

WATERBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES ~ REGULAR MEETING

Monday, June 1, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.

Waterbury Arts Magnet School, 16 South Elm Street, Waterbury, Connecticut

PRESENT: President Hayes, Commissioners D'Angelo, Flaherty-Merritt, Harvey, Morales, O'Leary, Stango, Sweeney, Theriault, and White.

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent Snead, Assistant Superintendents Cullinan and Sequeira, Chief Operating Officer Paul Guidone, Director of Personnel Ron Frost, School Business Administrator Paul Mazzaccaro, Attorney Maurice Mosley, and Education Liaison Mary Ann Marold.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

President Hayes called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. with a moment of silence and a prayer and Superintendent Snead led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

CLERK: Commissioner D'Angelo.

D'ANGELO: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt.

FLAHERTY-MERRITT: Present.

CLERK: Commissioner Harvey.

HARVEY: Here

CLERK: Commissioner Morales.

MORALES: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner O'Leary.

O'LEARY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Stango.

STANGO: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner White.

WHITE: Here.

CLERK: President Hayes.

HAYES: Here.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner White, it was voted unanimously to receive and place on file the following communications:

1. Copy of communication dated April 1, 2010 from Commissioner Theriault to Roseann Wright regarding his visits to the schools.
2. Copy of communication dated May 14, 2010 from Civil Service to Patrick O’Leary certifying him for the position of ABA Behavioral Therapist.
3. Copy of e-mail dated May 17, 2010 from Commissioner Theriault to Commissioner White regarding the Schoolhouse Committee and school conditions.
4. Copy of e-mail dated May 19, 2010 from Commissioner Theriault to President Hayes and Commissioner White regarding school maintenance issues.
5. Copy of editorials submitted by Commissioner Theriault from the May 19, 2010 Republican-American entitled “Waterbury School System Is Top-Heavy with Administrators” and City Meets Challenges with Action”.
6. Copy of communication dated May 19, 2010 from Civil Service to Judith Camp certifying her for the position of Paraprofessional.
7. Copy of communication dated May 20, 2010 from Civil Service to George Butler, IV certifying him for the position of HVAC Technician.

HAYES: Motion made and seconded. All in favor, opposed. We have another award presentation. I don’t know if they’re here yet. Dr. Da Silva is waiting for awardee to show up. The Principal from Wilson School will explain just why we are doing this this evening.

DA SILVA: Edward Mascolo of NEJ Inc. came to Wilson School about three years ago and more than opening their wallets, they really opened their hearts to our school and our children and have dedicated countless hours, times, energy, passion, to the children of our school and I can’t thank you enough, Mr. Mascolo, on behalf of our staff, and obviously you can see them here. We just appreciate everything you do for our children; a heartfelt, big, big thank you from the bottom of my heart. And I’m sad to go because I know how much you’ve done for our children. So on behalf of our school, and our Board of Ed.

HAYES: The Waterbury Public Schools honors Ed Mascolo of NEJ, Inc. for his support and contributions to the students of Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, presented by the Waterbury Board of Education, Patrick J. Hayes, Jr., President; David L. Snead, Ph.D., Superintendent, on June 1, 2010.

MASCOLO: Thank you. I want to thank you, Dr. Da Silva, as I know Suzie, I’ll tell you just walking in, I’m overwhelmed, I didn’t expect this, Suzie said come by and say hello

to the Board of Education. I thought it was a little less formal. I want to thank Heidi Prom who's standing over there who put in a lot of hours. She's a good friend from Fairfield, who when I shared this story, what we were trying to do she said I'm gonna roll up my sleeves and give you a hand. I want to thank Sloan for her endless hours, Monica, and everybody. The staff, honestly the only thing I have to say is what we were trying to do, and I think we've had some success, is the focus was the kids, how could we help the kids? And when we met Suzie and we met Woodrow Wilson we realized they did need help. And I think all I said to Suzie was if I could take a little edge off, one student, and get him through the week, then we've accomplished a lot. We couldn't change things, the socio-economic problems that everybody is faced with right now, but if we could take a little edge off and give them something that they could think about all week and what we did and I think everybody has some information on it or has seen maybe the room, as we call it, but we built an enrichment room and that enrichment room, the one thing that I requested from my chair was just get the kids extra time, get them extra time on the basics and give them a place where they could just relax a little bit and learn. And I had that when I was growing up, I was very fortunate, my kids have it, and they're very fortunate. And when I saw the students at Woodrow Wilson I felt they deserved a little bit extra and I felt as a company we were not giving back enough to the community and we randomly picked Woodrow Wilson, I didn't have any connection to the school, but we were welcomed when we made the phone call to them. So it's been an enlightening experience for me. The team that was around me allowed me to continue to run my business and still make some things happen. So each time I went over to Woodrow Wilson there was so much accomplishment. So, one, thank you, thank you for today. And Suzie, keep up the good work, she's coming down to Westport, I live in Fairfield now so she's gonna be close by. So we'll keep an eye on her. Again, thank you very much.

