
Committee Meeting

of

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*“Commissioner of Education, Dr. Leo Klagholz, and Paterson
State District Superintendent, Dr. Laval S. Wilson, will
present the district’s Strategic Plan”*

LOCATION: Room 319
State House
Trenton, New Jersey

DATE: February 20, 1997
10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF JOINT COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Senator John H. Ewing, Chairman
Assemblyman John A. Rocco, Vice-Chair
Senator Gordon A. MacInnes
Assemblyman Joseph Charles Jr.
Assemblyman Raul “Rudy” Garcia
Assemblyman Carmine DeSopo
Assemblyman Joseph V. Doria Jr.

ALSO PRESENT:

Melanie M. Schulz, Executive Director
Joint Committee on the Public Schools



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SENATOR JOHN H. EWING (Chairman): Good morning, everybody. This is the Paterson school presentation by Superintendent Laval Wilson.

Rich DiPatri, Commissioner.

DEP. COMMISSIONER RICHARD A. DiPATRI:
Good morning, Senator, and other members of the Joint Committee.

Commissioner Klagholz extends his apologies for not being here this morning. Unfortunately, he is handling an urgent matter, or actually I should say matters, and is not able to be here.

On behalf of Commissioner Klagholz, we appreciate this opportunity to report on the progress of the State-operated school district of Paterson. With me this morning are Dr. Contini, Assistant Commissioner for Field Services, who is responsible for State-operated school districts, and Dr. Laval Wilson, Superintendent of the Paterson School District.

Last March we came before this Committee and reported that Paterson had made important strides in improving district programs and services, had built new libraries, had increased districtwide use of technology, had restructured East Side High School, and had made other important improvements. We wish to report today on the efforts the district is making to improve student performance, our highest priority.

Since we last came before the Committee, Paterson's test scores have improved in five of nine benchmark areas in tests of reading, writing, and mathematics on the fourth-, eighth-, and eleventh-grade levels.

At present, the district meets State-certification standards in two of the nine areas. Where progress has been made, particularly at the fourth-

grade level and to a lesser degree at the eighth-grade level, the district has been evaluating its performance and seeking to build on that, which has worked.

For those areas where progress last year did not occur as we had hoped, particularly the High School Proficiency Test, the district is focusing on making improvements. Dr. Laval Wilson, State District Superintendent of Paterson will, in his presentation, share with you more details on these efforts.

The performance in Paterson this past year suggested State operation and the Department's focus on strategic--

SENATOR EWING: Rich, could you bring that microphone a little bit closer to you? This one. (indicating PA microphone)

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Sure.

SENATOR EWING: I don't think everybody can hear you.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: The performance in Paterson this past year suggests that State operation and the Department's focus on strategic planning is working in the district and will lead to future progress. As in Jersey City and Newark, a concerted and systematic effort is being made by the leadership and staff in Paterson to set high expectations for students and staff, implement effective programs, and hold principals, teachers, and others in the district accountable for performance.

Last March, Dr. Wilson presented to you the Paterson five-year Strategic Plan. You will recall that the Strategic Plan identifies annual performance benchmarks the district seeks to achieve and describes the strategies that will be used to reach those benchmarks. Today, Dr. Wilson is here to present the district's progress against the benchmarks for '95 and '96 and to share with you how implementation of several key initiatives is

proceeding and to review the direction the district will be taking over the course of this school year.

The report Dr. Wilson presents today has been reviewed by the Commissioner and his staff and was presented to the State Board of Education this past October. At this time, Dr. Wilson will speak for approximately 15 minutes or 20 minutes, and then, of course, we will be glad to answer your questions.

Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR EWING: You're not putting a time limitation on him when you say 15 minutes?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: No.

SENATOR EWING: This is our meeting and he can talk as long as he wants. (laughter) But he has to be worried, you're more or less over him. So don't give him the impression that he has to cut it short.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: I was referring to his brief introductory comments, Senator. (laughter) I would never suggest--

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Remember less is best, less is best.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Thank you, Senator.

L A V A L S. W I L S O N, Ph.D.: Good morning, Senator Ewing.

SENATOR EWING: You need the other microphone there, too.

DR. WILSON: This one?

SENATOR EWING: One is recording-- There, that's the loudspeaker for the room. (indicating) That's it. Thank you.

DR. WILSON: I'll try to make sure that I speak into both of them so we can -- the right electronic equipment recording is going in.

Good morning, Senator Ewing, members of the Joint Committee, Senior Staff of the Department of Education, audience, parents, and staff members of Paterson Public School System.

As Dr. DiPatri indicated, I'm very pleased to come before you and make some summary comments. These summary comments are similar to the ones that I presented to the State Board back in the fall.

First, I would like to make sure that we all have the documents I'm going to refer to. You have a copy of my presentation. Second, you should have a series of yellow pages which are summary comments which will focus on the various benchmarks. You should also have a green corrections page. The correction page focuses on those statements and corrections in the annual report that you have. After the publication of this report, we found there were some corrections. Again, since the presentation before the State Board, we have not changed this report, so you have the exact same document. In the summary comments, some of the events have already taken place. We've only changed the title from State Board to Joint Committee, so I will be reviewing that. You have a newsletter, which focuses on the expectations of performance for the school year for each of our principals, each of our classroom teachers, and you also should have a copy of the priorities for the current school year.

I'm going to divide my presentation into three major components. First, student performance successes and student performance benchmarks, which need improvement; second, nonstudent performance benchmark successes, and those which need improvement; third, priorities for the 1996-1997 school year, the school year that we are currently in.

I would like to start with the successes of the year, so we will use the yellow pages as benchmarks for this presentation.

SENATOR MacINNES: Good morning, sir.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Good morning, Senator.

DR. WILSON: The results, which, at this point are the successes for the year. In the fourth grade, Dr. DiPatri indicated to you that we did make some progress. We're finding that student achievement is still one of the most difficult areas to improve. We're not trying to make excuses in the Paterson Public School systems, in our system, for the fact that achievement is not as high as we would like. That's our number one priority; it has been and will continue to be. But in the area of fourth-grade performance, 83.2 percent of the fourth-grade students met the minimum level of proficiency in reading and surpassing the 80 percent benchmark that we had established by 3.2 percent. So we met the State standard there of 75 percent. We should clearly note that the minimum level of proficiency is not a very high level, so when students meet that level, it is not a very high level of proficiency.

In the area of writing, 89.7 percent of our fourth-grade students met the MLP in writing, surpassing the 84 percent benchmark by 5.7 points, and we met the State standard of 75 percent there.

In the area of mathematics, 70.7 percent of the fourth-grade students met the MLP, surpassing the benchmark, but we did not meet the State standard in that area.

The benchmarks not associated with student performance where we had some success: We have completed a new policy manual. That policy manual had been drafted with us through the assistance of the New Jersey

School Boards Association. That policy manual had been adopted by me in the summer. It has been reviewed completely with our Board of Education. We have had several retreats with the Board. We have gone over all the policies, so we have an updated policy manual that will now be disseminated throughout the city for every school and various community organizations to understand what the policies of the district are, and we are in the process of writing regulations to go with that policy.

Our Board of Education now, for the second year, is involved in voting on curricular, fiscal, and legal matters. This is the second year for that to occur. We have two meetings a month. The first Wednesday of the month business activities occur only, and the third Wednesday of the month is our regular meeting. We had one last night where not only was regular business presented, but we also were involved in major presentations concerning a host of different issues.

We have a committee structure that works very well. We have a Finance Committee, we have a Legal Committee, and a Curriculum Committee, and when negotiations are going on there is a Negotiations Committee. So we have made some good progress there.

We continue to discuss the need for new buildings, and I'm pleased to indicate to you that Assistant Commissioner Contini has approved for us the moving forward of \$44 million of monies for us to go forth to bond.

We have a school, as you know, in Ridgefield Park. That school is going to come back into Paterson. Each school, we figure, is going to be \$20 million, so two elementary schools, school number 1 and school number 11 are scheduled to be built. The educational specifications for school number 1 have

been finalized. We're in the process, right now, of negotiating the price for two partials in the city. As soon as those are finalized, we will be able to complete the schematic drawings. The schematic drawings are under way for two elementary schools. Those elementary schools, again, will allow us to take care of increased enrollments that we've had over a number of years and be able to assist us as we move forward to full-time kindergarten students, so we're pleased with that.

One of the buildings, school number 1, again has been in Ridgefield Park for a number of years. That school was established when we first became State operated in 1991 to reduce overcrowding. The second school we're going to build is to replace school number 11. We're going to transform that school into a full-time kindergarten school. We're going to build number 1, build number 11, and then take all of number 11 and renovate it so it will become a full-time kindergarten center.

SENATOR EWING: Doctor.

DR. WILSON: Yes, sir.

SENATOR EWING: As far as the Assemblymen go, if they want to ask questions -- because I realize that some of you have to leave for Committee Meetings -- to interrupt while they are going on rather than waiting because the presentation might take longer than you're going to be here.

DR. WILSON: I'll try not to get long winded.

SENATOR EWING: So, if there are other questions other than what Dr. Wilson is talking about, I would ask the questions now so that you can get your answers.

DR. WILSON: Senator Ewing, if I could just for a little clarity. Last year I got into two pages before the questions and answers. I was hoping to get through a little bit more of my presentation this year. (laughter)

SENATOR EWING: Well, the only problem, Laval, is that they have Committee Meetings coming up or caucuses and things, and they're not going to be able to stay for the full time -- all of them -- so I just wanted to leave it open because I think it's unfortunate for you to be here and they can't ask a question.

DR. WILSON: I understand. I just had my fingers crossed, that's all. (laughter)

SENATOR EWING: We've got the room until 3:00 this afternoon, so don't worry. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Unfortunately, we're in session and that's part of the problem.

DR. WILSON: I understand.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Are you trying to say you're working and they're not?

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: We're always working. Always. Everyone.

DR. WILSON: Since there may be questions popping up, let me try, rather than going through the major components that I was going to talk about -- hit for you some critical issues, because the testimony is here.

The student achievement issues are major for us. We've made some progress in the fourth grade. We continue to make some slight progress in the eighth grade, and this year we made some progress in the eleventh grade.

First-time eleventh-grade students taking the exams made some progress over the previous year, but we are far from being successful, or calling ourselves successful, on the Early Warning Tests and on the high school eleventh-grade tests. We realize, of course, that kids aren't going to graduate unless they pass the HSPT. In an endeavor to try to make more dramatic progress for these youngsters, I want to turn your attention to something that had not happened before in our school system and probably not happened in many school systems around the State. That's in this newsletter.

