this education system to protect those good people in there and those who are not in there and the fairness.

Even with some of those job opportunities that become contractual, I get tired of hearing everybody calling Senator Ewing a racist and all these bad names because, regardless of what he does down here, the rest of us are just as much responsible. He does come into Newark without fanfare. The problem is, is that we're getting all of these mixed signals, because the people at the Board of Education want to impress the State so much -- about how they can hound this thing -- and please the Commissioner, I guess, that we're not getting into all the realities.

Your job the way I see it -- and I'm a Senator, too -- is to come down here and say, "I don't want to be opposed to my employer, but this is going to hurt our kids. Being an African-American woman coming from an urban city with the diversity that we have, I understand the problem." And you will get our support.

Now, I would like to know first of all where is Technology High School?

DR. HALL: It's where the co-ed used to be.

SENATOR RICE: Well, that's what we calling it now?

DR. HALL: Yes, we've expanded the program.

SENATOR RICE: Okay. What's happening with the Creole situation in terms of language and people? Is that resolved?

DR. HALL: Yes. That had to do with seniority when the aides were laid off, the person who was Creole speaking. There is no distinction in terms of seniority. However, the person was recalled when we got to them on the list, and they are back in the school.

SENATOR RICE: So with that amendment, we have to depend on one person. God forbid, what if a truck hit that person?

DR. HALL: Well, we're also trying desperately to recruit people who have the certification in that area. It's been very, very difficult, but--

SENATOR RICE: Well, I find that interesting and maybe the Assemblyman can help us out, because we happen to represent the 28th Legislative District. And when you start talking about Creole between Irvington and Newark, East Orange-- I know you can find them in New York, but that's got to stop.

DR. HALL: And I have spoken to the Haitian-Creole community in some of the areas that you have just discussed, met with them, and explained our needs to them. They are working with us to try to recruit people.

SENATOR RICE: The Commissioner-- I just want to say this -- because I spoke to the Governor's office -- it was more political than anything else that they said. They were very kind. I want the Senators and the Assemblypersons to know it, too. I supported State takeover, because it was the right thing to do. I did not support people being hurt the way they are. But when we did a takeover, Paterson, Jersey City, and Newark were supposed to get some tax relief. We didn't get it, because folks probably didn't like the statements my Mayor -- and we disagree on a lot of things -- made in the paper. And a rationale, we're to increase our taxes, we're to give the Board of Education more money. We were due at least 3.2 million, and we didn't get it, because the Governor said that she's going to maybe eliminate that next year. I said fine. What does that have to do with the money we're due? I

mean we have a right to that money, and I'm still not going to buy it. I think we should get us some kind of Wynn's Commission to help us, so we can reduce taxes maybe next year. But they said, "We don't want you to get used to receiving it." I said, "How can you get used to receiving something when we know is not going to be there next year?" We deserve that money. We never got it, Senator. And I think it's something that needs to be looked into. I argued, they were very kind to me, but it became clear to me what the politics were. So I didn't push it, because I do have a Mayor that gets a little crazy sometimes.

Now, I just wanted to mention that-- The other-- You mentioned some things about the certifications of teachers and all the programs you have and how the teachers have to be more or less brought to part. Well, it's important for teachers to have -- and I don't know what your training is going to deal with-- Maybe I should ask the question. How are you addressing all these new teachers coming in? Because the teachers in their majority was not the Newark's school system problem. Okay. But it seems like they became a problem once you got there in terms of letting them go, give them the chance. But my question is, how do you with your in-house people deal with the realities? Teachers in cities like Newark, Jersey City, and Camden have to understand -- no crash course -- urban education. They also have to understand the sociological and cultural facts and realities of urban America including its diversities and the many languages we have. They also have to understand urban children. But to understand the children, you have to understand urban parents. Now, how are we going to deal with that through this in-house piece that you mentioned--

DR. HALL: Staff developer.

SENATOR RICE: --the staff development piece?

The second question, maybe that should be answered first, who are these staff development folk? Where do they come from? Do they come from the former system or all these new folk, also, that have to learn not urban education, but Newark urban. There is a slight difference.

DR. HALL: The staff developers all come from former teachers in the Newark Public School system who are identified by their principals as being exemplary or master teachers by and large. We are working with them. We are providing them with on-going training to really hone their skills, so they can in turn work with the teachers building by building.

You see, one of the things that's very clear, Senator, is that the students were not achieving at the level that they need to be. And so we have to change the way the teachers are delivering instruction. And we know to do that, we need people on-site to give them on-going support. So these staff developers have no other assignment but to work with teachers in the building. And to answer your question, they came from the Newark system. So they know what needs to be done in order for students to learn.

SENATOR RICE: I read your strategies-- Things that may not mean a lot to folks that should be in writing, to me, as far as I'm concerned, in the strategies is the nutrition of our children. How are we going to address that? Because I just said this to the State. They can be State government, but I will fight them a long time in the system, too, regardless of what the costs is. Our children need hot, prepared meals. We folk from the south, in particularly, in rural America, we're tired of raggedy, brown-bagged, potted

meat and all that kind of crap. Now, that doesn't mean that these vendors not coming in, but the prognostication does not really help our kids. There's been too many complaints and too many schools with cold lunches and vendors. I understand we are still having problems in some schools, whether they come to your attention or not. And I'm not talking about the political activists in our city or the special interests. I'm talking about real parents. So how do we stand with that?

DR. HALL: We have been meeting and on going with the parents where there were problems. We have modified the plan somewhat from where it was in September, so we can better assure hot lunches in all schools. But you know that in the food service area, that was an area where we had terrible cost overrun, that we had to do things differently. What we're doing is going to more of a centralized, or regionalized, feeding structure where we don't have every single kitchen cooking, but we have central kitchens cooking and then delivering the food to the other kitchens. It's different. We are monitoring it. But my belief is that by and large the complaints have lessened tremendously.

As a matter of fact at the last meeting, we didn't have any, but we continue when they're raised. On any given day, we may have a late delivery. There could be some cold lunches. We follow up to see what the problems are.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Senator, may I just add to that in terms of the waste that was in the system. And again, it takes time for Dr. Hall and her staff to make the change--

SENATOR EWING: Can you people hear in the back? (negative responses)

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Is this on? (referring to microphone) Is that any better?

SENATOR EWING: Yes.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: There was such waste in the system that -- to use an example in Jersey City and Paterson and probably in most special needs districts -- the lunch program with State and Federal subsidies generally operates at a break-even status. In Newark, for this past year, there was \$18 million had to be subsidized out of general revenue funds to support the lunchroom program. There's no need for that. That over time what Dr. Hall intends to do, and needs to do, because it's happening everywhere else, is to find a way to take that subsidy and put it into the classroom. You can't eliminate that overnight, so to speak; an \$18 million subsidy is literally outrageous, and it just takes time for that to occur. And I might add, if the lunches were that much better in the past you might understand that, but the food was no better than it is in Jersey City or anyplace else.