DA SILVA: I'm not sure if I'm allowed to do it, but I'm gonna do it anyway, on behalf of Woodrow Wilson School, the teachers and staff, families and children, the key to our school. I've also included for Mr. Mascolo and Heidi Prom, who worked very hard on developing a beautiful room where children can learn and play every day and our school newspaper, our first one, is included for Mr. Mascolo as a product for his heartfelt work and his team's heartfelt work. So, we thank you.

HAYES: We would certainly encourage any other business to do what Mr. Mascolo has done. I think it just, I know it's a common theme that we try to instill in our kids in school to give back to your community, this is a shining example of that. So all of our kids, when you do get out there and make something of yourself, remember where you came from and try to give back to your community. Thank you for being a role model in that area.

O'LEARY: I, knowing the Mascolo family, both Mr. and Mrs. Mascolo, born and raised here in Waterbury, raised Eddie who went on to become a very successful businessman. And to President Hayes' remarks, the Mascolo family exemplifies what I believe all of us could be doing to partner up with our public school systems. So on behalf of myself, I just want to, again, thank Eddie and his family for their contributions, not only to Woodrow Wilson School, but to the entire City of Waterbury and all of its youth. Thank you.

PUBLIC ADDRESSES THE BOARD:

Upon a motion by Commissioner White and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to suspend the regular order of business to allow the public to address the Board at 6:45 p.m.

HAYES: Motion made and seconded. All speakers are encouraged to submit prepared written statements to the Commissioners. Comments shall be limited to a maximum of three minutes. There will be no responses this evening to any questions or concerns raised; they will be referred to the Administration for review and response.

Jay Bhagat, 55 Stonefield Drive, had the following comments: Good evening and thank you for taking the time to be here today. I heard that the Gifted Program was in talks to be cut because of the budget. And I wanted to speak today because the Board of Education, you guys have round table discussions, and you guys aren't really around the schools to really know what goes on in the Gifted Program, you don't really know what we learn while we're there. It's kind of like Plato's Allegory of the Cave, you guys are amongst this blank wall and behind you lies this fire. The shadow casted by the fire is what you hear about the education system in Waterbury but you never truly see it and from that you scribe the form of what we're learning in our schools. But now when you stand here in the light, free from the cave, you can truly see what we're learning in our schools. Now a lot of you guys think that the Gifted Program is this elites program that is completely subject based. Now none of that is true. In order to get into the Gifted Program you need to be qualified based on IQ. Another way to get in is based on teacher recommendation. Now the Gifted Program is also open to many students. Opportunities are always allowed, kids have been taken on many occasions into the Mock Trial program and to the Close Up Foundation Program, so that they can have that opportunity. I know my teacher personally never rejects any student trying to get any help. Now the Gifted Program is a great way to have a four year mentor, someone to help you grow as a person and they teach you things that you don't learn in class, things that are relevant to life, things that you need to know about, how to apply for college, what you need to put in that essay, when you need to apply possible summer programs, the one person that actually cares about what you're doing and everything that's going on. Everything that I've displayed, all the skills, I've learned from Mock Trial. I was inspired by going to the Close Up foundation. I just came back from LifeSmarts, all which came from the Gifted Program. I mean when I'm at school I'm just not challenged, I get bored in class. When I'm in the Gifted room I have a place to discuss everything that's going on in my life, my teacher can teach me so much and each year has a theme. Sophomore year is globalization, junior year is about the brain, and senior year is morals and ethics. And this year we're finding out who we are as people and this is the year I really found out that I want to be an activist in my community and the Gifted Program has taught me all of that and I want you guys to know that you guys shouldn't change the Gifted Program at all, you should keep it the way that it is and make sure you don't cut it because a small investment now in us, the children, will result in other people, just like the gentleman who was up here before me receiving that award; I can guarantee, personally, that I'll be back in this City doing plenty of great things and you will see a tenfold in a few years. Thank you for your time.