We have an example of an elementary school and high school expectation sheet. In the beginning of the school year, my Assistant Superintendent for curriculum instruction, Dr. Hoover; Ms. Carrillo, who's our new Director of Planning; each Assistant Superintendent; and each principal met for about two and a half to three hours, depending upon the size of their school. We established goals for the school, by school, by grade level, by teacher. We looked at, as an example, the 1994 scores. If you'll take a look at the inside sheet, which is for the elementary school, we took a look at grades two through eight. This is a sample of a typical elementary school that has eight grades. We looked at the scores for '94 and '95. We looked at the scores for '95 and '96 in reading, writing, and math as an example for the second grade. We established a goal for '96 and '97, the current year.

An example in this school, we said we would like the goal to be 65 percent of the kids hitting the MLP in reading, 65 percent in writing, 75 percent in math. Then we established goals like that for the third grade, fourth grade, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth. Then we went, as an example, down here to grade four, and there is one for each grade -- we'll just take grade four

as an example -- we took the teachers by name -- we don't have them here by name, but just an example -- and we tried to determine what that teachers' scores had been in reading for '94 and '95, '95 and '96, and we established with the principal a specific goal for each teacher, at each grade level, for the current school year. Members of my staff and I have gone to each school in different sections of the City to start to review to see the progress that's taking place. Assistant Superintendents go to all the schools. I have been to about seven since this was established to check for myself to see the progress that's being made.

SENATOR MacINNES: Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR EWING: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: A question for clarity. Is this an actual school?

DR. WILSON: This one is a sample, but there is an actual profile.

SENATOR MacINNES: There is an actual school that this represents.

DR. WILSON: For each of the 35 schools in the district.

SENATOR MacINNES: Is this an actual school that's portrayed here?

DR. WILSON: This particular one would be a school without the name of the school. Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: But these are actual numbers--

DR. WILSON: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: --from real schools--

DR. WILSON: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: --in Paterson. From a real school--

DR. WILSON: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: --in Paterson. If that's the case, I'm mystified, and maybe you can help me. How you can have -- I'm assuming that most of the second-graders in '94 and '95 became third-graders in '95 and '96.

DR. WILSON: That's correct.

SENATOR MacINNES: You have only 62 percent achieving the minimal level in '94 and '95 when they were second-graders, and it jumps up to 88 percent in the next year when they are third-graders, which seems to be a huge and dramatic increase. What explains that? And then your expectation is that when they become fourth-graders, there is going to be a rather noticeable falloff.

DR. WILSON: It depends on the number of students at a grade level. It also depends on the mobility rate. Some schools -- I'll give you an example. School number 11 would have a 65 percent mobility rate a year. Some other schools would have a mobility rate of 20 percent or 30 percent. It really depends upon the grade level and the number of questions that students get right at one grade level in comparison to another grade level.

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, but the standards don't shift so dramatically. Take the second-graders again for '95 and '96 at this school. You had only 55 percent of them -- only 55 percent of them passing the reading. The expectation for the same school, for that class, this year is that 92 percent of them are going to pass the reading. What explains such a sharp revolutionary change in one year?

DR. WILSON: We discussed those issues with each principal. Let me give you an example. As we talked about what had occurred the previous year and the year before, there were some very clear reasons as to why some grade levels had a very low score the previous year. One could have been the fact that the teacher who was the regular teacher was out on leave at the end of the fourth or fifth month. We found that in some cases they had some beginning teachers in that grade level. So scores could have been low for a particular reason. What we try to do with each principal, as we looked at the previous year's scores, was to determine what that principal, based on the teacher who was in a certain grade level -- what was a realistic goal for that teacher at that grade level for the '96 and '97 school year. We won't be able to determine how realistic those goals were until the students take the California Achievement Test this spring. That was a teacher by teacher assessment by the principal.

SENATOR MacINNES: Your explanation for this is that in the second grade, you had either some rookie teachers or some really lousy teachers operating in this school. In the third grade, you've got really great teachers, and therefore, the 37 percent of the kids who couldn't make it in second grade, meeting minimal standards, are somehow in third grade at that same school going to meet them this year. That's your goal.

DR. WILSON: And that's based on a grade-level by grade-level, teacher by teacher analysis.

SENATOR MacINNES: What are you doing to change the situation in the second grade at this school? Why are those teachers still there if that's the explanation for that terrible performance in the second grade?

Why is that second grade-- Have you cleaned out the second-grade teaching staff at that school?

DR. WILSON: Those are the same types of questions that members of my staff and I raise with each principal. It's a good question. We raised the same question. Some of the teachers in those grade levels were changed. Some are no longer in those schools. We try to provide opportunities for professional development for those who are having difficulty, so there has been work sessions in math, work sessions in reading, work sessions in writing. If those were teachers who were not performing, we've asked for the assessments of their performance to be critiqued to determine whether those who are teachers that should have poor ratings and whether they should have been removed from the schools. Those types of questions that you are focusing on -- the same ones that my team and I focused on with each principal. We raised the same questions.

SENATOR MacINNES: You know what school this is and I don't, and we don't need to reveal what the school is. I'm asking not a general question, I'm asking a specific question. I want to know if you made changes at this school on the ground and if this year you have a different group of second-grade teachers at that school or what have you done -- and if you do, why is the goal only 65 percent compliance if you've cleaned house in terms of the second-grade teachers in that school? You're not moving up that dramatically in terms of what your expectation is. If you've corrected the problem by changing the staff or doing whatever you can do, why don't you have a higher goal for reading in the second grade at the X school?

DR. WILSON: I would say, Senator, that based on where the students were at the second grade in that school that going from 55.7 percent to 65 percent was thought to be a reasonable goal no matter who was sitting in the chair as teacher.

SENATOR MacINNES: You can't convince me of that, Dr. Wilson. If you expect that the kids who are in the school last year are going to move from 55 percent to 92 percent in reading in the third grade, now, your answer--

DR. WILSON: Okay.

SENATOR MacINNES: --just doesn't make any sense to me. I'm not trying to pick a fight with you. This is your newsletter.

DR. WILSON: I understand.

SENATOR MacINNES: You have invited us to take a look at it, and it raised this huge question about what's going on in the X school.

DR. WILSON: What I will do is to go back and review the specific staffing at the second grade, and I will give you a call and review that with you. I do not remember, specifically, what teachers were moved in that school, but I will go back and pull my files and review it with my staff.

SENATOR MacINNES: But it's not just-- Here's what you're saying. You're saying that according to this chart, what you're saying is, if your kid is in second grade at the X school, pull that kid, get him or her someplace else, because the experience there is not good and it's not going to get that much better. However, if your kid has survived the second grade, keep him or her there because in the third grade you're going to see a miraculous transformation.

DR. WILSON: Well, what you saw in '94 and '95 was students in that grade level at the 62 percent level and then it dropped. What we're trying to do with that grade level is to push it back up again and to build on what the principal would have thought would be a realistic possibility. We are concerned, the same as you, with the lower performance level and even though there is a major change in the scores by the time the students get to third grade, we thought focusing on the strengths of the school in the second grade with new staff would provide us that type of help. There was a dip and we would assume that this year, given the focus of attention there, we would make the progress that we've established as a benchmark for the next year. I don't have any other answer that I could give you on that.

SENATOR MacINNES: You know what I would like to do, I'd like to come and visit this school with you. (applause) That's what I'd like to do. I'd like to see.

SENATOR EWING: I ask for no demonstrations here otherwise you can step outside. Please, do you understand that.

SENATOR MacINNES: Because I can't -- By the way, if you track the same things with grade four to grade five and you run into the same experience with reading, math, I mean writing -- excuse me -- grade four in '94 and '95, there was 86 percent of the kids that did fine or at least met the minimal standards, but when they moved to grade five, that dropped to 65 percent in the next year. Again--

DR. WILSON: We are taking the scores.

SENATOR MacINNES: --these are-- When you see such large changes, then you have to look for explanations or you have to doubt the

reliability of the measurement you're using or its application because these sorts of changes, I think, would be seen by most researchers as rather stunning, as aborational, as deserving special attention, yet this is the school you chose to pick -- you chose for your newsletter.

DR. WILSON: We gave you a typical school at the elementary school.

SENATOR MacINNES: It's a typical school.

Mr. Chairman, I think the chart raises some serious--

SENATOR EWING: Well, I think what you should do, Gordon, is go up and visit the schools that you want to and see firsthand and talk to some of the teachers, etc.

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, I want you to come with me.

SENATOR EWING: I've been to them. I haven't see it there.

SENATOR MacINNES: You've been to the X school?

SENATOR EWING: Yes, and the Y and the Z.

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, I think it's a -- Okay, if you don't want to come, Jack, I'll go.

SENATOR EWING: Let us know when you're going.

DR. WILSON: We'd be happy to have you come and visit, and we'll visit those second-grade classes.

SEANATOR MacINNES: Well, I'm wondering if the Department has looked at this pattern and whether they are concerned as I am about the apparant lack of explanation for this.

ASST. COMMISSIONER PETER CONTINI: The answer to that is absolutely absurd. I think there needs to be a clarification,

Senator, because you bring some very insightful questions of which we have been asking similar questions and there are different levels of answers.

One set of answers is that there is a mobility issue. The second set of answers is the size of the school and the number of classes in a particular grade level can create a fluctuation in percentage calculations, so you have to look beyond the percentage. You have to look at the actual number of kids involved. The third is, what interventions has the district really taken for staff development and also the reassignment as you indicated.

We are focusing on the same issues. As you know, two years ago, when we developed a strategic plan, it wasn't just at the district level, it was benchmarked at the school level just to bring forward the kinds of questions that you are raising. We're reviewing the same data that you are and have the same inquiry and the same concerns.

SENATOR MacINNES: But no answers.

ASST. COMMISSIONER CONTINI: There are answers, and I think what Dr. Wilson is indicating to you is that behind each one of these sets of analysis are determinations that he has made and his staff has made as to what modifications they are making in the current year to address these.

SENATOR MacINNES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

DR. WILSON: The major point that I was trying to make with these charts is to say that rather than having goals established that didn't relate to where specific classes were in previous years, we think we've made a major progressive move by identifying a specific goal, not just for a school and not just for a grade level, but then targeting each teacher's previous performance in reading, writing, and math and establish a new goal for that teacher in every

grade, in every school, in the school district. We think that that's progress. We think that provides us with a better opportunity to track those areas of reading, writing, and math that are working and those schools that need additional support and help.

The specific reason for that is that it also has given us an opportunity to work with each principal on a clear diagnosis as to what has happened at each grade level with each teacher and to be able to track that. That had not been done previously. We believe that that is helpful to us. There are two attempts this year to improve achievement in each school. It's the in-school program improvement that the expectations plan is focusing on.