SENATOR EWING: Well, are they getting hot lunches now?

DR. HALL: Yes, they are.

SENATOR EWING: All over?

DR. HALL: All over.

SENATOR RICE: A couple of things, and I'll say this to all elected officials. I know we like to compare. To me, Newark is a unique urban center for a lot of reasons, so I don't like to compare with the others. But I also know that you shouldn't have \$18 million that we have to take from general revenue to make food work. But I also know that food should not be

late. I don't care if there's one school. It should not be late. Kids can't rush in and eat cold food because it's late and it wasn't properly prepared, nor can they wait around and miss classroom instruction because it's late. That's the problem I'm having without us having our own facilities to prepare our own food. One thing about momma, she's going to feed you on time with her own kitchen, you know that. So we're going to monitor a lot closer.

Going into the year of '97, we're going to be a lot more vocal. Thank God, I can communicate with Senator Ewing, so some of these things we discuss down here we are trying to figure out where we go. We're going to start in legislation to tighten up some of these things.

The final question I want to raise really deals with the -- well, there's two other questions, but one deals with the enrollment. I said before, if you start messing with \$30 million that you need to anticipate enrollment, that the idea is that a lot of people in the City of Newark, like other districts, could never afford to send kids to private schools. But some kind of way, they slip them into the Maplewoods and South Orange, and it's hurting those school districts. Now, we don't want to help those schools with their funding problems, and they're purging the school system, which mean they're saying, we identify, you're going back. Somebody's going to pay. Then the parents who put up with that kind of way, they got them in private schools. We can't afford this, but there's takeovers there, maybe there's some hope we'll put them back. Now no one thought about it. I spoke to the Commissioner, and he said, "You know, you're right," because we had that situation in East Orange one time where the enrollment increased without moneys being there, and I think it happened recently.

How are we going to address that? Because I'm afraid that if you come into the next school year, we're putting up facilities for all-day kindergarten that you're not going to have enough necessary dollars to address that. If you go on the notion, well, since I have more enrollment and I have these dollars and I'm flexible, I'll use them for the additional enrollment, you don't complete the all-day kindergarten. And that's why I said if you're going to take \$30 million, I don't want to make up the Governor's deficits. I'd rather set it aside in the Commissioner's budget and give him the ability to draw now on most of those dollars, based on our needs.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Senator, just a couple points, and that's a valid, very serious question and one that, I think, can reasonably be addressed. But factually, unfortunately the decline in enrollment has been significant. For example, right now Newark is projected to receive approximately \$350 million next year on an enrollment of about 46,600, or so, which really comes to over \$7500 per student in State dollars alone. There's also an \$80 million tax levy on top of that. So the resources even with this proposed cut of \$30 million are significant.

However, we know the way to get the system better -- and we found it in Jersey City and Paterson -- that if we can draw the students back-- If we can make the program better, then we can draw the students back. This proposal, the Senate 40 proposal, calls for current year enrollment. So that when the district attracts students back, they'll receive those funds. It's never been done in the history of this State current year enrollment. This plan calls for that. So if the program can be improved such that we can draw those youngsters back, then I think the system is in place to accommodate that.

SENATOR RICE: But it's not the system I'm concerned about, it's the funding, which means increased property taxes if the dollars aren't there, or we lose one of the benefits. We're saying all-day kindergarten, we're saying preschool, and that's one of the goals that Dr. Hall mentioned when she first came in. People bought into it.

And that leads me into the next question. Where are these facilities for the space that's not in the school houses? Are we back in the same old places with some of the same old political folks? Or do we have all new faces on these facilities? Where are you looking for additional facilities? What's the criteria for these facilities, so our youngsters don't be running into some raggedy abandoned building or another Mt. Pleasant?

DR. HALL: One of these facilities that we're in was actually owned by the Newark Public Schools, and we leased it for \$1 to the Portuguese Mission. So we took it back, because we needed it in the east ward. The other building is on loan to us from a community-based organization. It did not cost us anything either, and they use it for after-school programs for young people. So they were really up to code.

So we have been fairly successful in accessing facilities that won't cost anything and are in good condition. They are not substandard. Now, as we go further along, we're going to have to look at whether we need to rezone some of what we currently have, because we do have some schools that are underutilized. We do have others, as you know, that are oversubscribed. We also have in the works plans for annexes for some of the more overutilized schools, Ann Street, Ridge Street, to be specific. We completed the Sussex Avenue annex and opened it this year. So all of this is in the facilities plan

which will become available in January, which I will be more than happy to share with members of this Committee, because they have taken into consideration all of the demographic shifts, the numbers, and the projections of what we want to do in terms of programs. They are going to give us some recommendations.

SENATOR RICE: Senator Ewing, if the Committee can look into this-- This takeover legislation indicated that the City of Newark would have two representatives on this bonding and capital improvement piece.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: Capital instruction.

SENATOR RICE: It was structured wrongly. Most local government people do not communicate, administrative and legislative. Governors don't communicate with us regardless of what party it is. The same thing works in local government. I don't know why you haven't figured it out. So the Mayor's appointed two people, I understand, because I keep raising with these appointments, and I found out the Mayor appointed two, where now she's not going to come to the council for appointment. Anything that is done, we have to approve. We need to amend that legislation very fast before they start to meet to make sure that the council has representation, which means we're going to have to add a third body or reamend it. The Mayor, I believe, is sending his BA over there and his Finance Director, which makes sense. But not to have council participation so that-- We're the overseers of the finance-- Of the trust-- We are always excluded on these doggone committees. I don't like that, because one thing about it. They send me over there, we're going to look at all the factors. There's not going to be any tap dance from the administration. So we could fast track some legislation on the

amendment. Our response is, I hope the Senate response is and I'd like the coprime it, so we can get it to both committees so that-- They're going to meet and spend our money, and I want to be there or at least have some representation.

SENATOR EWING: Have you asked all of us to draft it?

SENATOR RICE: No, I just-- We couldn't even figure out where the appointments were. We figured we could get the Mayor to come and talk to us. Then we found out the other day that he has designated two people, the Business Administrator, who is very important over there, as well as the Finance Director. That's why I said we're going to have to amend it so we don't take away, we just add to make sure local government-- We're the governing body and that's what it should be indicating. That we would have--

SENATOR EWING: Do you want Melanie to talk to him about getting it drafted, or will you get it?

SENATOR RICE: Yes. Would you get it done? This way I could get it fast tracked and get it into committee. Superintendent and also the State, I would like to have you reach out for me as soon as you get a chance to, like soon, because when Superintendent Capp was there, they wanted to create this grandiose structure that was going to cost them about \$20 to \$25 million in terms of relocating and doing some administrative things with the Board of Education. The City of Newark has got to do a capital piece around city hall. At one time when you went into the police building, that was the Board of Education building. We got these lots designated, and we have put together a plan where the Board of Education and the City of Newark could come together, and rather than us spending \$20 million over here and you spending

\$20 million over there, we can do the whole project for about \$20 million in bonding. I think it is still an important thing even though you're decentralizing. I'd like to have you meet with us and our administration, so we can tell you what we had in mind and convince you that it's the right thing to do.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak, and I also--

SENATOR EWING: Well, why don't you make a date with Dr. Hall right now, right in front of everybody? Then we'll know.