Maggie Bergin, 71 Tower Road, had the following comments: I am a junior at Kennedy and I've been in the TAG Program for three years. I can remember the first

day of my TAG class in January of my freshman year. After taking way too long to form a circle of chairs, we sat down and Mrs. Ring gave us folders. The first thing she told us to do was write down five colleges that we hoped to attend in the future. Most of us just jotted down the Ivy Leagues that we had heard of because they seemed like the only ones worth noting. None of us knew what we were getting ourselves into, but let me tell you it's been quite the adventure. Entering my sophomore year I began to understand why the class was so important. With my first AP class and a very hard English class, I employed the study skills I learned as a freshman; believe me, they were a lifesaver. We began to realize that the program was a class of skills. Out of all the courses offered, many of us feel that TAG will be most useful in the real world. This year as a junior I have realized how important TAG is to me. Mrs. Ring has helped us all start to get ready for college applications in the fall; I already have one essay completed. With the SAT she helped us make a study schedule which, granted, was a pain in the neck, helped us get ready for the SAT's and our scores did improve. Our class has experienced so much in TAG; we've done SEARCH which is a water project at Hop Brook Park, Mock Trial, and my personal favorite Harvard Model United Nations. A lot of times kids get lost in the shuffle, there isn't any avoiding it, TAG helps us to stand out and express our own personalities. It's hard to believe we were once a group of shy freshmen because now we are one of the most outspoken students in Kennedy. From the outside looking in, I suppose it may be easy to cut the class, but spend a day or even just one period in it and you will see just how much it matters to us. We go to TAG because we want to. It counts as a study hall so there's no credit. We do Power Point presentations, read books and articles, learn about human patterns in the brain, but most importantly, we discover ourselves. We are not forced to take the class; it's not even an elective. We go because we can learn things and still have a good time. Once invited in you literally have to pry us out. If the program is cut my class will probably suffer the greatest. We have become accustomed to the unusual projects like the violent mind presentation I just gave today on teenage bullying. I guess we have taken the class for granted assuming Mrs. Ring will be there next year to help us with our college applications and senior year. It has become a safe zone for us. We rely on her to help us with our problems even though we tend to be melodramatic. Without TAG I honestly don't know what I'll do next year. I have a younger sister who's a freshman in TAG this year and she knows everything I have done in the class. She's heard stories and she knows all about the opportunities that we have come across and I want her to experience everything that I have been able to do. If she needs advice I want her to go to TAG like I always do. If she needs help with SAT's or college essays, I want her to have Mrs. Ring in TAG. We as juniors want future students to experience what we have. We have been recognized as a group of leaders and strive to live up to it. Being thus acknowledged is a privilege and something that future KHS students hope for. Cutting TAG is not a solution. For most TAG kids it's the class we look forward to each day. It's the class we go to when we get too stressed. It's the class we grow in. Thank you.

Sheila Lee Calhoun, 359 Tudor Street, had the following comments: I'm really glad to see so many TAG children and their parents here. I'm sad that the majority of the children and the parents that I'm going to address you about today are not here, they're in the transitional program from kindergarten to first grade. I bring it to your attention because it's one of the programs that's slated to be cut. I take exception to the cut, because I volunteer with these children and unlike the TAG children, the children that I work with can't sit down and keep still. They are over stimulated by noise and sound,

by the changing of classes, by an announcement that's made on the public address system. These are children who can learn, but I find myself from time to time holding their small faces in my hands and saying "hello, I'm here" and trying to get them to listen to what I say for just 30 seconds so that they can learn. These children started out not being able to sit down at all. They are sitting down now. They are paying attention. They have short attention spans. What I hear the teacher say all the time to the children when they act up or act out is use your brain, be courteous, be respectful. These children are probably bored, themselves, but they won't be able to express that to you. They're antsy, they can't tell you how they feel. Today's assignment was to draw a picture of themselves and I sat next to each one as they drew those pictures. The majority of them didn't bare any resemblance to anything human and I drew a head, a neck, a chest, arms, leg. Now I'm not an artist, by any stretch of the imagination, but you know the form. And I said "is that how you see yourself"? He said "yes, isn't that right"? And I said okay, it's your picture, it's what you want. I beg of you, I know that there are places within the budget that there is excess where cuts can be made. The children that I'm talking about need to be able to focus in order to function. They need to get to first grade to get to second grade. Let's not begin the cycle of social promotion and have these children end up graduating from high school without a real education. Let's continue to help them now so that in the future we won't read about them in the paper. They will be the ones who are the recidivist when it comes to prisons. They'll be in and out because they don't have the wherewithal to be able to make the right decision for themselves about whether or not they should do this particular thing again and they don't know why. In a regular classroom situation, these children will be invisible, they will be lost. If they are lost, the failure is the educational system's failure, not theirs. They come to school every day ready. They don't know what they're ready for, but they are ready and they're willing. Let's help them to become able and stable members of this society. Let's help them to add to their community as opposed to take away from it. Thank you very much.