In the beginning of the year a presentation was made to all teachers on videotape concerning the improvements. A meeting was held with all fourth-grade teachers. I held a meeting with all fourth-grade teachers in the district. I held a meeting with all eighth-grade teachers in the district and each of the high schools, as well as meetings with all of the vice-principals at the high schools and Department Chairs to focus on the same issues. A newsletter was sent home to all parents to focus on this issue. Second, there is a remediation plan that we put into place for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursdays, and Saturdays for grades four and eight, as well as grade eleven, and for those twelfth-grade students who needed help and support. When young people come and participate in the programs we find success. The students who take part intensely in the remediation efforts we find that they are successful.

To give you an example of some of the successes in those schools where young people have been involved, I would ask you to turn to Page 52 in

your document, and that's the annual report. On Page 52, fourth-grade students in the area of reading -- these schools are schools that have various types of innovations that are going on.

The right-hand side, SFA is Success For All. That's the Slaben program that focuses on early childhood intervention. The Colmer process, Dr. Colmer from Yale, and the program that's solicited as PPP was the Paterson Paradigm Program which focused heavily on basic skills. In some schools there is a combination of either Success For All or the Paradigm Program and there was one traditional program. What is interesting is that in those schools where we have innovations where the program has been in effect for more than two years -- so right next to the program column, the first column to the left of the program column, the percent passing in the program more than two years, so 1996 scores on the California Achievement -- in comparison to the column next to it, percent passing in programs less than two years, we're finding that 12 of the 13 schools were fourth-grade students who were in the program for two or more years are much more successful in meeting the minimum level of proficiency than students who are in a program less than two years. So students who are in innovative programs tend to be more successful than those who have -- if they have been in there more than two years -- than those who haven't been there at all, or less than two years.

If you compare that same column, more than two years, all over, to the percent passing in 1992 prior to intervention at all and prior to State operations -- State operations started in 1991, but the programs weren't really in effect until the third year -- you're finding that, again, there has been success. So we're pleased to indicate that in those schools where there have

been interventions that have been placed in the programs there for young people that they're working. That's for fourth grade.

If you go to Page 55, you see a similar set of scores for eighth grade in reading. A question that is always raised is that when you put programs into effect are those programs working? So programs in place for two or more years tend to show more progress for students, meaning the MLP, than for students who are in those same programs less than two years, and since the program has been in effect for eighth grade students similar to fourth-grade students in comparison to back in 1993, which is the first year we had results for the eighth grade students, more students met the MLP. So those types of interventions seem to be working.

Another intervention that demonstrates success because it's been an intensive project-- The back of the presentation you will see a chart that compares the students in the Residential High School Program. Some of you have been to the residential high school program. It's a summer program. It's the last page in the presentation material of the speech, the last page in the speech is draft 2.

The Residential High School Program is another intensive program for remediation. It's operated in the summer for four weeks. There is a limited number of students, only 65 to 70, but those students who were eleventh-grade students who took the High School Proficiency Test for the first time -- comparing the prep student results to the general student population -- you can see a dramatic difference in reading, math, and writing. Every student, of course, can't take part in a remediation program such as prep, but Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday we do offer

remediation. It's our belief that students who take part in those remediation efforts will benefit from them. This intensive effort in prep demonstrates that those students, again, who took part in that type of remediation in the summer -- this past summer of 1996 -- did much better than students in general.

SENATOR MacINNES: Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR EWING: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: Just a clarifying question. Back on table number one on Page 52 where you indicated that the -- where you have special programs, could you just explain what the PPP is? I'm familiar with Colmer and Success. What's PPP?

DR. WILSON: In some of the schools in Paterson during the first year and the second year of State operations we focused in those schools on a new approach, we called it the Paradigm schools, looking at ways of solving problems in different ways. There was an emphasis on reading, on writing, and on math. That's what the PPP stands for. The Paterson Paradigm Program.

SENATOR MacINNES: Oh.

DR. WILSON: So those schools--

SENATOR MacINNES: So it's your own special design.

DR. WILSON: It's our own design.

SENATOR MacINNES: All right, now, how many elementary schools don't have special programs? This is the table. There is--

DR. WILSON: No. There are 32 elementary schools. These were the ones where we had introduced Colmer, Success For All, and other types of innovations that the district designed. There are other schools that are contemplating some of those same designs now.

SENATOR MacINNES: You have 18 elementary schools where you would have what you call a traditional program.

DR. WILSON: Well that school, Martin Luther King, had made a decision that it wanted to try a traditional organization rather than a Success For All or a Colmer model. Martin Luther King was one of four schools that had been assessed as being below average.

SENATOR MacINNES: My question is a little different. My question was, at the 18 or 19 schools that are not displayed on this table, should we assume that you don't have any special programs operating, that they operate with a traditional--

DR. WILSON: That's correct.

SENATOR MacINNES: Given the performance, this table doesn't tell us what percentage of the kids who took the test in '96 had been in the program for more than two years verses the percentages that were in the programs for less than two years.

DR. WILSON: What you have is the percent passing who had been in there--

SENATOR MacINNES: Yes.

DR. WILSON: --more than two years and the percent passing in less than two years.

SENATOR MacINNES: Right. I understand that. What percentage of the kids -- what's the allocation between those who have been in the program for less than two years verses those who have been in the program for more than two years?

DR. WILSON: That data is available, but I don't have it though.

SENATOR MacINNES: The differences aren't so great are they? If you've been in the program less than two years compared to fourth-graders in Paterson, in general, you're doing pretty well, aren't you?

DR. WILSON: In the fourth grade, yes, but if you take a look at example school number two, 83.5 percent of the kids were successful in comparison to 93. That's still a major difference even though the percentages are high. It shows that there is more success if you're in a program for more than two years and the dramatic difference also shows between the column of '96 and column of '92, so thinking in terms of the fact that prior to the program being implemented that gives you a fix at 92, before the program was there at all--

SENATOR MacINNES: Right.

DR. WILSON: --what were the scores like. So in general the chart clearly shows that after you put innovations into place--

SENATOR MacINNES: Right.

DR. WILSON: --many more kids tend to be successful.

SENATOR MacINNES: What's the pace at which you expect to see these successful programs introduced into the 19 schools where they do not now exist?

DR. WILSON: Some of the other schools -- there are 32 elementary schools -- some of the elementary schools are primary schools, some are sort of middle schools as well as K-8. We are in the process, right now, of reviewing that question. Last night at our Board of Education meeting, as we were reviewing the various report cards, one of our Board members who had been very active in trying to help reform some of the programs while he was a

parent in the schools prior to being on the Board raised a question about the Success For All programs and how many could we get into the schools. So we had a discussion about trying to speed up the number of Success For All schools in the elementary division. So we are going to be working closely with John Hopkins University, which is the priority place in the country where that program is initiated, to try to get additional assistance.

SENATOR MacINNES: I'm trying to find the table which gives me the overall fourth-grade performance for the 32 schools. Where do I find that?

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: It's on Page 2.

SENATOR MacINNES: Page 2 of what?

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: Of the document report. This one that you have in your hand. Go to Page 2.

SENATOR MacINNES: All right.

DR. WILSON: The top line, fourth-grade test reading.

SENATOR MacINNES: Okay. So fourth-grade test reading is -- you're above the benchmark, and the State standard is 90.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: Seventy-five for the fourth grade.

SENATOR MacINNES: So you're above the standard districtwide, and if you took all these schools that have special programs-- I don't know, that's one of the problems, it doesn't tell you -- oh, yes it does, okay.

If you look at column two back on Page 52, I don't know if you averaged all of those up, I guess it would be slightly higher or a lot higher than the--

DR. WILSON: Well, the problem is you can't average percentages though. You don't want to try to do that.

SENATOR MacINNES: If you have the underlying numbers you can.

DR. WILSON: Sure, underlying numbers, but you wouldn't want to do that.

SENATOR MacINNES: You have to have the underlying numbers in order to produce the percentage, so if you have the underlying numbers, you could produce a total figure for the schools that have special programs and you can compare that with the schools that don't.

DR. WILSON: I would say that most statisticians would indicate you should not try to take percentages from all of the schools and combine them and divide them to come up with an average.

SENATOR MacINNES: Wait. You do that for the district as a whole. You do it for each individual school, and so if you aggregate the numbers in this table and get a percentage who passed and therefore you can compare it with the districtwide average, I don't think statisticians would express horror at that procedure. I mean, you have to have the numbers in order to produce the percentages.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: You're talking aggregating the entire population that's represented on Page 52?

SENATOR MacINNES: It's a pretty simple question. If you have a number which shows that in the schools with special programs the kids are doing materially better than they are in schools without the special programs-- You have 40 percent of the elementary schools-- I don't know what percentage of the elementary students, but you have 40 percent or so of the elementary schools have special programs, 60 percent do not. The question is, if you have special programs, do the kids perform better than in schools where they don't have special programs?

DR. WILSON: And the data tends to say that they do.

SENATOR MacINNES: But I can't tell that from this because-- And so, if they do perform better, then what explains that? What is the process by which you decide which of these models works best or whether you say, "Gee, our experience is that we should continue to try the three models. Will we do Colmer, PPP, and SFA," right? Or you say, "We like SFA and that's where, in the other 19 schools, we're going to move." When are you going to do that?

DR. WILSON: I would say that the time is approaching where we will probably make that decision this year. The data that we have available to us has only been available to us this school year. We did not have all of the information in the computers to be able to provide this type of analysis. So this is the first year that we've had program analysis that allows us to compare the success of some schools that have innovative programs in comparison to those who did not, as well as the number of years of data loaded into the computers. This is the first year.

SENATOR MacINNES: Wait, these programs were set up under -- since the time the State took over the school districts.

DR. WILSON: Correct.

SENATOR MacINNES: Now, when you set up a program, the easiest evaluation tool you could do is the one you've shown here on Page 52. You start with before and after, right? Are you saying that you set these programs up and didn't have a statistical base that allows you to show before and after what happened in these schools?

DR. WILSON: The data that is being used is the California Achievement data. That data, of course, has been available, but to have it aggregated in the computer so that we can compare and make judgements about the programs before and after, that project has taken two years to load all of that information in school by school, program by program so comparisons can be made.

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, given the number of kids involved and given the availability of calculators, it seems to me that somebody could have done that in two days, not two years, and that would have been very valuable information to have much earlier, because think about if you were a parent--

SENATOR EWING: I think that we're getting into so much detail.

SENATOR MacINNES: No, we're talking about schools that work against schools.

SENATOR EWING: You're comparing what should be done in two days and took them two years. I think we ought to let the Superintendent

finish his whole report and then go back and ask some more of these detailed questions.

SENATOR MacINNES: Detailed questions. These have to do with schools that are working against schools that aren't and they are not detailed questions. They are questions about what kind of chances the kids have in the Paterson schools.