SENATOR RICE: She's usually pretty good at getting back to me. I'm not scolding her, but--

SENATOR EWING: No, but you might be hard to get ahold of.

SENATOR RICE: No. She can get me. They know that. But I can say this. I want to make it perfectly clear now, and I hope the Commissioners understand what I'm saying. I hope my residents understand it, because I've told them this before. We can call Dr. Hall all the names we want. And everything she can do, we may disagree with because it may be the wrong direction, but I want to make it clear, if the State doesn't fund -- I'm not beating up on Dr. Hall-- I'll tell her what I think about things. But I'm telling you Commissioners, that you've got to look at that funding. You've got to have more community input. I'm not talking about the other folks, I'm talking about structured programs and things. It's going to cost you, and that's where our fight's going to be.

I would like to ask the Chair, when there's an opportunity prior to us dismissing, to at least hear some of the parents who took their time to

come down here that maybe have something to say, but that would have to come from you. But I'd like to at least make that request.

SENATOR EWING: Well, Senator Rocco asked me the same thing. This was meant to be just a meeting for the Joint Committee. Maybe when we get finished, if you want to stay with me, I'll stay and listen to some of the parents. But what I was planning to do-- I know what it's going to be like, but that's all right.

SENATOR RICE: Well, I'm going to be here. I have--

SENATOR EWING: No. No. Wait--

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON FROM AUDIENCE: We just want to give a parent's birds-eye view--

SENATOR EWING: --I know. I know. I know. I did not ask you to speak. I'm running the meeting. Fine. So I ask you to keep quiet until I get finished. I plan to have two -- that's the discipline in Newark-- I plan to have two public hearings in Newark. I know that they will be screaming matches. Also, as Assemblyman Rocco suggested, we plan to have a hearing down here for parents. Those that are interested will make the effort to come down and will not be as bad as having a public meeting. We'll still go ahead with the public meeting in Newark. Period. I think I owe it to the people up there to let them vent what they want to. Those who want to come down here separately to a parents meeting, we'll do that also.

SENATOR RICE: Just one quick question.

Dr. Hall, the AS office, why was that not kept in central administration? Why is that placed in schools?

DR. HALL: Because one of the things that we feel is that we would like our assistant superintendents and support staff closer to the schools so they can be more responsive and more in tune with what is going on in the schools. In many of the reports that I've read that were done prior to us arriving there, there was this concept of the world of 2 Cedar Street and the world of the schools. We felt that we wanted our assistant superintendents physically located where they can signal that they are there to service the schools and to be more responsive to the parents or the students out in the clusters, as opposed to being removed at 2 Cedar Street.

SENATOR RICE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR EWING: Assemblyman Stanley.

ASSEMBLYMAN STANLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just going to ask just one question, because I'm interested in hearing -- maybe if we could get some input from the parents -- and that's regarding enrollment. The enrollment from last September to this September, what is the difference? Was that a 10 percent enrollment decline?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Not from last year to this year.

ASSEMBLYMAN STANLEY: Okay. So what-- So when we talk about enrollment decline -- and Senator, I think, this is a key point -- are we talking about from '91 to '96?

DR. HALL: Yes.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Yes.

SENATOR EWING: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN STANLEY: I believe that leads me to the point where-- I don't know whether we can really ask-- And, Senator Rice, I think this is the point that you were making, also. I don't know whether we can ask the district to absorb that type of a cut. See, the cut is based on a 10 percent -- I guess it's around 10 percent decline from '91 to '96 or somewhere along there-- But the cut is based on enrollment decline from '91 to '96. But the actual enrollment decline -- if there is a decline -- from '96 to '97 is not going to be that significant. That's an awful big pill to have to swallow at one time. And anything that we can do in the Legislature to minimize-- Because it's a bit drastic.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: The absolute enrollment decline from '91 to '97 is 7.5 percent. But it's a relative factor, because across the State, the enrollment for everyone is calculated to determine the enrollment. So that the actual decline -- relative decline -- is almost 19 percent from, as you said, October of '91 until what's projected for October of '97. First, had the absolute decline not occurred and Newark maintained its enrollment, it would have received a \$61 million increase. So whenever you prepare a formula, such as this that's a per pupil formula, this is what happens. If you don't have the students -- and that's what has happened in Newark because of the system that existed before when the district was not attracting students. And now the challenge to Dr. Hall is to attract them back. And fortunately, at least one element of the plan is for current year funding. So that if we can begin to get the students back in -- particularly next October count -- then the district will be reimbursed for those new students coming back into the system.

ASSEMBLYMAN STANLEY: Yes. I think the problem comes in is whenever you use a formula that talks about enrollment from '91 to '96, at either a decline or an increase, you're going to have some unbelievable jumps. I think we should at least be able to hold harmless districts. I mean if we are not going to hold harmless every district, let's hold harmless special needs districts that we are on track to try to improve performance. I would think so.

SENATOR EWING: Well, I still want to get something straight in my mind. As I understand, there is a surplus. Is it 13, 1-3, or is it 3-0?

DR. HALL: One, three.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: That's undesignated.

DR. HALL: Yes. Undesignated, yes. Free balance, yes. The undesignated, free balance.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: The rest is appropriated.

DR. HALL: The rest is appropriated.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: That's undesignated, Senator. Thirteen million is undesignated.

DR. HALL: It's 49 all together.

SENATOR EWING: It's undesignated?

DR. HALL: Right.

SENATOR EWING: So it's 13?

DR. HALL: Thirteen, 1-3.

SENATOR EWING: Are there additional funds available also?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: No, they're already-- They're appropriated or designated for payment.

SENATOR EWING: So part of the \$30 million cut to be made up by the 13? And then if an emergency arises, you have to come to the State. If a boiler blows up or a roof blows off, the State would have to appropriate additional funding.

DR. HALL: And we continue to have mandated cost increases every year, so it is a real problem.

SENATOR EWING: Well, I have a few questions.

Dr. Hall, I certainly am 100 percent behind you. One thing that has disturbed me, though, and I don't think it's been taking place, and I know that Mr. Contini was not well for a while, but we're going to get it set up-- I want to see established a monthly meeting between you and the department and Mr. DelGrasso. In spite of everybody, not you necessarily, but the union thing calling you names, etc. -- I don't give a damn in life. I think if people gradually talk and discuss things over, some things can be accomplished. I want to see that established. And I'm going to call for a meeting. Pete Contini can make it, fine. If I have to sit up outside your office, I'll sit outside there, Mr. DelGrasso, until you walk in the door, and then we'll go in with you. But I want that clear. I know it's going to be difficult, but I'm going to be there.