Donna Anton, 48 Albion Street, had the following comments: I am here to talk about the TAG Program. I don't understand why you would consider cutting the TAG Program when it serves the best and brightest of our public high school students. I had three children graduate from Kennedy High School who were all in the TAG Program and I cannot begin to tell you the impact that Ms. Ring, the Kennedy teacher, had on their lives. This impact was through an academic and a personal relationship that benefited all aspects of their life. I can't imagine what my children's high school and college careers would have been without her influence. Please don't take this opportunity away from future students who could benefit as well. Thank you.

Michael Anton, 48 Albion Street, had the following comments: As a four year member of the Kennedy TAG Program, I can attest that it provides an invaluable experience to its students. From my freshman year, Ms. Ring, my teacher, was doing everything she could to prepare my classmates and I for college. From exercises to improve our critical and creative thinking skills to helping us learn more about ourselves, to recommending universities and programs for us to look into, Ms. Ring provided invaluable help to her students. She helped us focus on what we wanted to study, where we wanted to study it, and then she helped us turn our dreams into reality. From working with us on our applications, to reviewing our admission essays, to writing letters of recommendation for us, she was always willing to help her students. My TAG experience helped me figure out my college plans then go about making them happen.

With Ms. Ring's help I was able to get into the university that I wanted from which I graduated just a few weeks ago. Without the TAG Program and the experiences and opportunities that it gave me, I would not have gotten to where I am today. I ask you not to take away the opportunity that I had from the other students who are currently in the public school system. Thank you.

Kayleigh Anton, 48 Albion Street, had the following comments: I am a former student of Kennedy, I was in the TAG Program for four years there, and I cannot tell you the amount of challenge and personal relationship that you build by being in that program. Not only does the TAG Program allow students to think outside the box in terms of their critical thinking, but it makes you step outside of that box and I was given challenges that have been so valuable throughout my college years and my college years would not have been what they were had it not been for the TAG Program where I was not even considering leaving the state and Ms. Ring challenged me to step outside my comfort zone, not only as I had in my academics, but in my personal endeavors in academia and it has forever changed my life and without that personal relationship to help individual students to take that step and take on those challenges that they don't think that they're ready for, without the TAG Program there to do that, there's a huge gap that will be left for those students and challenges that will not be taken on. And while there are guidance counselors in the public school system; they are not able to offer the time needed for individuals and for students to even see their guidance counselors you need to leave your classrooms where you'll be learning something. So to have that extra time set aside, not only for special projects and skill building, but to also have that extra personal help in finding what your future will be with the TAG Program is invaluable and I would, it would pain me to see it taken away from future students and current students in the public school system. Thank you for your time.

Erin Losty, 9 Irvington Avenue, had the following comments: I currently have three daughters that are attending Kennedy High School. All three of them are in the TAG Program. Ms. Ring is nothing short of phenomenal. The influence that she has had on all my children I can't replace it, it's something that's needed in a school system, she molds the kids in all facets of their life – academic, social, and personal. Cutting the TAG Program would only hurt the students that education means the most to. These are the kids who are willing to work the hardest without receiving any academic credits whatsoever. They are the seeds of our future and the TAG Program nurtures them into the leaders that they will become. Being in the TAG Program with Ms. Ring has given students the self-confidence, the courage, and a sense of responsibility to take on the role of leading our society. Thank you.

Thomas Vecca, 28 Gail Drive, had the following comments: I have recently found out that the Talented and Gifted Program may be cut due to budget problems. I'm extremely upset at the thought that Waterbury could lose such a wonderful program. The City of Waterbury schools need the TAG Program. First and foremost, the TAG Program was started in order to keep the City's brightest students in the public school system. I, myself, am a testament to this. I was offered a full scholarship to Holy Cross High School but turned it down to attend Kennedy because of what the TAG Program had to offer. This program was the major reason why I chose to attend public school. If this program were cut, Waterbury would surely lose many of its students. Additionally, the TAG Program offers hands-on events that allow Waterbury's brightest students to further their education and enrich it beyond what is offered within the regular curriculum.