SENATOR EWING: Are you talking about the data that he had?

SENATOR MacINNES: I'm talking about parents who got kids in schools listening--

SENATOR EWING: Let him finish the report and then we can back into it.

SENATOR MacINNES: --listening to an answer which says it took us two years to find out whether--

SENATOR EWING: Gordon.

DR. WILSON: It took two years to load all of the data from every school into computers with programs to be able to compare to provide us with the type of information we have now. That was not possible before. What--

SENATOR MacINNES: I can't accept that. You have individual schools producing information. Here it is, downtown in our classrooms we gave the California Achievement Test, and this year the results are that 62.6 percent passed. Last year 58.7 percent passed. Your information that is aggregated by classroom, by school, that each school would be able to have because a principal would want to be able to respond to the question.

DR. WILSON: Each principal has that information.

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, then you're talking about 13 principals in schools that have programs, and you're talking about 19 principals in schools that don't have programs, and you're saying it took two years to figure out what the differences were.

DR. WILSON: What we're trying to show on this chart is information besides just what type of progress an individual school made. We had to also determine what the mobility rate was, establish perimeters for mobility, so that in comparing in a chart like this, this shows two or more years in comparison to less than two years. We were also looking at the number of schools that students had attended. Some schools -- we found that youngsters had attended three, four, five different schools by the time they were in the fourth grade. All of that type of data laid out in very complex charts were then put in with programs written to make those comparisons, so what you see here is just one capturing of the data. Clearly we wanted to find out whether these programs were working in comparison to schools that did not have any programs. We also wanted to find out over a period of time if the programs had been in use in those schools for a period of time. Did they work better for youngsters than for those youngsters who had just gotten to the schools or if there were other types of issues associated with the students making progress? That's the type of data we're collecting.

We will make a decision this year concerning which of the programs we would like to disseminate more. This type of chart tends to show that whether it's Success For All or Colmer or the Paradigm, it does show that all three of them tend to work. There is some evidence that suggests, however, that Success For All in the primary grades not only is helpful in primary grades,

but tends to focus teachers' attention on improvement up through the grades in the way they approach reading. But that decision will be made this year as a result of not only the information that's here, but also the new California Achievement Test data result that we get in the spring.

SENATOR EWING: Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN DeSOPO: Mr. Chairman, I have to leave for a meeting at the caucus, but, Dr. Wilson, we'll be digesting all this information, and I hope to be of assistance to you so that we can help the children in the City of Paterson. So I'm not in a position, right now, to be of any assistance to you because we do want to digest this information and hopefully with the Senator maybe one of these days we'll come up and visit you -- hopefully we will do it in the next couple of months.

You mention that you restructured East Side High School.

DR. WILSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DeSOPO: What were some of the things that you did to restructure East Side High School and how are things going there?

DR. WILSON: We utilized the services of Dr. Frank Smith of Columbia University to assist us with the restructuring of four elementary schools, and since that restructuring project worked very well, we used the same team to begin the planning process three years ago with the staff over at East Side. At that school, teachers began to meet and began to take a look at the idea of dividing the larger school into academies or smaller subschools with the notion that a school within the school project would seem much more helpful to students than just thinking in terms of the large, comprehensive school program of 16 or so hundred students.

There are three subschools that are now in their second year. Teams of teachers are meeting with students. We have a health careers project that's tied in to St. Joseph's Hospital and Barnet Hospital. There is a business academy that is tied in to a number of local business groups, and there is one that focuses on city planning. Those three subschools--

ASSEMBLYMAN DeSOPO: What was the last thing?

DR. WILSON: City-type planning activities, city government, various other activities in the city that students could be involved in. Those three subschools are now servicing the ninth-grade students and tenth-grade students. The idea is to move them through all of the grades, so you will have ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade, tie them into the world of work, so you'd have young people prepared to go into the world of work after graduation or while they are in school. As an example, for the health careers, Barnet Hospital and St. Joseph are major employers for students who have an interest in technology, in lab work. They get a chance to go to the hospitals, observe people who are working in those fields and to gain some tutorial knowledge, as well as firsthand experience and some part-time jobs in those areas which will not only peak the students' interest, but provide them with some real awareness as to what the various medical careers are. We think that will be very helpful in this transition from the school to work.

Similar types of plans are under way at Kennedy High School, which is the larger of the two comprehensive programs. They will be implementing, next year, several small community schools similar to East Side.

ASSEMBLYMAN DeSOPO: Those are the only two high schools, Kennedy and East Side?

DR. WILSON: Those are the two comprehensive high schools. Rosa Parks is a small 300-student high school that's a fine in performing arts. So it's a small school as it is of 300, but those are the three high schools. One, East Side--

ASSEMBLYMAN DeSOPO: So the restructuring at East Side High School has been primarily to strengthen the ties with business and industry?

DR. WILSON: And to provide students with smaller learning environments with counselors, with teachers who can interface with them and know those students as they go through the grades, providing support and help rather than being in a very large comprehensive high school as one of 1600 therein smaller learning centers. So the concept of school within the school in smaller learning centers has been the focus of attention at East Side and will also be the focus of attention at Kennedy.

ASSEMBLYMAN DeSOPO: Do you see any improvement in terms of finding kids jobs in occupations when they graduate?

DR. WILSON: That is an area--

ASSEMBLYMAN DeSOPO: Are you keeping those statistics? The graduates in terms of--

DR. WILSON: We do have some data on the type of school to work progress that is being made. We've been working with businesses. Recently, our Chamber of Commerce provided an opportunity for what's called Leadership Paterson, a group of individuals in the city to come together to spend a year trying to become indoctrinated about the various types of organizations. So we had two people from the school system a part of

Leadership Paterson. At the end of the year there is sort of a convocation. Various members of that leadership group interact and talk to members of the school system staff. We had about 15 representatives of business who came and participated with us last spring. They had some very good recommendations to make concerning how we might reshape some of the instructional programs to better interface with the world of work, and they were quite prepared to provide help in that endeavor, as well as make some jobs available to young people who had certain types of skills. So we're looking at our restructuring not only to provide a good education for students at the high school level, but how we can tie that in to the world of work whether it's in manufacturing, whether it's in service areas. And the subschools -- in particular both subschools -- that are in place at East Side we think will give us a good opportunity to make some good progress there.

ASSEMBLYMAN DeSOPO: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARCIA: Dr. Wilson, it's been a year and it's been-- I look at these test scores. When were these special smaller schools implemented at East Side High School?

DR. WILSON: We're starting the second year at East Side High School with the school within a school program. Last year was the first year for that program for ninth-graders.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARCIA: If you look at the High School Proficiency Test and you look at the results, which are on Page 35, you actually see that last year the performances were lower than the year before at East Side High School.

Quite frankly, it leads me to a more general observation. It seems that in most of the schools, or at least in the aggregate, the fourth-grade test has demonstrated improvement throughout the system--

DR. WILSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARCIA: --or at least when you compile. That when you go out to the Early Warning Test of the High School Proficiency Test, there hasn't been an improvement.

DR. WILSON: That's correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARCIA: Quite frankly, it seems to be going down. My question is that it appears that in the fourth grade, you've instituted some of the programs -- at least in some of the schools -- that have met results. Why hasn't there been any -- I mean, I guess you're starting a little bit with East Side, but it didn't work, at least not in the first year, according to the test results anyway.

DR. WILSON: The test results that we have just gotten back for October of 1996 -- you don't have as a part of your packet -- but in the presentation, it does show you that there has been some progress for eleventh-grade students, so the initiation of the smaller schools community, the academies at East Side -- those students last year were ninth-graders, and they are tenth-graders now. They won't be eleventh-graders until next year, so you may not see the beneficial impact of those small communities for another year. But in reading, over at East Side, students went from 29 percent passing to 31.7 percent, so there is a slight increase in reading even though that's a low score. In math, they dropped slightly from 43.5 percent to 39.4 percent. In writing they had a good jump from 43.1 percent to 50.9 percent. So in two of

the categories, reading and writing, this October in comparison to last October there was some progress for East Side. So I think it's going to take another year or so to see the impact of the small communities at East Side.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARCIA: I mean, my only question is -- and this is a comment. I've been to the schools.

DR. WILSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARCIA: I've toured. I just think it's-- I mean, what's taken so long to devise these types of systems in the high schools? I mean, year after year since we've been here -- or at least since I've been here -- we've seen that the high schools, in particular the students, may be doing better in the eighth grade, but as soon as they get to the high school there is large declines. I'd just like to see more action taken in these two schools.

We went to the Performing Arts School--

DR. WILSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARCIA: --and Rosa Parks, I believe, and you'd notice how all the students there, they are all across the board doing very well. But some of these other students -- I think we just have to step up and start creating these programs. It goes to back what Gordon was saying. If it weren't for those 13 or so schools in the fourth-grade level -- and maybe it would work in the other 19 schools in the system, that we need to get there. Also, with the stuff with the facilities, I mean-- The number one school that's a school in Ridgefield park, right?

DR. WILSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARCIA: What's going to happen with the other schools? I mean, I've toured some of those other schools, and I wouldn't send my children there. I mean, we saw that old building from 1896 that is still part of the school system. Is that bonding money going to be utilized? Forty million dollars, you're not going to do much with that. What's going to happen to that school building? That school building, I mean, no children should be going there.

DR. WILSON: Well, we are going to have two replacement schools. That clearly is not enough for us, so we will have to continue to improve as best as we can, as far as renovations.

The issue of the high schools is one where -- similar to the Senator's question about implementation in the elementary schools. Recently, in fact last week, we began to focus on how we could get students from the high schools who had not been successful to come to remediation. Remediation sessions for the high school students, four days and Saturday, is not some of their priorities. They have other priorities at the high school level as far as their own personal lives, and we're having some difficulty getting there. So this past Tuesday of this week I personally met with all of the high school students who had not passed -- the eleventh-grade students and the twelfth-grade students who had not passed the High School Proficiency Test in October in both of the comprehensive high schools. We have also been in contact and we are in the process of working with various ministers in the city. Each of our students, we think, can be helped to improve, so besides the school system working on the attendance of young people in these after-school and Saturday programs, we are enlisting the ministers to assist us in calling

meetings of the families in their own churches. So, throughout the city, an effort is being made to have each minister to work with families and the students to make sure that those youngsters get to the remediation session.

Those sessions, we think, if students attend, will see some progress. For those young people that have been involved in the efforts we tend to see more progress. If they don't show up for those remediation sessions-- It's difficult. Since it's voluntarily and it's after school and Saturday, there's no reason they have to attend unless they desire to attend. So we're thinking motivation, not only a part from us as educators, but motivation from their ministers. Working with individual families may give us some additional help there. So that's another tactic and another strategy that we're going to be using to try to get more participation.