DR. HALL: Are you aware that we are meeting monthly, Mr. DelGrasso and myself? Are you aware of it?

SENATOR EWING: No, I don't agree. No, I don't understand that at all.

DR. HALL: Yes, we're meeting monthly.

SENATOR EWING: When was the last meeting?

DR. HALL: We had a meeting last week.

SENATOR EWING: Last week?

DR. HALL: Yes. With senior staff and myself and Mr. DelGrasso.

SENATOR EWING: And were things accomplished at it?

DR. HALL: The agended items were all discussed, yes.

SENATOR EWING: Well, I'm delighted. I apologize then for stating that it hadn't been taking place.

DR. HALL: It has been taking place.

SENATOR EWING: Several months back, it hadn't?

DR. HALL: That's right. We did not meet in September and October, but we've met since.

SENATOR EWING: You plan to more or less keep that up?

DR. HALL: We have a schedule for the year. The dates are fixed, he has it.

SENATOR EWING: So unless somebody is sick, you can definitely make it?

DR. HALL: That's correct.

SENATOR EWING: Well, that's great.

DR. HALL: And we have last year, too. I'm being reminded here that we also met last year.

SENATOR RICE: Excuse me, through you, does that schedule -- not collectively, but individually -- include Local 617 and JJ and the rest of them?

DR. HALL: I meet with them, too.

SENATOR RICE: But is it monthly?

DR. HALL: Monthly.

SENATOR RICE: In other words, we lack equity in the system, okay.

DR. HALL: I meet monthly with 617, monthly was CASA, monthly with NTU.

SENATOR RICE: I just want to be sure.

DR. HALL: They have fixed schedules.

SENATOR RICE: Okay.

DR. HALL: And I meet quarterly with all the units, and there is a big schedule.

SENATOR EWING: And are you able to get some points resolved?

DR. HALL: Absolutely. There's never any acrimony at those meetings.

SENATOR EWING: Great.

On textbooks, I had heard a report at one time that maybe some of the textbooks were quite old, and also maybe they were not sufficient. Is that being changed--

DR. HALL: Yes.

SENATOR EWING: --or do we still suffer that problem?

DR. HALL: This year we spent \$3.4 million *K* to eight providing new reading and math textbooks for every child *K* to eight. We do have, in the high schools in particular, a need to continue to phase in new textbooks, because we just couldn't do them all. But in terms of reading and math, we know that every *K*-to-eight student in Newark has a new textbook.

SENATOR EWING: And are they allowed to take these textbooks home?

DR. HALL: Yes. Absolutely.

SENATOR EWING: Excuse me just a minute. I have to sort of change the format. I heard some voices in the back saying no, but anyway, is there definite proof they are not allowed to take them home from certain schools?

SENATOR RICE: Excuse me, some of the students met with me. University High didn't even have books, and when they got books, some of the school students told me they don't take books home. Then I'm told, well, it depends on what grade you're in. I said I always took books home, regardless of what-- I took Dick and Jane home.

DR. HALL: But those--

SENATOR RICE: That's right. If I lost it, my parents in some kind of way, they worked out paying for it. We're not making kids responsible. We're talking about all-day kindergarten. They should get used to carrying something home. And so that's the problem I'm having. So I'm telling you, Dr. Hall, don't make me call the system to task here publicly. I'm telling you all the students are not taking books home. All of them are not even getting homework.

DR. HALL: And I would never argue that. It's back to what I'm saying about the leadership in the building. You don't reform schools -- 82 schools -- by putting an edict out from 2 Cedar.

SENATOR RICE: I understand that.

DR. HALL: You have to have principals, because I've been there, and I was one--

SENATOR RICE: But you need--

DR. HALL: --who insists that the students take home the books, that they do homework, and monitor staff. If they don't hold teachers accountable, my job is to hold them accountable -- the principals -- to see that they are doing their job.

SENATOR RICE: And through the Chair, I don't disagree with that. My point is that you don't wait until the school year's--

DR. HALL: I know.

SENATOR RICE: --over and then say they did a lousy job in leading. That should be done by somebody everyday. In fact, I'm getting complaints about Mt. Vernon. I did not know the principal left there, okay. Then I found out that part of my problem is not just the person that replaced them, but also the person that's in charge of that part of our district. So I'm going to look into that. That's nothing to do with here, but I don't know how you evaluate your folks, but it's creating problems for us.

SENATOR EWING: How do we get around this then, Dr. Hall, so the parents can get the input into you so you know some of these jerky superintendents you have are not doing the job?

DR. HALL: One of the things I have-- The Deputy Superintendent sitting right here -- and I've asked her, because I'm getting tired of the complaints. I have asked for a breakdown school by school, class by class of textbooks that are available and supplies that are available. She's

in the process of putting that together, because I want to be able to see for myself.

In the budget, there's an awful lot of money there for instructional supplies and textbooks. Therefore, now I'm asking for concrete proof. What exactly do you have classroom by classroom? It's the only way I can ever offset the individual complaints.

SENATOR EWING: But what about letting them take them home?

DR. HALL: Yes, they are supposed to be taking them home.

SENATOR EWING: Wait, Dr. Hall, I agree with you. They are supposed to be, but how are these parents going to let somebody in the education-- Should they write to me--

DR. HALL: No. No. No.

SENATOR EWING: --then I can get in touch with you?

DR. HALL: No. No. They can get in touch with their assistant superintendents if they feel it's not being addressed there. They can get in touch with the deputy superintendent. We have an associate superintendent for teaching and learning. We go to the community outreach meetings. We've had five so far. We ask for their information and their input into this, so when we hear it, we address it. We have an office of community development. There are many, many ways in which the parents can bring those concerns if indeed they are going on.

SENATOR EWING: All right. But if you see a superintendent or a principal that's constantly flouting your rules and regulations, what can you do? Does the union protect them so they can never be kicked out?

DR. HALL: Well, we have-- I have here in my hand one of the assistant superintendent's evaluation. There's tremendous amount of accountability in this system. They're being held accountable for what is going on in their cluster of schools.

SENATOR EWING: Right.

DR. HALL: They in turn are holding-- It's very clearly spelled out and they have signed off on it. They included things like homework being assigned, being collected, being graded -- very very specific. They in turn are holding their principals accountable for this. I believe there is a way to hold principals accountable. I believe that it doesn't have to be necessarily through removal, but that you can really work with them to let them know that you're not satisfied with their performance. I think the word is out very clearly in Newark that we're not going to accept our principals or any staff member who is not doing their job. We just can't afford it. We just can't afford to have that continue.

I have already made changes, as you well know, at the principal level and will continue to do so if I feel that the person is not appropriate for the job. I have no trouble doing that.