The students of Waterbury would have never been able to take part in events such as Mock Trial, SEARCH, and the Model UN. Even as a freshman and only taking part in this program for a single year, I have already benefited from this. I was able to participate in Mock Trial and SEARCH, both of which allowed me to see firsthand how education takes place in the job force. If it weren't for TAG I would have never taken part in these events. Clearly the TAG Program presents the students of Waterbury with beneficial and worthwhile opportunities and experiences. As inner-city kids, the students of Waterbury would have likely never been able to take advantage of these opportunities without the TAG Program. If the TAG Program is cut, Waterbury students will be at a disadvantage. How could you, as the leaders of Waterbury's educational system, cut a program that helped your students so much? Your job is to enhance the Waterbury educational system and make it the best that it could possibly be. Cutting this program will be doing the exact opposite. Furthermore, the TAG Program helps the students get into the nation's top colleges. This program works extensively to help students in choosing the right college for them as well as getting accepted into them. This program helps Waterbury students further their education and realize their dreams. Cutting TAG will leave Waterbury students at a disadvantage when applying to colleges. Without the guidance of TAG, choosing and getting into colleges will become exponentially more difficult. Clearly, Waterbury needs the TAG Program. This program helps the brightest students of Waterbury shine brighter. TAG presents Waterbury students with endless opportunities and provides them with the skills necessary for success. The TAG Program needs to continue because cutting it would take away the opportunities that Waterbury worked so hard to offer its students. Thank you.

Maria Vecca, 28 Gail Drive, had the following comments: As you just heard, my son testified that he turned down his full ride to Holy Cross High School because of what you, my city that I lived in my whole life, had to offer him. And I just get so upset that you could even think of changing it or even cutting it. These kids matter, they matter so much. It might be to your eyes money, to us a handful of kids, they matter. I'm begging you not to even consider changing it. Kennedy is doing so well with the SOAR and TAG together, just the way it is, please do not change it.

Aaron Schrag, 14 Quintin Street, had the following comments: I graduated Kennedy High School in 2006, was in the Talented and Gifted Program for four years. I will be the first to admit it was a long four years, me, and Ms. Ring, who is the Talented and Gifted teacher at Kennedy, had our battles, but she is the best teacher I've ever had. She pushed me to limits I never knew I could reach. I recently graduated from the University of Connecticut with an accounting degree and a job at Earnest Young in New York City. I tell you about my accomplishments because without her I wouldn't have had them. I came into Kennedy not even wanting to be in the SOAR Program and was able to graduate 10th of my class . . . enrolled in Talented and Gifted. Without her this was not possible. The things she taught me and opened my mind to would never be there without her. And that's all I have to say. Thank you very much.

Carmine Perrotti, 639 Wilson Street, had the following comments: I'm a graduate of Kennedy High School where I participated in SOAR, Advanced Placement courses, and the Talented and Gifted Program. Although TAG was not a grade course, I would consider it the classroom that provided me with the deepest learning and preparation for the future. Throughout my four years as a member of the Kennedy High School TAG community, I participated in many activities that exposed me to new ideas that allowed

me to develop useful life skills and that prompted me to think in a different way. I was introduced to and further developed skills such as independent thinking, leadership planning, organizing, listening, reading, and writing. Most importantly, I developed skills that you do not learn in your typical classroom setting. These skills included a critical and reflective thinking. Throughout my participation in TAG I developed cognitive skills such as solving problems and making decisions. More importantly, TAG encourages students to analyze and make judgments about what had already happened in their lives and how to continue. In your typical classroom such as SOAR and AP, everything is very structured, there is no time to reflect on yourself or what you are learning, you simply you learn the material and regurgitate it on a piece of paper a few weeks later. However, TAG offered me the opportunity to learn and apply all these skills in many different forms throughout my time in the program. TAG exposed me to many different fields and encouraged me to identify an area that's of interest to me. As a freshman I joined the Mock Trial team. As a sophomore I went to Washington, DC for the first time with several TAG classmates. In DC I participated in a weeklong program called Close-Up where I was able to see and attend congressional hearings, visit the Library of Congress and Supreme Court, sit in on lectures of high ranking government officials, and meet with members of Congress. During that same time when I was in Close-Up I was taking an American Government class at Kennedy High School. However, Close-Up and TAG allowed me to take what I was learning in the classroom and apply it to the real world. When I returned home from DC I knew that I wanted to pursue a career in public service. Ms. Ring encouraged me to continue to deepen this area of interest in many different forms. We researched colleges with public service programs. Today I attend Providence College where I'm a double major in political science and public and community service studies. Providence College is the first college in the country to have a major in public service. I continue to explore law when I served as an attorney on the Mock Trial team my junior and senior year where I had the opportunity to work with live attorneys and judges here in Waterbury. By the time I entered my freshman year of college I had already participated and worked on three local political campaigns and interned with one congressional incumbent's reelection campaign. Most recently, I just returned from my second trip to DC, this time I served as an intern for the First Lady of the United States, Mrs. Michelle Obama. These past five months provided me an ultimate public service experience which was sparked from being a 15 year old young man interested in politics sitting in Room 106 at Kennedy High School. As the fall of my senior year approached, Ms. Ring introduced the class to a topic of ethics and a concept of community. We completed a variety of assignments around these topics and read books such as Man Search for Meaning, Utopia, and Herland; all of these were later reintroduced to me in Providence College. As I enter my senior year this fall at Providence College, I know I'll continue to reflect on the experiences and educational tools that I learned from TAG. I hope that you'll agree that TAG provides a type of education and life skill set that not a typical classroom provides. I also hope that you'll reconsider and continue to fund and support the Talented and Gifted Program as is providing current students in the program and students in the future the same opportunities that myself and fellow classmates have had.