SENATOR EWING: Assemblyman Rocco.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Dr. Wilson, how are you doing?

DR. WILSON: Fine. How are you, sir?

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Good.

As we move along in this process over the years, it's going to be interesting how we ultimately look at the final mark in a few years. On the fourth-grade test on Page 52, are we comparing apples to apples? Are these the State-given test, or are these California Achievements all the way through?

DR. WILSON: These are California Achievement Test results.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: In both '92 and '96?

DR. WILSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Okay, so we're comparing apples to apples here?

DR. WILSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Okay, and I don't want to be repetitious, but I had a leadership meeting, so I wasn't able to be here earlier, so if I'm repeating anything, I'm sorry. But, obviously, there was some schools that -- 10, 13, and 21 -- that declined in the reading scores on Page 52 and some that improved, the school number 3, and I think Senator MacInnes said, if I can correctly observe what occurred, there are some questions in regard to the reason for the incline or the decline in those schools.

DR. WILSON: Well, one of the things that we had been focusing on with the Senator was the fact that in certain grade levels there were some discrepancies grade level to grade level. We have instituted expectations for each grade level and each teacher in each school.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Well, that's his question, that's not my question.

DR. WILSON: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: I was just giving an observation. My question, basically, is there any observable reason for the drop in school numbers 10, 13, and 21?

DR. WILSON: As we have talked to each principal, we try to determine with those principals why there had been some change in their scores. The scores in 1996, as an example, in school number 10 -- you're looking at Page 52?

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Yes, that's correct.

DR. WILSON: Eighty-eight percent of those students in that particular column you're looking at, those students who had been in the

program for two or more years, were successful at meeting the MLP in comparison to -- and the 1996 scores for students who had been in there less than. So that's just a comparison.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: So, when you say less than, you're talking--

DR. WILSON: Less than two years.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: --about transient students that are in and out--

DR. WILSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: --that are on the rolls and then they're gone, that type of student.

DR. WILSON: This is just a comparison to try to demonstrate that in schools where you had programs in place for two or more years, students were being more successful--

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Well, that would lead you to believe that there is some tremendous amount of transition going on with students--

DR. WILSON: Yes, that's correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: --in and out of the system.

DR. WILSON: And I pointed out in one school, as an example, we had 65 percent mobility in one year in comparison to some schools you may have 20 percent or 30 percent mobility in one year, and when you have that type of mobility, no matter what your instructional program is and what your remediation effort is, the change is so great that the students aren't there.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: So you really can't lock them into the system because they're here and then they're gone. So, therefore, it's difficult to lock them in to whatever system you're working on.

What do you think the transition rate is throughout the district? Do you have any idea?

DR. WILSON: Throughout the district I would have to tell you, based on the data that we have, I would think it's in the 30s and 40s.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Tremendously high.

DR. WILSON: It depends on the schools. One of the things we have done to try to reduce the impact of mobility is, of course, we have a standard curriculum. The textbooks are similar throughout. The in-service training to the teachers in reading, writing, and math has been similar throughout.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: When you're talking about transition, are we talking about intradistrict, or they're leaving the district totally?

DR. WILSON: A great deal is school to school, parents moving around the city. There is some mobility, of course, in and out, but most of ours is moving around the city.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Okay, well, you can control most of that, so, I mean, if you had the standard curriculum throughout the district, which I would assume would be the case--

DR. WILSON: Correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: So you can control most of that. I'm talking more about students that are in and out of the district.

DR. WILSON: I'd have to look again. I wouldn't want to give you an erroneous figure there.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Well, that could account for some of it.

How about the improvement in school three?

DR. WILSON: The improvement in school three: They have worked diligently, they have -- again, we talked a little bit about the fact that they have a Success For All Program, as well as a Colmer Program. At the fourth-grade level, they just had some very good results working not only during the regular school day, but their after-school program has been successful, and they have a high level of attendance in their after-school program.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Well, having taught fourth grade, I can tell you that it's a wonderful age and there are so many positives that can go along with a nine-year-old. I can understand that. But we all know that when they reach the high school that we run into our problems--

DR. WILSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: --basically in keeping that motivation that they had in fourth grade and the interest in fourth grade. It's difficult to keep that moving along, as indicated by some of the test scores. Overall there have been some improvements, some decline in your HSPT scores, decline slightly in math from 52 percent to 51 percent, a slight increase in some other areas, and I think the subjectivity of the writing samples I think you really can't judge much from that whether you would say 52 percent or 56 percent -- doesn't really mean anything because it depends on who's reading it and how

they subjectively evaluate. But I think, on the hard numbers, the reading and the math, there has been a bit of increase.

Several years back we had spoken, and it seemed to me at that time that the curriculum was pretty sterile in terms of lack of art, music, and other aspects of the curriculum in the elementary schools. Has that changed since our--

DR. WILSON: That was only in those schools that we had called our Paradigm schools. There were nine schools that were focused on the reading, writing, and the math skills. The other schools had quite a mixture of art and music, and then we modified the Paradigm Program to make sure that there was a cycle of all those other issues and all of those other types of courses. Now with the core curriculum standards that are in place in the State, we revamped the program, and our schools will all have a very similar type of schedule of various classes. The remediation effort after school, we'll try to assist those young people in the areas that they are weak in those reading, math, and writing areas that aren't improved during the regular school day.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Good, because I think it's important to have all the other aspects other than just the hard-core three *R*'s, so to speak, and an important one to say the least.

The East Side High School, where you go into smaller areas of administrative responsibility in the high schools, etc. -- I for one am against the whole concept of bigness. I don't think bigger is better, especially in the school environment. So I would applaud your efforts in that regard, because the more we're able to break down units into smaller groups, the more effective we're going to be. In my summation that certainly makes sense.

In a conference that I attended recently, not only smaller class sizes, California is now going to under 20 in class sizes and Nevada, and some others -- not only class size, but also in the unit of administration, which is basically what you're doing there at East Side. It will be interesting to see how the ultimate results are a few years from now, because I think it's much, much better than all of those proponents, often times, who believe in larger units such as district regionalization and things of that sort. I for one am opposed to that. I think that-- Do you have any data at all on going to the smaller units, whether it's better, worse, or indifferent?

DR. WILSON: I would think that in the next year or so we will have additional data to support the direction both schools are moving in. At East Side, we initiated those academies last year for ninth-graders. Those students are now in tenth grade, and they will be in the eleventh grade next year. We will have data that we will be analyzing this year that will give us some indication of where they are. So that data we will analyze and be able to give you some feedback on.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: If I remember correctly, in a few years back in your district, we talked about the need for preschool, full-day kindergarten, etc. Where are we with that? I know that the budget that you have received from the State will provide you with some money. Are you going to escrow until you can find a space? I know your space problems.

DR. WILSON: We're moving towards--

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Where are we going with that kindergarten, preschool?

DR. WILSON: We're moving towards continued collaboration with Head Start, Good Starts Program. We have those in our district now. The school that is an elementary school, K-8, that's called school number 11. That is the second school that will be replaced. We have received an approval from the Department of Education to bond -- to go forth with our bonding program. Educational specifications have been completed for that school. That school will be renovated to become a full-time kindergarten center. So that elementary school that's now serving K-8 youngsters, as we build to replace it, we will take that school and transform the entire building into a full-time child care center.

We have an elementary school now that is called school 2. There was an old school two that was about ready to fall down. It's in the historic district. That school is undergoing major renovations. There will be about seven or eight classes of preschool students that will go into that school, kindergarten as well as preschool. School two has a Success For All Program. That school had been one of our below average schools. It is no longer below average and they're making progress. So we're trying to identify additional spaces where we can have full-time kindergarten.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: What percent will be full-time next school year, '97-'98?

DR. WILSON: For '97-'98 we will probably have no more than we have now. We have not as many as we would like. We have a few full-time kindergarten classes. Those are the Success For All, and some of the other schools, such as school number one, we have full-time kindergarten. The space is the limiting factor for the present time. We have half-day kindergarten--

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: So then you're escrowing the money that's coming in from the State, or are you using that for the renovation of the schools you mentioned?

DR. WILSON: We are, at the present time, escrowing some and we are also thinking in terms of two years from now being able to expand drastically the full-time kindergarten.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: That has always been a major priority on my part and I think rightfully so when you see the data out about the effect of longitudinal studies for those that have been in good preschool programs and full-day kindergartens. Their rate of success at the other end is much greater than those students that did not have that program, so hopefully we will continue to move in that direction very rapidly because that's what the money from the State is focused on. That's why we have it there for the purpose of that full-day kindergarten and preschool resolve.

One other question and then I'm finished, Jack.

SENATOR EWING: Let me just ask, how many children are not in kindergarten that should be there?

DR. WILSON: Well--

SENATOR EWING: Roughly, a guesstimate.

DR. WILSON: We have full day. We need to have all of them in full day. We don't have the space--

SENATOR EWING: Are they all in full day now?

DR. WILSON: No, they're not.

SENATOR EWING: No.

DR. WILSON: No.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Well, you're not close.

DR. WILSON: We only have full day in some of the schools -- in school one -- because we bus those kids there and they're there all day and we also have -- Clarence, do you want to help me on that one?

CLARENCE C. HOOVER III, Ed.D.: Currently we have 22 full- day, 43 half-day, 8 pre-K programs in the past couple of schools.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: What percent is that of the total?

DR. HOOVER: One-third is full.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: About one-third--

DR. HOOVER: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: --of the children are now in preschool/full-day kindergarten programs.

DR. WILSON: So the space issues for us, as we are able to--

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: I know you have a tremendous space problem.

DR. WILSON: --provide more youngsters with full day as soon as we can do that--

SENATOR EWING: You have maybe 500 children that should be there or 600 or 1000 or 400 or something. Do you have any ideas about the numbers?

DR. WILSON: Probably about 1000.

SENATOR EWING: One thousand.

SENATOR MacINNES: What's the maximum number of kids you can have in a kindergarten class?

DR. WILSON: Twenty-five.

SENATOR MacINNES: So you have 43 that don't have full-day kindergarten--

DR. WILSON: Correct.

SENATOR MacINNES: --and multiply that by 25 and you came up with 1000.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: So we have a way to go yet in the full-day kindergarten program, to say the least.

DR. WILSON: We're strongly supportive of the concept of the full day, but at the present time do not have the space capacity to do it.

SENATOR MacINNES: Following on John's question, Mr. Chairman, isn't Paterson expected to not only have full-day kindergarten, but also preschool programs down to the three-year-old level?

DR. WILSON: Five years.

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, you're saying in two years you're going to begin to address the space problem that deals with the full-day kindergarten problem, right?