SENATOR EWING: Okay. I just hope that the majority of parents understand that they can get word to you, because also they certainly can get ahold of Senator Rice or get ahold of me. It's easier to get ahold of Senator Rice, but -- or get ahold of me because it's things like this that are so discouraging.

DR. HALL: I think we also have to look, Senator, at the vast majority that we don't hear from, because I get letters. I keep them. I'm

keeping them by the box load. I hear from an equal in numbers, sometimes more people who have seen changes, who want to convey it, but who do not have the access to the media or to someone like yourself who doesn't know how to access Senator Rice to convey their feelings. Those people are there, but their voices are not being heard.

SENATOR RICE: Mr. Chair, through you, all due respect, I get a lot of compliments from people about what's taking place in the schools. They start off giving me the compliments about what's taken place. They like that, and they tell me what's not taking place.

DR. HALL: Absolutely, as they should.

SENATOR RICE: And what's not taking place happens to be the same things that the parents are coming in that don't say anything good is happening, but it the same common pieces. And so I'm accessible, because I'm out there seven days a week. I'm more accessible than probably all your principals and administrators put together and everybody knows that. So we're here. I'm trying to support what you're trying to do. The parents here-- I happen to know that the majority of the people here -- because I was there -- stood up. Someone met with Senator Ewing and said, yes, go do what you have to do. Our feeling back is come based on what we see happening. There was a low enough expectation based on some of the things you were doing.

I happen to be smart enough and intellectual enough and observant enough to know that some of the things you are doing, any parent in that position would have to do something similar because the State did not try to make you a hero. If I was the Commissioner in this State, when I brought you to take over that district, I would have said what you need, you

would have had it up front, even if I scaled back two years down the road. That made good sense. Call it political sense, call it economics, it made good sense. What you are all doing is crucifying this lady. She's an African-American in an African-American city predominantly-- Well, I won't but the people will, but I know what the problem is.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: That's not fair at all. That is not fair, Senator, if I may. Commissioner Klagholz -- and you can ask Dr. Hall, not here, in private -- has been extremely supportive of Dr. Hall and everything that is happening in Newark. It has not been easy. We soon forget what it was like pre-July--

SENATOR RICE: I don't forget, I deal with it every day.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: May I finish, Senator?

SENATOR RICE: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry, go ahead.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Thank you.

We soon forget what it was like in pre-July 1995. From the first day that Dr. Hall was hired on July 12, 1995, the Commissioner has been there and supportive. She will tell you that I spent two days a week working with Dr. Hall and her staff on Newark. Mr. Contini spends the equivalent. I have two other Assistant Commissioners -- Dr. Anderson and Dr. Reese -- also spend time in Newark, not to mention two or three or four other people sitting behind me who are Department employees who spend their time in Newark. So we have been supportive.

There was and is a lot of waste in that school system. I commend Dr. Hall, as does the Commissioner, for the courageous, bold step she took. She didn't want to lay off 634 people. It was necessary to move money from

noninstruction to instruction. But we've been there, we've been helpful, and I believe we'll continue to do so from now until the day that Newark returns to local control.

SENATOR RICE: The key, optive words, through the Chair, are resources, equity, fairness, and opportunity. We can talk later about opportunity. We can talk about your legal areas. We can talk about contracts. We can talk about that. I'm just saying is that she takes hits on old things, too. You know, painting the schools and things like that. People say you shouldn't paint the schools, you should get books. She takes those issues on work with her. There are other areas that she cannot move forward with without some help from you all. I'm going to continue to raise that, because I can verify and I know some of the those political folks are with recipients of resources in the system when there are other folks who can share them. That becomes a part of young people learning. Because if young people in Newark in any of the school systems recognize that I can never be a principal or a lawyer with some work over here or a janitor or whatever, then you lose them in the whole learning process, particularly when they live in the city or live in the county. That's all I'm saying.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Senator, we're open to suggestions to continue to improve the way we operate with Dr. Hall and her staff, and we're welcome to those suggestions. My only point is to say that we, like Dr. Hall, are doing our best to be helpful. We all want the same thing. Every one of you I heard today said we want to make what's better best for the children of Newark. I think we want the same thing.

SENATOR RICE: Resources.

SENATOR EWING: Dr. Hall, going back to the kindergarten, etc.

DR. HALL: Yes.

SENATOR EWING: How many rooms are you short?

DR. HALL: Now?

SENATOR EWING: Yes.

DR. HALL: We have everyone in all-day kindergarten. What I don't have is if we go to pre-K.

SENATOR EWING: Pre-K. Okay.

DR. HALL: I don't have those numbers. I won't have them until January. That's in the report that I mentioned.

SENATOR EWING: But are you using any church basements or things like that?

DR. HALL: Not at the moment.

SENATOR EWING: But you could if you had to. I mean you can get waivers.

DR. HALL: We would, I would assume.

SENATOR EWING: The Department would give waivers or -- within certain confines, right?

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: Senator, there would be obviously the opportunity if the district needed additional space off-site of procedure for that, as long as health and safety is met. It would be short term, and they would give the district the opportunity to implement the comprehensive plan that Dr. Hall discussed. She'll have a better fix on that in January.

SENATOR EWING: And you'll know better after January--

DR. HALL: That's correct.

SENATOR EWING: --or sometime in February or March as to what the potential is for space needs?

DR. HALL: For Pre-K.

SENATOR EWING: Okay. Another question I want to ask you, Dr. Hall. Should we do something about-- Try to-- I don't know that we can on this seniority thing about the Creole teacher or whatever it was?

DR. HALL: We were able to rehire the aide. We did get--

SENATOR EWING: Oh, you did?

DR. HALL: We did. We did. Yes.

SENATOR EWING: I know. But for the future if it comes up again, should we do something throughout the-- I don't know-- To have it looked into.

DR. HALL: I know that we do not have the opportunity here to step outside of the seniority rules for special cases. It would be something I think that would be worth looking into, not just for Creole, but for bilingual personnel as a rule. Because many times they are the last hired, and therefore, when there is any kind of reduction in force, they're the first to go. And yet they are the ones that we need desperately because there's a shortage in the system. So it would be very helpful, yes.

SENATOR EWING: We'll look and see if we can.

DR. HALL: Yes.

SENATOR RICE: Excuse me.

SENATOR EWING: Yes.

SENATOR RICE: Mr. Chairman, if we can, you said rule-- Are you saying statute or are you saying contractual rules or are you saying policy or school or what are we talking about? We talking statute?

DR. HALL: I would assume through statute, yes. I was--

SENATOR RICE: No, I mean what are you talking about, you can't do it based on the rules?

DR. HALL: No. We can't do it because--

SENATOR RICE: What rules?

DR. HALL: --both by virtue of the regulations-- State regulations and contracturally, neither way.

SENATOR RICE: State regulations is something that--

DR. HALL: Civil service rules don't allow any--

SENATOR RICE: Civil service--

DR. HALL: --exceptions.