Anthony Cestaro, 33 Birchwood Street, had the following comments: I reside at 33 Birchwood Street, right next door to Kennedy High School and right next door to Ms. Donna Ring, the teacher of the Talented and Gifted Program. I bring a pretty unique perspective; I've actually been her neighbor as well as her student. My brother and sister have also been her students through the Talented and Gifted Program. You've

heard a lot of current and former students already discuss some of the great extracurricular programs that are offered through Talented and Gifted such as Close-Up in Washington, DC, SEARCH which sparks interest in Biology in our students, as well as the Mock Trial Program, which I participated for in my four years at Kennedy High School. Ms. Mancuso, as well as Ms. Ring, worked tirelessly for this program, spending a lot of their own time to give us rides to and from practice, they organized their own transportation to bring us to and from the courthouse for competition, and I'd like to point out that SEARCH, Close-Up, and Mock Trial do not receive any special or additional funding from the City, it's all out-of-pocket expense or scholarship applications that Ms. Mancuso and Ms. Ring help students fill out. I was lucky enough to be a recipient of one of the Close-Up scholarships and that's why I was able to attend the program in Washington. I'd like to focus a little bit on my personal experience through TAG. I think there's a little bit of concern that what TAG offers is replicated through the departments of guidance and advanced placement courses in our public high schools. And I can tell you from experience that this is not the case. The guidance department works tirelessly for our students. However, from my experience, I found that they had many times to deal with students who are having academic difficulty, disciplinary problems, or making sure that standardized tests such as CAPT are running smoothly. I was needy, I still am a little bit, my peers are needy, we found our needs met through the Talented and Gifted Program, through receiving individual attention to review our college essays, helping pick out our colleges, participating in roundtable discussions and seminars. I took eight AP courses during my time at Kennedy and, unfortunately, due to the amount of material and time of the course, not one of them was conducted in a seminar style. I enjoyed them very much but Talented and Gifted was the only program in which we were able to have roundtable discussion with seminar style learning. I was lucky enough that through the guidance of Ms. Ring in Talented and Gifted, I attended Cornell University and got an Ivy League education. I found that the majority of my courses in college were seminar style. I wouldn't have had the experience I had in college had I not been prepared adequately through the Talented and Gifted Program. If you're worried that the program maybe doesn't meet standards or that it is repetitive, I encourage you please; please examine the program for yourself. I'm confident that if you go and sit in on one of Ms. Rings or Ms. Mancuso's classes, you will see that its value is unparallel in the Waterbury education system today. My future plans include law school so like any good attorney; I'd like to end with an analogy. When you have a computer you think you have a virus, you want to get rid of it, right, as soon as possible so you open up your task manager and see the list of all the programs running on your computer, you see winlog32 and run.exe and you're like what are these, these must be viruses, I don't recognize any of these names. So you delete them. Thank God, we got rid of the problem. You try and turn on your computer the next day to find that its broken, those funny names you didn't recognize or didn't know much about were actually your operating system and now your computer has crashed but you didn't know until it was too late because a rash decision and ill-informed decision was made to cut something that wasn't properly understood. We have the luxury of buying a new computer; there isn't the luxury of buying new futures of success for students that are deprived of the Talented and Gifted Program. Thank you.