DR. WILSON: What I'm saying is, for next year, I'm not able to do it because of the space, but we will be looking at alternative space for the year after that. We are looking at several different possibilities within our own school district, as well as other facilities.

SENATOR MacINNES: Right. The reason I ask the question is that you have roughly 600 kids or so that are in full-day kindergarten and you have roughly 1000 who need to be, right?

DR. WILSON: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: And in a couple of years you're going to look at how you'll start implementing a program to address that shortfall in the full-day kindergarten. My assumption is that the numbers for the pre-K programs require the four-year-olds and the three-year-olds are in the same magnitude. Right? You're talking 1500 to 1700 kids probably in each of those cohorts?

DR. WILSON: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: So you're talking about -- and those numbers you have to divide by a smaller divisor. You can't have 25 three-year-olds, can you?

DR. HOOVER: Fifteen, approximately.

SENATOR MacINNES: Eighteen?

DR. HOOVER: Fifteen.

SENATOR MacINNES: Fifteen.

DR. HOOVER: In a smaller space, but you're right.

SENATOR MacINNES: So you need-- We're talking about dealing with -- say, if you have 15 and 1500, to make it easy, that's 100 classrooms there, and you're talking about 100 classrooms for the three. You're talking about -- am I right? -- 250 classrooms you have to find, roughly, within five years.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: Well, that would be the assumption, Senator, that each of those classes be housed in a public school. There is still -- the district can and in many suburban districts--

SENATOR MacINNES: No, I'm not saying--

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: --will contract with CBOs, community based organizations.

SENATOR MacINNES: You're not going to do it in public schools.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: Sure.

SENATOR MacINNES: I'm not assuming you're going to do it in public schools.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: No, I'm saying they may do some. There may well be other contracts that will be administered through organizations. There may be rental of facilities of existing sites -- and this is not unique to Paterson, obviously.

SENATOR MacINNES: No, I know. I think it's an illustration of the problems created by the mandate that's been opposed, and I think that -- I'm not certain -- that the provision for escrowing the money towards renovation of existing space, which is the quickest way to do this, and where you would hope that if you have underutilized--

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: Sure.

SENATOR MacINNES: --classroom facilities that churches might have that they don't use during the week-- For example, I know Dover is using a couple of the churches that have Sunday school classrooms that meet standards and they don't need renovation, but we're talking about a few classrooms, we're not talking about 250. I mean, what's your inventory, Dr. Wilson, of available space in looking at churches with Sunday school programs and other voluntarily organizations that might have suitable space? What does

your inventory tell you about the likelihood of being able to do something on this five-year schedule?

DR. WILSON: Well, that's what we're in the process of doing, inventory, now. I can't tell you. At the present time we are working with various churches. We continue to work with Head Start. We have a number of collaborative programs presently with Head Start. We also are trying--

SENATOR MacINNES: How many classrooms does Head Start operate in Paterson?

DR. HOOVER: Eight.

SENATOR MacINNES: Eight?

DR. HOOVER: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: Is that a separate -- is that run by the school system, or is that a separate organization that runs it?

DR. WILSON: Separate organization.

DR. HOOVER: Subcontract.

SENATOR MacINNES: Subcontract from the school system or from--

DR. WILSON: From the school district.

SENATOR MacINNES: To the Head Start group or the Head Start, Inc., or something?

DR. WILSON: Head Start Organization.

SENATOR MacINNES: So we actually need 232 classrooms if you have 8, so there is some headway.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Certainly, the whole issue of the kindergarten and preschool program and the reason my estimation and my

rational for a mandate of that nature is that's where we get the most for our money and that's where we know, in the longitudinal studies, that we can effect the best possible academic success for students when we have the preschool, full-day kindergarten. It just wasn't happening in so many of the districts, and so we had to make sure that this came about in one way or another, and I for one am very happy that we have instituted that mandate.

However, on the last clear, visible aspects of the takeover situation, can you just briefly indicate, in a general sense, what has changed within the school environment -- the school system environment -- since takeover? We have better systems of handling the fiscal aspect and the financing of the system, the business. I know earlier on there were some problems in getting a lightbulb changed. You had to go through 10 systems to get that done--

DR. WILSON: Well, I think since takeover--

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Just let me finish and I'll--

DR. WILSON: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: So that you can probably answer some of it in more than one way. Are the facilities in better shape or are they looking better? Basically, you know, we have the morale problem -- or not a morale problem with staff, are students happier to be there? Are any of these types of things visible to you in the change since -- basically since -- the takeover?

DR. WILSON: I'd say the day and night differences prior to takeover in comparison to now is that you can find, when you go into schools and talk to principals, that the support staff, we believe, is much more responsive, it does not focus on who you know in the system to get the district

staff to respond to you; that there are established priority needs based on the severity of building problems where services are provided. The professional development in-service training that is provided to staff members, in looking at different learning styles, has been pervasive throughout the district. Professional development seminars, writing, and math has been dramatic. The textbook purchases for the core areas, not only textbooks, but the curriculum revisions, are moving along.

We are pleased, right now, with the progress we've made in business. Bob Davis has been with us for two years, and we are now currently, as it relates to getting our secretary reports and treasurer reports, off the AS400. We have made, we think, some good progress there. We are looking at reduction of serious audit findings. We've made good progress there.

Clarence Hoover, who just commented on the full-day and the half-day kindergarten classes, has made some very fine moves in curriculum instructions, so those are dramatic changes in the area--

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: So you think the taxpayer is getting their dollars worth out of the system?

DR. WILSON: We think that they're getting more than their dollars out of the system.

The governance system -- the members of the board who have been with us for awhile and have been trained, we think, are in much better shape to take over and become the local controllers again. Unfortunately, we are losing some Board members. The appointment process provides an opportunity for the Board members to be trained. When it came time for elections, many of those members decided not to run. When you have an

Assistant Superintendent who, we thought, should not have been hired as an Assistant Superintendent now running and winning a seat on the Board and has a major goal of disruption, we think that that's not a good governance structure. So we're concerned about the fact that many of our Board members that have been trained will not try to get into the political arena and serve in a continuation with us. We've made some good progress in providing good support for governance, but--

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: You're saying people that were let go are now running for the Board and winning seats on the Board?

DR. WILSON: We had one in Paterson who was an Assistant Superintendent and I refused to appoint him. He ran and won a seat this past year. A similar type of thing, of course, happened in Jersey City when the Superintendent ran and won a seat. So that's an issue of governance for us. I say the training and the qualities of members of the board has been enhanced.

The collaboration with organizations in our community: we have the Paterson Education Fund -- Mrs. Irene Sterling who happens to be here today -- we've undertaken some very traumatic moves. We've had a Library Powers Grant. We went from no libraries in the system to over 21 elementary libraries with some others coming on-line. The technology has bloomed greatly. We have schools that are technology enriched schools. We've gone from very few up-to-date computers to a host of computers and labs throughout the district with Net day training and connectivity going on. We have schools that bring in weather forecasting into the classrooms and into the schools. We've made some good progress there.

We've established an alternative school for disruptive young people. That is now in its second year. It opened last spring.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: So you think you're getting a majority of the disruptive students out of the school environment? We all know, if you have spent any time teaching, that one student that's disruptive can ruin the learning for the other 30 or 25 very easily. Are you in the process of eliminating those students from the general population?

DR. WILSON: We're making some stabs at that. It's a collaborative project with Family Court judges, City of Paterson Youth Program, and the City Housing Authority. They built a \$2 million structure and didn't have program money. We have put an Alternative High School Program in this new \$2 million structure.

One other program that I'd like to bring to your attention is the Young Parents Program. We've had many young people -- young women, who have become new mothers, and they drop out. We've instituted a pilot, this year, for bringing young mothers back in. If they are in school, we provide child care for them. We're in a pilot program for 12 youngsters. That's going to go into full force when our aged building is completely renovated, so we'll be able to handle, approximately, 60 infants and toddlers at the same time. That's a major problem of youngsters dropping out because they are young parents and they have to stay home and take care of their youngsters.

So those are some of the innovations that we've put into place, as well as staff training across the district, elementary school, and high school--

SENATOR EWING: Laval, do you also want to tell us about -- don't you have 200 or 300 computers out with families that you're able to get?

DR. WILSON: We have a Family-Friendly Computer Program where, with the Paterson Education Fund in collaboration with the district and businesses, we've been able to get computers that can be checked out into the families who can then use the computers at home. We have some of the parent trainers, some of the parents who have gone through the program themselves, even with us today.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: I guess to sum up, I guess you can say there are the hard-core numbers, where you can look at statistics and determine growth or decline, and then there are the soft areas of observation, where you can say the system has changed and all of the things that you are mentioning at this time, which are not necessarily measurable, but these are things that have happened within the district. So you're happy then with the progress of the system internally but maybe nonmeasurable aspects of it, because the measurable aspects of it are kind of still very close in terms of whether there is true growth or not, you know, in the academic end of it. So probably, if you continue to increase the environment in a very positive way, that those measurable on the soft end and the measurable hard items, then, should increase in the test scores, which is really what we're really looking for because so much of what happens in education is nonmeasurable.

Those in business would like to think that everything is very easy to measure, and you do *A*, *B*, and *C*, you'll get *E* result. Well, that just doesn't happen in education. So -- Jack being one of them-- I'm only kidding, Jack.

So I think what we're doing in your situation here, a number of the soft areas, the nonmeasurable areas, can become all important in terms of

the daily life of a student in the school system. So I think-- How many years are we in the system now?

DR. WILSON: This is our sixth year.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Okay, thank you, Jack.

SENATOR EWING: Thank you. Do you want to continue?

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: No.

DR. WILSON: Well, I think Assemblyman Rocco was able to provide a good summary for us. We're making some progress. I'm pleased with the progress. None of us are happy with the eleventh-grade results on the HSPT and the eighth-grade Early Warning Test. Those are difficult areas for us. Not only, again, are we attempting to have improvement during the regular school year through the Superintendents' Expectations Program for school by school, grade-level by grade-level, and teacher by teacher goals for this year, we are looking, also, at the remediation effort after school and on Saturday. We are contemplating using our Channel 8 cable station for some homework instruction, as well as remediation instruction, and we will be publishing that so that families can tune in to see some remediation efforts in fourth grade, eighth grade, and some other subjects. We're trying to expand as much help to students during the day, after school, and weekends. We are in the process of enlisting our ministers to try to work with their own parishioners when those young people are not taking part in our after-school remediation efforts.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: It would seem to me it would be very worthwhile, in your system, to take all of your testing, whether it's HSPT or fourth-grade testing, and indicate those students that have been there for the

entire program for a year or less and take it down in chunks of a year to see how much impact these transition students have as they go through the system. They could be dragging your test scores down, and you may want to take a look at the student who comes in for less than a year that's in there and doesn't score well. You can't really be responsible for that growth because he hasn't been with you long enough. So it might be interesting to see what kind of impact that has on your test scores.