SENATOR RICE: All right. Can we prepare legislation-- They may be able to waiver temporarily, but let's compare legislation. You see I don't believe in--

DR. HALL: We have asked, Senator Rice, and we were not able to get anything waived.

SENATOR RICE: But that's the problem. Your Senator-- See, Senator Ewing gets mad with you all. Maybe you don't know this, but one thing he's done told people, why are you not talking to your Senators. Okay, we're here. The thing that galled me the most is, if you need something, I don't know. We may disagree on what it should look like. What also galled me was someone going to a Senator, outside the district that I represent, to get

things. At least give me the first opportunity. Now you see how I operate. You need it, we're going to do it. Are we going to get it passed, I don't know. But while play was stuck, it's important to what's moving at fast speed. Jesus, that's the way the Mayor treats me.

SENATOR EWING: You say your capital needs of 200 million for just repairing and renovating buildings or is that in construction?

DR. HALL: And also some construction as well, both for capital improvements and repairs.

SENATOR EWING: And what sort of-- Do you have any bonding capacity or the city?

DR. HALL: Currently, we have a little over 70 million in authorized but nonissued bonds.

SENATOR EWING: Seventy?

DR. HALL: Yes, 70, 7-0, million.

SENATOR EWING: Well, have you got plans for that 70?

DR. HALL: Yes, absolutely. We're going to need that money in order to really bring these buildings up to code. Seventy-six percent of the buildings in Newark are over 50 years old. Sixteen percent of them are over 100 years old, and they have been in a state of neglect and disrepair over the many years. So it's going to cost over \$200 million to rehabilitate and to make some capital improvements.

SENATOR EWING: Well, are plans being made now?

DR. HALL: Yes.

SENATOR EWING: I mean, plans are being drawn, etc.?

DR. HALL: Yes. Yes. Just to deal with the life -- what we call the life safety issues in our buildings, we need \$790,000. Of course, that's priority one. We have to address those right away. Then to make them habitable, we figured we need \$33 million, and that's just to deal with roofs and windows and structural kinds of things. So we have a lot to do.

SENATOR EWING: But it's in the process of being--

DR. HALL: We're looking at it. We've just completed the priority lists. And again, that study that I told you is due in January will give us the information that we need to begin to make decisions.

SENATOR EWING: Could you send us a copy of that--

DR. HALL: Absolutely.

SENATOR EWING: --when you get it, Dr. Hall?

DR. HALL: Yes. We will.

SENATOR RICE: Mr. Chairman, through you, I need to ask a question, because I'm concerned about this. It never takes place. This goes directly towards the increase in enrollment also. On this bonding and need for new schools and things of that nature, is the city office of development and housing authority at the table on a regular basis with your people in terms of the development team? And let me tell you why. Traditionally, we'll go out and build a school any place and nobody look at the census, nobody know what economic development is taking place. I keep telling the Mayors -- two of them -- that it does not make any sense for us to think as a totally separate entity, and we're giving them \$80 million. We started with 42 million, we're up to 81 or 82 million now. And we're at the table regularly saying, here's where we're building units. This has been approved. Here's a commitment.

Now we got to plug in welfare reformation. You're going to be surprised, in my estimation -- someplace in this State -- how you are going to see some increased enrollment just based on welfare reformation. Because some of these folks that we may not know are holding kids home or doing something else with them, because they're laying home doing nothing themselves not to get out the house -- and they're going to be looking for some babysitters. So my point is Newark meeting with your regularly?

DR. HALL: Yes, we did meet with the Office of Planning. We did have a lot of input from the Mayor's office in this plan, and you will see it. We've looked at where the housing is projecting to be built, the demographics, and the long-term projections across the city. So that's all included in the report that will be available in January.

SENATOR EWING: I'd like to ask, as long as you're here, Dr. Hall--

DR. HALL: Yes.

SENATOR EWING: --how many parents want to put up their hand and ask a question? We'll take those three, and that's all. The lady over here on the right first.

Joann. Come right over here, use this microphone over here, please. And, please, state your name and what school you're from or parent or what you might be, a teacher or a parent.

**JOANN MILLER:** My name is Joann Miller. I'm a parent in the Newark school district. I'm also Chairperson for the Pro-Child Coalition. I am here for children, every child that attends the district in Newark.

My concern is -- I'm also a core team member -- principals. There are a lot that retired, a lot that were laid off. But whatever the situation was, that one school, two schools-- My concern's on McKinley and University.

At McKinley-- A principal was placed at McKinley from -- what school was that? -- Barringer Prep. He is only there temporarily. He told me just this morning, he will be leaving as of December 24. We have interviewed vice-principals. We have heard nothing regarding a principal come the first of the year. I don't understand this.

The second concern I have is University High. A principal was taken from University High. Another vice-principal was brought there from Barringer High and placed at University. No notice was sent to parents. Parents are not aware of these changes that you're making. What is the problem that parents are not made aware? Students come home -- my child and other children that I know very well -- making these complaints. Our principal was taken away. They just told us today we'll have a new principal. Why is this disruption taking place in the middle of the year?

DR. HALL: Both of those are separate incidents. The principal from University applied for, which is her right, and accepted another position. And that is certainly her right to do so. It was my understanding that she shared with her staff and with her parents and with her students that she was leaving. But that was something over which we had no control. She applied for and was selected for another position.

MS. MILLER: I can respect that.

DR. HALL: Yes. The gentleman from Barringer Prep is retiring, and the time line that I have is not December 24, unless he plans to do

something I don't know, which you've just shared with me. The time line is January 31, and that was official. I have signed off on it, but now I'll find out why he told you December 24. And as we have done in every one of the other vacancies, we have put together a committee consisted of parents, for the first time, teachers including the NTU rep, administrators to select the replacement principals for each one of the other schools. We'd be doing the same for McKinley. We plan to do that in January, because the time line that he officially gave me was January 31.

MS. MILLER: We're being lied to. Blatant. That's the only way I can put it. Parents are being lied to and that upsets me personally. Not only upsets me, it upsets other parents who are truly concerned about our children's education.

DR. HALL: Well, the action form that I filled out, that I signed -- that's the document that goes down to the Department -- indicates his date as January 31. Now, if he's planning to take any time between now and then, he should be able to justify that as sick time. Hopefully, he can do that because he's not entitled to that time. So I must go back and find out what has happened between the time he gave you and the official time.

MS. MILLER: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR EWING: Thank you.

Next lady.

**MIRIAM BEY:** Good morning or good afternoon. My name is Miriam Bey, and I'm a parent, as most of you know, at Westside High School. I have a ninth-grade son, and I'm also a member of Pro-Child Coalition and, I am the host of Parent Notebook. I'm going to try and stick to the subject, because as

a parent with a child at Westside, I am very disturbed with what has been happening over there.