Donna Hunt, 51 Cottage Place, Oakville, had the following comments: I've lived in Waterbury for 30 years prior to moving to Oakville. My children were born and educated in Waterbury. Both my daughters were in the Talented and Gifted Program; one from grade four to eight and the other from four to 12th grade. Sara attended Wilby

High School and was in the gifted class there. She probably would not have attended Wilby if it weren't for this program. I can't tell you how beneficial the program was for her. When I asked her about Talented and Gifted, her experience at Wilby, this is what she said, and I quote, "Wilby's Gifted Program taught me about topics we would never learn in the regular classroom. In middle school we did sections on subjects like the middle ages, Greek and Roman Mythology, and Oceanography. In high school we did sections on things like the mind and meteorology. The Gifted Program was a welcome respite from algebra and US History for it allowed students to flex their creative muscles and think outside the box. In a world that now measures educational achievement strictly by standardized test, the Gifted Program allowed "the smart kids" a way to be innovative, creative, and engaged; something they rarely get in a regular classroom. When I was in school it provided students with a forum for discussion, exploration, and inquiry and was the best preparation for college that I received. Not only were our assignments interesting and exciting – design a board game, recreate a moment in history on video, publish a newspaper that would have existed in the middle ages, etc., but it also took learning outside of the classroom. We received hands-on experience, visited Talcott Mountain to learn more about weather, we were exposed to college level ideas and concepts, attending symposia at Trinity College and Tunxis Community College. If it wasn't for Wilby's Gifted Program, I would have very few fond memories of my high school educational experience. Sarah is the Assistant Director of Alumni Relations at Fordham University in New York City.

We have many classes and resources for our less bright students, the only classes we have for the brighter students is Talented and Gifted. If we want our brightest students to stay in our public schools and not leave the system for a private school, we have to offer an incentive for them to stay. The Talented and Gifted Program is this incentive. Do not dilute the program with larger classes and less committed students. I urge you to keep the Talented and Gifted Program and to keep it as it is today.

Joseph DaSilva, 150 Bateswood Road, had the following comments: On this date five years ago I was completing my first year at Kennedy High School, a shy, timid freshman; I wasn't sure what social circle I belonged in, what sports I was good at, where my future would take me. However, there was one thing I was clearly excelling at, studying. I was determined and thirsty for knowledge. I often exceeded my own expectations by meeting the upper bounds of Kennedy's grading policy. Despite the challenging reputation of SOAR and AP classes, I quickly found myself bored with the curriculum. Had this trend been allowed to continue you'd see a very disinterested and unfulfilled individual standing before you today. However, . . . for me, in the middle of my freshman year I received an invitation from Ms. Ring to join the Talented and Gifted Program. Ms. Ring had brought together the academic superstars from all my classes into one intellectual setting. We were finally free to talk amongst ourselves about real-world issues; we could let our minds run boundlessly unrestricted by preset curricula and those of our peers who are more interested in MySpace and texting on their phones than with what we had to say. Elite is a dangerous word to use but I have no qualms about applying it to the TAG Program. My teacher and my classmates were the best the City had to offer. As my time in the TAG Program passed, I grew immensely as an intellectual. As I memorized the stats and policies of Hitler's Holocaust program in AP European History, Ms. Ring provided us with Viktor Frankl's Man Search for Meaning and taught us how it actually felt to be a concentration camp survivor. As America's wars in the Middle East plunged into violence, Ms. Ring brought in a native speaker of

Arabic to familiarize with the language and culture of the lands to which we had sent thousands of young men and women to fight for our freedom. Ms. Ring found the students who were willing and able to go above and beyond the City's set curriculum. Through the TAG Program she provided us with the challenges we needed to continue to grow and shaped us into permutable young intellectuals. My time at Kennedy flew by faster than I would have ever thought imaginable. It seems as though it was only a matter of weeks between my first daunting steps through the halls as a freshman and my triumphant return to them as a senior. However, before I could successfully exit the doors of high school for the last time, one enormous challenge lay in the way, getting admission to college. As a middle class teenager from a hardworking blue collar town, I didn't have a clue of where I wanted to go or which college would suit me best. However, Mr. Ring led me through the process in a manner that the guidance department could never achieve. Having to attend to over 1,000 students, guidance never provided me with the attention I needed. However, Ms. Ring was always there for me when I had to meet a deadline she made sure I met it. When guidance put my scholarship applications in the wrong bins, Ms. Ring made sure they found their destination. By the end of the year I had gained admission to Princeton University, a feat I attribute entirely to my participation in the TAG Program. I was not the only one to find such success in the year I graduated, all in all, three members of my TAG class found themselves placed at Ivy League institutions and the rest would be matriculating at various laudable colleges and universities. Such success is not imitated anywhere else in this City. During my time at Princeton, I have met exactly zero Chase Collegiate graduates. However, I bump into a fellow member of the TAG Program almost weekly. All things considered, SOAR and AP classes provided me with fancy acronyms that I could use to fill up the space on my resume. But the TAG program turned me into the interesting intellectual that elite colleges look for during the application process. My experience with TAG has continued well after high school graduation. America's leading universities expect their students to analyze literature and statistics and offer new unthought-of explanations and opinions. My experience in the TAG Program has provided me with the tools needed to accomplish this lofty task. If someone were to ask me to point to a perfect classroom experience, I would immediately send that person to Ms. Ring. In its most fundamental state, the TAG Program is an educational experiment that has been met with wild success. Rather than sitting here determining whether or not to cut the program or to destroy it by flooding it with students whose interest would be best served elsewhere, we should be analyzing the structure to see how we could improve academic curricula across the City and applauding Ms. Ring and Ms. Mancuso for their efforts. The young people sitting before you here today will one day become the doctors, lawyers, and business owners that will lead this City. Many of us will not be here today without the TAG Program. Without Ms. Ring and my classmates, I know I would not have achieved even half of my success. When old age has crept up on the current leaders of this City, we will be the ones waiting to carry the torch. And the best way to prepare for this unavoidable changing of the guard is a continuation and preservation of the Talented and Gifted Program. Thank you.