SENATOR EWING: But wouldn't it depend on the amount of staff he has, the cost of the staff to be able to keep developing down there along that line?

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: It's a computer. It shouldn't take them long. You just punch it right in.

DR. WILSON: We'll be able to take the database we have and sort it that way, and it's a good suggestion. We'll take a look--

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: They enter a school and that's all you have to do and then everything drops--

DR. WILSON: --and drop off some and get some comparisons.

Finally, I would just indicate that we are continuing to follow the Strategic Plan priorities, the five major priorities for the current year, and we're tracking those and making progress there. We do, again, want to see our academic progress go up. In those areas that are nonacademic, we have clearly made a lot more progress. Hard data issues are difficult for us, as well as many other districts, but we're going to continue to focus our time and energy and attention on that.

Thank you very much for the chance to come and give you an update on the Paterson Schools.

SENATOR EWING: Well, I had a couple of questions.

Do all your classes, all your students, have the necessary books, papers, and pencils? Because in talking to a group of parents in Newark the other day, I'm getting complaints from up there about the lack of supplies in certain schools.

DR. WILSON: I would say you probably get some complaints in some schools.

SENATOR EWING: But you don't have enough textbooks?

DR. WILSON: Some would say that they don't take them home, that we don't have enough to have kids take as many home as they want. We think we've made a big effort--

SENATOR EWING: Why wouldn't they take them home?

DR. WILSON: Well, the local schools sometimes don't want the books to disappear, so they don't let the kids take them home.

SENATOR EWING: How do they do their homework?

DR. WILSON: Well, it's the work that they provide for them on paper that they allow them to go home. That's been a problem of having books returned. We think we have adequate books in the schools, but having the books go home has been a problem. So some would complain to say books don't go home for homework, that the different materials that are run off are all right, but they would like to see textbooks go home. We're going to try to see if we can infuse more textbook money, so we can remedy that.

SENATOR EWING: Well, Rich DiPatri, is this a problem throughout the State as a whole, that a lot of schools other than Paterson and Newark and Jersey City that don't let children take books home because they don't have enough books because they don't get returned? To me--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: No, I don't think it's a problem, Senator, and in fact I think some of the issues you raised that were raised by Newark -- as we said before, we would love to know which schools they are, because we think all the schools are properly supplied with materials. The issue that Laval is raising is, if you have a textbook series, a social studies textbook, sometimes the teachers don't want them to go because they don't come back, and I don't think that it's uncommon. But, if anywhere, it might be particularly in urban areas where they might limit the number that go home. I think that's a concern that he is raising here.

DR. WILSON: That tends to be the issue, not that there are not adequate books in the schools, but the kids tend to take them and lose them, and they don't bring them home and they don't bring them back to school.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: I think in one area that they certainly need more work, the reading scores in a number of these grade levels have dropped. Grades two, seven--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Assemblyman, I think that's one school you're looking at in particular; that's the newsletter.

DR. WILSON: That's a sample of one school.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Unfortunately, Laval had gone through that prior to your arrival. Senator MacInnes raised some

interesting questions about that which we will get back to the full Committee with some answers about the specifics.

SENATOR EWING: On special education, how is that working out? Are all the children getting services?

DR. WILSON: We are servicing, we believe, the young people who need to be serviced. The issue always in the special ed is that you try not to classify students. You try to provide for them first in the regular program, but those who are clearly in need of special services we have adequate numbers of teams to assess and provide for the placement. We have programs outside of the city that we send some youngsters to, we refer. We're trying to establish some more programs within Paterson so that we don't have to refer as many outside.

SENATOR EWING: On the-- (Senator Ewing's cellular phone rings)

SENATOR MacINNES: Mr. Chairman, answer it.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROCCO: Jack's chirping

SENATOR EWING: I'm chirping.

On the in-service training, is it voluntarily or is that mandatory? How do you work that?

DR. WILSON: Well, the in-service training of staff -- what we have established is days during the year when we have half-day in-service sessions to make sure that the staff members are there to be exposed to either the math curriculum areas that we want them exposed to, the writing, the science. So those types of sessions we have held throughout the last six years.

We also have had what's called format training, which looks at the

various learning styles of students and teaching styles of staff. We've had whole schools involved in those programs, so we would bring in substitutes for staff members to make sure that whole teams are involved, as well as after-school projects, and we also have tied in with Caldwell College with a master's degree program in computer technology so that some of the classes are offered in the school system so our teachers are available to take part in those sessions. They don't have to go to that campus. We've had some good arrangements, also, with William Paterson College where we have a number of practice teachers who are in our system that are there full-time, and we're able to tie in our practice teachers in the in-service training, as well as our regular teachers.

SENATOR EWING: Do you find the attendance by the teachers excellent, or what? I mean, there are some that are deadbeats and don't get to it, or what?

DR. WILSON: No, I think our in-service sessions and those session--

SENATOR EWING: Do you keep track of those who attend?

DR. WILSON: We have records of those who attend, and I think we have good attendance.

SENATOR EWING: What do you find? Do you find any particular one or several of them not coming to any of them or something?

DR. WILSON: Well, I think the principals keep track and those who -- if they are having a problem, they would make sure that the staff members attend. If there is a problem of absence, then those individuals are spoken to, and that has not been a major issue that's been brought to my attention.

SENATOR EWING: On the libraries, how many of the schools don't have libraries still?

DR. WILSON: Well, we have 21 libraries in elementary schools at this point, so we're talking about 12 elementary schools that don't.

SENATOR EWING: And there is no space available even if we get waivers from the Department the way we did before?

DR. WILSON: Right now we don't have adequate space. As we begin to--

SENATOR EWING: Even for some sort of a library, regardless of whether the Department says it has to have 500 square feet and maybe we got 350, you could do something.

DR. WILSON: I would think in future years as the building program goes forth, we'll be able to free up space for libraries in the other 12 schools. We've made dramatic progress, of course, going from 0 to 21. We need 12 more, and I think over the next few years we'll be able to make major accommodations in the buildings. We're looking at the substandard space and we've begun to address substandard space. As we do that, it will free up more rooms for classrooms, as well as opportunity for libraries.

SENATOR EWING: But to go back on the kindergarten, as far as the funds go, do you have funds if you're able to find rooms in churches and things of that nature that you could use? Do you have the funds to staff the kindergartens necessary or not?

DR. WILSON: Yes. The funding is there. It's just that right now it's the space.

SENATOR EWING: Well, then I think you have to make a very serious effort, if you haven't done it already, Laval, of really checking on all the churches and any type of nonprofit group that has a building to see if there are some facilities available that you could use and see about getting waivers from the Department.

DR. WILSON: We're in the process of doing that.

SENATOR EWING: Well, how long will it take to do it?

DR. WILSON: Well, by the end of this year we will have an inventory as to what is available to us--

SENATOR EWING: In the whole City of Paterson?

DR. WILSON: Throughout the City of Paterson. We're working with ministers to take a look at a number of issues, so space is one of them.

SENATOR MacINNES: School year or calendar year?

DR. WILSON: School year.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: Senator, as you know, the district is required, as all the districts who receive yearly jotted money, by January 1, 1998 they have to have the five-year plan so we can ensure that they will meet it in the five years, so that's a critical piece. It will maybe help some for '97-'98, but it will certainly help for '98 and '99 as they move forward.

SENATOR EWING: But, in the meantime, there are a hell of a lot of kids that are--

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: Absolutely.

SENATOR EWING: --not getting that and it's just so tragic. Taking areas like that where it's even maybe more necessary than in other areas--

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: And the issue you raised about libraries, I want to just underscore that we will work and we'll work with every district who receives early jotted funding to look at flexibility in providing those alternatives as long as there is not a health and safety concern for kids.

SENATOR EWING: Right.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: We're certainly flexible and we want to be flexible in the use of facilities. We don't want that to be the impediment.

SENATOR EWING: What's the Norman S. Weir School? Why is that so high in all their testing? Is it a special school?

DR. WILSON: No, it's a mixture of regular students and special ed. The numbers are not large, so you may have one class. You've also had a principal there who's looked carefully at the test scores and have established goals and worked on in-service training with the teachers. They've made some good progress. That was also one of the schools that we assessed as being below average. It's not below average any longer.

If you will recall, there were four schools that we assessed as being below average. One of them, we removed the principal and the vice principal and vacated the entire teaching staff. The second one, principal and vice principal was moved and some staff, and the two other, principals. None of those four schools are below average. Those four schools we also worked with

Teacher's College to look at various designs, looked at Success For All, looked at Colmer, looked at several other possible designs and worked for three years now in implementing those programs, and four schools that had been below average are now still moving forward very well. So they are not below average. One we would think is in the above average category, and there are two that are in the very good average category. So we've made some progress in those types of schools. Norman S. Weir was one of them.

SENATOR EWING: The last question is, as far as the staff go, the teachers, etc., are they payed on time, and are the deductions made properly for their credit union? Because we are having major problems in Newark on that.

DR. WILSON: They are paid on time.

SENATOR EWING: You're not getting complaints on that?

DR. WILSON: My telephone has not been ringing off the hook.

SENATOR EWING: It rings, but not off the hook?

DR. WILSON: Not off the hook. That's one they would be calling you about.

SENATOR EWING: Gordon, do you have any comments?

SENATOR MacINNES: Yes, just a couple. Just a couple of questions, Dr. Wilson, and of course, there may be some follow-up questions that arise given whatever answer, but how much longer is the State going to be running this school system in Paterson?

DR. WILSON: I would think that we would -- we're in the downside of State operations there. I think a few more years. The critical issue still is student performance. I think we'd be able to meet certification in

most of the other areas based on the feedback that we've been getting from our very helpful County Superintendent, who's been monitoring us and pointing out suggestions for improvement. We think we would meet certification in most of those other areas, so the student achievement one is the one that we have to focus heavily on in the next few years. So I'd say several more years of tiding up in the other categories with a continued big push in the academic area.

SENATOR MacINNES: So it will be after the millennium before this school district is returned to the residents. Is that your best guess?

DR. WILSON: I would not want to try to speak for the Commissioner on that.

SENATOR MacINNES: I'm not asking you to speak for the Commissioner; you've already answered the question. You just think that it's several years. I'm saying that several sounds like three to me at a minimum. Is that right?

DR. WILSON: I think that that's reasonable.

SENATOR MacINNES: So that would mean-- Was '91-'92 the first year?

DR. WILSON: Yes. We're in our sixth year.

We were in very, very bad shape at that time.

SENATOR MacINNES: Right.