I have sent letters to you, Dr. Hall, and I've also sent letters to Kathrine Murphy regarding some of the issues at Westside High School. I was informed a couple of weeks ago that Westside has lost 19 teachers. The way that I found this out was that when my son received his report card, he has had 3 science teachers in one cycle. In the letter that I addressed to you and Kathrine Murphy on October 21, it indicated the overcrowdedness at Westside High School. Kathrine Murphy feels that Westside has not been overcrowded. I believe that since my son has gotten an incomplete for his science class it is partially due to him having 3 science teachers in one cycle and the fact that Westside was overcrowded.

As a parent, I'm outraged. Because, as you know, when you came in last year, I was not one of those parents who supported State takeover, but I did support you and your efforts to make a change in the Newark school system. Based on what has been happening at Westside, I don't see any real change going on academically for our students.

We've had many problems with security, as you know. I've also sent letters regarding that. We have a population of over 1100 students. We have four security guards. We may have increased two temporary security guards, and that is not enough for that student population. We have at Westside teachers and department chairs who are manning the hallways to prevent false alarms. I think a lot of it has to do with your Newark plan, which I do believe is destructive to the children in Newark.

The other concern that I have is a lack of parental participation. Parents are being excluded. We are not being included in this process. Parents do want to work with you and your district. But for those parents who may disagree with your positions, we are not respected. This is the same problem that we had under Eugene Campbell. As I said to you earlier, we're not going to go away. My son has been in this district for four years, and I have high expectations for him.

The other concern that I have at Westside, as a parent, is that we have teachers at Westside High School who are computers teachers who are taking computers home to repair them, because we don't have enough computers in the class. Now, as a parent, I understand what protocol is. I do write letters, but I do not get responses from the letters. I not only write letters to you, Dr. Hall, but I also send the CCs to Senator Rice and to Klagholz and to Governor Whitman.

So what I would like to see-- I'm tired, as a mother in this district, of our children being used and parents being blamed for everything. We want to work so that our children would be successful in this district. I'm hoping that you'll be able to start really including parents in this process, because what I see on paper and what I see in fact is not happening. So I'd like to know if you've received my two letters regarding Westside High School, because I have not received a response from you. I'd like to know when children are given incomplete grades for something that they had no responsibility of, what happens to those students? I do not believe that my son should receive -- why any other students in that grade should receive an incomplete when they have had three teachers in one cycle.

SENATOR EWING: Thank you, Ms. Bey.

DR. HALL: Let me respond by saying that both letters were responded to. One was responded to-- Both, I think, by Kathrine Murphy because the specifics had to do with the state of the high school. I gave her the letter to respond to you, and I have a copy.

MS. BEY: I received one response. I didn't receive the other.

DR. HALL: Well, okay. But she did respond in great detail to that letter. The other issue of the incomplete I don't have the specifics here. I wouldn't be able to comment. We could look into it. Someone from her office will respond as they always do when you raise these issues.

Westside remains of tremendous concern to me. We will be taking steps to change the climate in Westside and you will see them. We will not continue to have a school spiral out of control because I think that's inappropriate. So in a couple of weeks, we should see some drastic changes involved in Westside High School.

MS. BEY: And what about the inclusion of parents?

DR. HALL: You were-- As I understand it, we tried to reach the PTA president of Westside. She has moved. She couldn't tell us who the next person was who ought to be contacted. I spoke with Ms. Holiday I believe on Thursday, again, indicating reach out, find out who the parent -- whatever parent, teacher, executive board, who they are -- engage them, and let them know what we're planning to do.

MS. BEY: Okay, but we don't have to be a PTA member or on a board for you to contact us. I know that you have my address and my phone number.

DR. HALL: Yes, but we don't-- When we're doing something formal with the school, we do engage the PTA presidents, and they in turn engage the other parents. There has to be a structure, and that's the way we do it. You also know when we open up our Committees, we invite parents to participate. You have participated on some and not on others. You've come and not come and that remains a standard procedure.

SENATOR EWING: Thank you, Ms. Bey.

SENATOR RICE: Mr. Chairman, through you, right quickly, Dr. Hall and to the State, who may not know enough about Westside. When Bellsburg High School was there, Bellsburg competed with Science and University. Half the population of Westside High School came from "the Bellsburg community." The majority of the people in the Bellsburg community are home owners who go to church every week. Their kids have these value systems that can be worked with, even though it may not act like it sometimes at Westside. They did not want to go to Westside because of conditions. The reason--

Westside has a good principal in Nate Parks. He didn't take any mess. But the school has never received any kind of help from downtown because they are nonpolitical and they choose to remain that way. Every time we pick up a document in the City of Newark for the record, when you talk about public schools, it's normally some new transformation of program at Barringer, which I support, or some new transformation of program at Central, which I support, maybe Shabazz, maybe Weequahic. Westside has always been left out of the loop. I think you have a good student body potential there to work with, but I really think you are going to need strong leadership in that

school and a lot of parental participation and not depend on just the PTA president to get you that. So I at least wanted to say that.

MS. BEY: Thank you.

SENATOR RICE: And it happened to be in my district and my ward. So I always get angry because all the locally elected officials live in the south ward or over on the other side of town, Central, etc., and so we choose not to be political. So what happens is the school continues to get hurt with everything.

DR. HALL: Well, Senator Rice, we will share with you the plans that we have in the works for Westside. We're not ignoring it.

SENATOR EWING: Thank you, Ms. Bey.

MS. BEY: Thank you.

SENATOR EWING: Didn't recognize you today.

**A N D A I Y E F O L U K E:** Good morning. Andaiye Foluke. I'm a Newark parent. I'm also a teacher in Irvington. I work with teachers and parents. I work with teachers in training them on some of the higher art of teaching skills that Dr. Hall talked to you all about.

One of the things that I've noted in a lot of the mandates that the Newark teachers are getting are not processed learning. They're learning the tests. They're getting quarterly, sometimes monthly, level assessment tests where they have a criteria test, they call them. Where they have to constantly be teaching children those particular skills so that they can prepare the child for that particular month's criteria test. So the amount of time that teachers have in actually teaching our children processed learning, which is a type of learning that suburban children receive, is very minimal first of all.

I was very surprised that Dr. Hall and neither Mr. Klagholz actually gave you the former district strategic plan, which would have highlighted in details -- maybe you did get it, this is different from mine -- but it would have highlighted the objectives. If you really look at the objectives, you would see that the State does not project that our children will pass the test until the year 2000. I mean even the former board expected more from our children than that.

Most of the whole curriculum has been very watered down. We met with you, Dr. Hall, if you remember in August of 1995 from University. We showed you, at that time, that we would work with you, that we had very high expectations. We talked about advanced placement courses. To our surprise, we found out that the advanced placement courses at University-- They did give advance placement courses under the Education Improvement Plan, but we found out that the Education Improvement Plan apparently is a whole basis of all of the instructional programs in all of the schools. So, as opposed to the Education Improvement Plan supplement, the districts' education are instructional programs. We found out that a lot of the weight of the schools is based on the EIPs.

What we found as a result is that all of the other children in University have been lumped in overcrowded schools and classes. I'm very surprised that Dr. Hall didn't talk to you in terms of the overcrowding and what the whole restructuring--

SENATOR EWING: How many children are in a class?

MS. FOLUKE: We're talking about an average of 35 or 40 children in the classroom. This is secondary. Apparently I was glad -- I wish

Senator MacInnes were here -- when he asked about all of the focus being at the prekindergarten and early childhood level. Basically they have just decided to just wipe us right off, the secondary students.

There are not a lot of instructional programs for the secondary schools. The only time this is-- We had to come all the way to Trenton to find out what was Dr. Hall's and Mr. Klagholz's plans for our children. Dr. Hall had had no monthly meeting with parents. We had to attend community meetings sponsored by Public Service or Prudential or whoever. We could not get-- We begged her for town hall meetings. We begged her to come in and meet with parents so that we could find out what her vision and what her mission was. We weren't screaming. We were very disciplined. We just wanted to know what was in the plans for our children.

This is the first time we had to take off. This is the first time that we, as parents, got an opportunity to hear what Dr. Hall had planned. They sent me this, but she would never meet with us. It took, in fact, two months to get this.

SENATOR EWING: Would the superintendents have that?

MS. FOLUKE: I'm sorry.

SENATOR EWING: Did your superintendent have that?

MS. FOLUKE: Have?

SENATOR EWING: That booklet. I mean, showing--

MS. FOLUKE: It took two months. Yes, I put a letter in the mail--

SENATOR EWING: Then you can discuss it with the superintendent on this.

MS. FOLUKE: The Superintendent being Dr. Hall?

SENATOR EWING: No. No. I mean your local principal or superintendent.

DR. HALL: Assistant superintendent.

MS. FOLUKE: I'm a parent. The superintendent basically did not-- And she had it. The superintendent, I guess, have gotten some word, and they're very fearful of really talking to the parents about what's going on in Newark. They are not really talking about plans. Also, I wanted to--

SENATOR EWING: The document evidently was not public until -- what? -- December 4 when the report was made to the State.

DR. HALL: That's right.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: That's correct. But there is significant--

SENATOR EWING: What?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: There's significant community involvement. I believe that was described in Dr. Hall's plan and in her earlier remarks about the community meetings and the involvement, where possible, of all the core teams and at the school level.

MS. FOLUKE: Well, I'm also on the core team. That that was in the plan was correct. What I'm telling you is that I'm in community. That I'm there, and I think you've seen me a couple of times. She did make that report. I'm telling you that that is not correct. That we are not getting-- I'm also the corresponding secretary of the PTSO at University. So I think that I would be in the position to receive any correspondence coming from the Central Office for the PTAs, which is, as Dr. Hall calls them, a legitimate group. We do not

receive the information. I guess, as Ms. Bey said, they are handpicked parents. But they are not going, and I wrote that down.

You said we have a problem with structure. According to my understanding, the corresponding secretary receives all incoming correspondence. We received for the first time, two weeks ago, a package from the community development, I guess, in preparation for this meeting of information of our parent involvement -- programs that they have for parent involvement. We've been asking. We attend advisory board meetings. We attend council meetings with Ms. Doggett is there. I mean, we are there. We certainly know how to-- We attended this parent meeting that Ms. Doggett had in response to how to develop and improve the parent involvement. So we are absolutely out there. But in terms of monthly parent meetings, no. And in terms of community meetings, the community, I would think, represents the parents of those children that Dr. Hall has a responsibility to educate. Not Public Service, not Prudential, and not some of the businesses, but Dr. Hall very rarely plugs in to the children. This is the first time.

I thank you all for the opportunity to attend. This is the first time that we found out what was going on. But I can certainly tell you that the district's strategic plan here is not at all competitive with what's going on in the suburban districts.

Thank you.

SENATOR EWING: Thank you.

(indiscernible comment from audience)

You have to come up here.

I said there were only going to be those three ladies. So you have to wait until another time or I'll talk to you when we're finished here.

Okay, thank you.

One question.

**H O U S T O N S T E V E N S:** Just one question on finance, sir. I believe it would illuminate a lot of things for everyone here. Just one question. The district started out with a surplus budget with a surplus of \$68 million. Dr. Hall reported today that they expected to have 13 million at the end of this school year. We've not received any report whatsoever where the money, the surplus funds, was spent. We would like to know how this money was spent partly because they claimed that they saved \$26 million from noninstructional programs and put it into instructional. Where we look at it, we don't see the dollars.

SENATOR EWING: Who's we?

MR. STEVENS: We-- I mean parents. Those parents who have actually read the document and done some research.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Senator, that information will be readily available when the audit is completed and made public at that time.

MR. STEVENS: The audit is usually done in October, Senator. This is already three months.

SENATOR EWING: Well, it's not going to be done before that.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: No, it's not October.

MR. STEVENS: It's always done in October.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: No it is not. It's due to the State Department of Education on November 5. The information we made public.

SENATOR RICE: Excuse me, through the Chair, when did you say it was going to be completed?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Excuse me.

SENATOR RICE: Excuse me, I said when did you say the audit would be done? When would it be completed?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: The district audit will be made public at an advisory committee meeting in the future. It's not tomorrow night's agenda.

SENATOR RICE: No. No. No.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: It will likely be at the January meeting, I suppose.

DR. HALL: That's right.

SENATOR RICE: Commissioner, through the Chair, do you have any idea of what month, what time frame--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: January, I just said, Senator. January.

SENATOR RICE: We do all the time in local government. We know what we're going to do. January?

DR. HALL: January.

SENATOR RICE: All right. So would you make sure that we get a copy also in local government.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Of course.

SENATOR RICE: So then January you can scrutinize the audit and then we can move further.

SENATOR EWING: On an audit like that, who gets copies?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Generally, made available to the advisory board and the local board of education. Each board member receives one, and it must be presented at a public meeting.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: And copies are available, Senator, upon request.

SENATOR EWING: So groups can make a request?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Sure.

MR. STEVENS: Sure. I've never had any trouble getting it in the past, but I have a great deal of trouble getting information out of this administration.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Senator, please. Senator, this is not fair.

SENATOR EWING: We think the administration is doing very well. We're putting the money in by far the biggest amount.

MR. STEVENS: But we're paying the money.

SENATOR RICE: Yes, and in January, through the Chair, Houston, I'll make sure in January when the document comes out, it will be made public. And what I'm requesting is they always send one to the council, and I'll make sure you have a copy, so it can be analyzed, because I try to remind this Committee that some of our parents are analytical people, and I think that's the problem that some people have with working with you all.

(noise from audience)

SENATOR EWING: No. No. I'm sorry.

Thank you very much, Dr. Hall, and your staff. Thank your staff.

**(MEETING CONCLUDED)**