What percentage of your student body comes from homes that speak other than English as a primary language?

DR. WILSON: Well, I can't give you an exact figure; 49 percent to 50 percent of my population is Latino, about 44 percent or 45 percent is

African American. A large number of my Latino youngsters, their parents and relatives speak Spanish fluently at home, so the youngsters are exposed to standard English during the day, and sometimes they speak in conversation in Spanish, which is to be encouraged at home, but we also want to make sure those youngsters are all very proficient.

SENATOR MacINNES: What percentage of your students are in either as a second language, bilingual programs, or some other--

DR. WILSON: Let me get a little help on that. Maggie.

Ms. Carrillo could sort of help us on that.

MAGALYS CARRILLO: Good morning

SENATOR MacINNES: Good morning.

MS. CARRILLO: Currently we have about 23,000 students in Paterson, and of the 23,000, 4000 youngsters are classified LEP or identified LEP, limited English proficient.

SENATOR MacINNES: Okay. Four thousand, you said?

MS. CARRILLO: Yes. Approximately.

SENATOR MacINNES: Okay. Sixteen percent. I'm interested in how this -- you mentioned a core curriculum.

DR. WILSON: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: As I read the core curriculum, it strikes me that some of the most dramatic changes that would be brought on by implementing the core curriculum would be in the high schools where you have less than half of the students, in most school districts probably, who are taking and meeting the mathematic requirements, the performing and visual arts requirements. Have you done a preliminary estimate of what is going to be

required by way of new faculty and space in order to meet the core curriculum standards in those areas -- science as well? I mean, have you-- In other words, people are going to have to take laboratory sciences who aren't taking them now. People are going to have to take algebra II who aren't taking algebra II now. People are going to have to take foreign languages who are not taking them now. People are going to have take dance, theater, music, and other things that they are not taking now. It seems to me that judging from the high schools in my district that there are big numbers of high school students who are not involved in those programs but will have to be competent in them. Have you done any assessment as to what's going to be required in Paterson to implement those?

DR. WILSON: We're in the process of doing that, and we also have established algebra as a requirement for all young people to move towards, making sure that our young people are much more proficient.

SENATOR MacINNES: When will that be implemented?

DR. WILSON: It's implemented for the first time -- Clarence? -- this year. Algebra requirement for all students starting this year.

SENATOR MacINNES: So does that mean that anybody, in order to graduate, is going to have to take algebra? Is that anybody who is--

DR. HOOVER: Yes.

DR. WILSON: Yes.

SENATOR MacINNES: And how is that working now that you have one semester of experience? I've had a hell of a time with algebra, so I'm sympathetic if there are any kids in Paterson who are having troubles.

SENATOR EWING: Trouble elsewhere, too.

SENATOR MacINNES: I did, I've had a lot of trouble, Jack, (laughter) in addition to algebra, but certainly algebra was a problem.

I mean, how is that working?

DR. WILSON: I'd say first semester we were going through the--

SENATOR MacINNES: Does that mean all ninth-graders are taking algebra? They're not ready in all cases.

DR. HOOVER: What it means, Senator, is that--

DR. WILSON: Before they graduate.

DR. HOOVER: --the incoming class of ninth-graders during their four years of schooling--

DR. WILSON: They will be taking--

DR. HOOVER: --they will be taking one year of algebra. Some are taking it in ninth grade some are taking it in tenth grade.

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, let me-- It's not clear to me what -- or if it was clear to me, I've forgotten your answer on the core curriculum and your assessment as to what--

DR. WILSON: We're assessing the requirements and the needed facility changes.

SENATOR MacINNES: This was going on all last year. The State Board adopted it on May 1. In your relations with the Department, I would expect that you might be asked to comment on -- "Well, Dr. Wilson, if we implement these core curriculum standards, what will be the influence in Paterson where we're directly responsible for the operations of the schools?" So there must be some work that you've done on this, right?

DR. WILSON: We have clearly, looking at the space requirements-- The two comprehensive high schools have all types of labs, so we're trying to determine specifically on the scheduling basis how we can arrange to make sure the master schedules can be accommodated to accommodate all the needs that youngsters have.

SENATOR MacINNES: In you're comprehensive high schools, what percentage of your students are not taking lab science?

DR. WILSON: I'm not sure if I can give you a percent on that right now. I can't do that.

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, in your comprehensive high schools, what percentage of your kids are in what you might call a college preparation track? How many are preparing to attend college directly upon graduation?

DR. WILSON: Well, in the comprehensive high schools, the indication is that students who come out with a diploma should be able to go into the world of work or go into higher education with a diploma from a comprehensive high school. They should meet the standards to go into--

SENATOR EWING: Or vocational school.

DR. WILSON: Or vocational, but we have a vocational school in our county, but those who come out of East Side, out of Kennedy or Rosa Parks should be able to go either to the world of work or into a college.

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, I'm aware that that is an objective. I'm aware that that is a hope. I'm aware that that is something that is supposed to be true, and we all know it's not true.

DR. WILSON: Well, that's because sometimes the choice is in the part of the student, but the requirements--

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, I think that if you talk to employers or if you talk to people who are having to organize remedial courses at colleges in New Jersey, that there is a broad-informed opinion in this State and in the nation that an unacceptably large percentage of our high school graduates, in fact, cannot do what you have suggested.

DR. WILSON: No, I'm not disagreeing on that. I'm not suggesting to you that a high school graduate has all the skills that are necessary to be successful.

SENATOR MacINNES: I'm trying to get a pretty simple question here, Dr. Wilson, you're making it more complicated.

DR. WILSON: I don't want to do that for you.

SENATOR MacINNES: My simple question is, and I have this maybe an outdated notion of what happens in our high schools, but it seems to me that in most high schools there are kids who are taking classes in preparation of going to college. They called them Carnegie units when I was around.

DR. WILSON: Yes, they still do.

SENATOR MacINNES: That was just before the death of the saber-toothed tiger, I think. Now, that means you have to take foreign languages, it means you have to take laboratory sciences, it means you have to take mathematics beyond general math, you have to take algebra and geometry at a minimum. What percentage of the kids in the comprehensive high schools in Paterson are enrolled in courses that are suggestive of college preparation?

DR. WILSON: I'm not going to try to guess. I would say that if you go through four years, you pass the High School Proficiency Test, come out of a Paterson high school, you should be able to go into a college, depending upon on what the requirements are of that college.

SENATOR MacINNES: You're jumping beyond my question.

DR. WILSON: I can't give you a percent though.

SENATOR MacINNES: You have a core curriculum that says you're supposed to be providing universal opportunities to kids in mathematics, science, and a division of performing arts and foreign languages that you may not now be providing. That's what the core curriculum suggests.

It was adopted on May 1 of last year, so this is not a new question. In the comprehensive high schools that means that some kids are already taking, by way of class work, many of those things that they will need to take in order to be prepared for an examination of the eleventh grade that will make them give them some chance of passing, right?

DR. WILSON: Correct.

SENATOR MacINNES: And some percentage of kids are not taking classes that will prepare them to pass the HSPT that's based on the core curriculum, and I'm wondering what the gap is in a comprehensive high schools in Paterson, that's all.

DR. WILSON: I can't give you the answer on that right now.

SENATOR MacINNES: That scares me that you can't. That really scares me. This has been in place since May 1, and I would think that as a part of the collegial association between the Paterson school system and the State Department of Education, which has the ultimate responsibility, if

this question would have been asked by the Department -- what is the impact of this core curriculum on two high schools that we're directly responsible for operating every day--

SENATOR EWING: I've got other ones, too.

SENATOR MacINNES: I know that, but this is a scary answer. I can tell you that in Morris County, where a higher percentage of kids go on to college than in the Paterson school system--

SENATOR EWING: A little bit different socioeconomic background.

SENATOR MacINNES: I don't care what the explanation is.

SENATOR EWING: Well, that's part of it though.

SENATOR MacINNES: I'm not making a judgment about it, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR EWING: Well, you seem to be.

SENATOR MacINNES: No I'm not. I'm not at all making any judgement. I'm just saying that the impact of implementing the universal requirements in the core curricula are going to be substantial in Morris County.

Now, if kids are participating already at higher levels at Randolph High School than at East Side High School in things like algebra and geometry, in things like, biology, chemistry, and physics, in things like music, dance, and drama, and I'm not sure of that letter in things like French, Spanish, Italian, or German-- And if the impact there is going to be substantial in Randolph, I'm assuming it's going to be humongous in Paterson. I'm just looking for some notion of magnitude of what we're talking about and what the

implication on the ground is. I can foresee that you have a total mismatch in your teaching faculty in your comprehensive high schools between what they're teaching now and what they have to teach under the core curriculum and maybe a mismatch in facilities on top of your other facility problems that you've got to deal with.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: Well, I think your first point we would absolutely agree. I would, Senator, on that point. The facilities less so. Outside the labs, my observations on the standards, in people that are gearing up to implement them, it's really a reallocation of assignments, reallocation of courses that students have to take. You use the example of foreign language, for example, or even algebra II. It might be a course that more students have to take as opposed to what they might be taking now such as general math. They would have to take more algebra, so the difference is then reallocating staff, trained staff--

SENATOR MacINNES: Right.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DiPATRI: --and implement those standards as opposed to saying they need a different classroom because the classroom--

SENATOR MacINNES: Well, I don't think you need a classroom, algebra is not the problem. I think that music rooms, laboratories-- I mean, I look at the facilities at high schools that were designed to incorporate active music programs: Morris Hills, Morris Knolls, Randolph -- I mean I'm talking about high schools that I go into a lot -- Morristown High School. Now, even there with special facilities already in place, the fact that instead of having 35 percent or 40 percent of your kids actively pursuing music programs, you're

going to have now a higher percentage because of the core curriculum standards. I'm not certain that they're going to have the facilities, and I bet you the mismatch is greater in Paterson than it is in those communities in Morris County.

You have a lot of problems on your hands, and I notice that construction and facilities is a major priority that you have. I'm not saying that the core curriculum question that I've asked is primarily a facilities question, but I think it has ramifications for facilities, implications that haven't been considered; and if they're not being considered by the Department in the school district for which the Department is directly responsible, then I think we may be in for a rude shock when the information comes back about what all of this is going to mean to us.

I just highlight that question, Mr. Chairman, because we have here just one of the three districts that the State is responsible for -- I guess it's the smallest of the three -- so we can multiply by some number the answers here in terms of their implications in Jersey City and Newark and I just think it's-- I think it's a frightening proposition, and I'm not reassured by the presentation of the strategic plan today, I can tell you that.

SENATOR EWING: Thank you.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CONTINI: Thank you very much.

SENATOR EWING: Thank you, Pete.

(MEETING CONCLUDED)