Joe Geary, 26 Greenleaf Avenue, had the following comments: It's my privilege to come down and speak to you tonight regarding the Talented and Gifted Program. It's gonna be very tough to follow two out of the last three Ivy Leaguers, but I'm gonna give it a shot. How lucky is Anthony Cestaro, not only does he have Donna Ring in TAG for four years but he's her next door neighbor, that's a double win. I'd like to digress for about one minute and just go back to my position, the Director of Operations for the City

of Waterbury and then I'm gonna talk to you as a parent of two graduates of Kennedy High School and members of the TAG Program. As you all know the Board of Education submitted a budget to Mayor Jarjura, I happen to sit on the Mayor's Budget Committee, we had made some initial cuts, sent the budget back to the Board of Aldermen and the Board of Aldermen had some issues with the budget and asked you to make an additional two million dollars in cuts, which now I understand Talented and Gifted is a potential cut. So I understand it's a daunting process that all you respectful members of the Board of Education are up against today. These are tough times out there, we're trying to close about a 13 million dollar budget gap with revenue versus expenditures so it's not an easy job, I sympathize with you, I went through the first half of the exercise, and you honorable members of the Board of Education are going through the second half. Approximately nine years ago my oldest daughter Sara was just about to graduate from St. Mary's School when she came to my wife and me and said she wanted to attend Kennedy High School. We live in the East End of Waterbury on Greenleaf Avenue so we're out of district, so we know we have to provide transportation. A long-time friend of mine, retired Principal Anthony "Butch" Azzara, had met with a variety of parents and parents of potential incoming freshman that year and one thing that sticks in my mind to this day that Mr. Azzara said that when your son or daughter, specifically my daughter, when my daughter leaves Kennedy High School after four years, she will be prepared for college. Well, I could tell you that my daughter graduated last year from Providence College. She just finished her first semester at the University of Connecticut going for a Master's in public administration. Her sister, my younger daughter Kaitlin, will be entering her senior year at the University of Connecticut majoring in communication disorders, speech pathology. So myself and my wife couldn't be prouder of the two of them. And really where the rubber met the road, when I think back what Mr. Azzara said, it really rings true today because their experiences both at Providence College and at the University of Connecticut, the transition was seamless and certainly I accredit that so much to Mrs. Donna Ring who you've heard so much tonight about. She's an incredible individual. I can't say anything more than the parents or the students haven't already said. And certainly another personal friend of mine is Donna Mancuso who runs the program at Crosby High School. I apologize; I do not know the names of the teachers that teach at the middle school. Certainly we've heard, Commissioner Stango, we've heard Mock Trial mentioned and I know your son Attorney Chuck Stango certainly helps Ms. Ring for many, many years with the Mock Trial preparing the youngsters for competition. So, I'm just here to say in closing I know you have a daunting task tonight and I understand that if you are able to substitute this program, you have to cut somewhere else. I understand that, it's a tough job; I wouldn't want to have to do it between all the members of the Board of Education. But I implore you to please look long and hard and see if we can save this program. I think the true testament is what you've heard from all the youngsters here tonight – the past and present members of the Kennedy High School Talented and Gifted Program. I think a young man that came up from Crosby. So whatever you could do to turn over every rock and see if there's any way to save this, it would be much appreciated. Again, speaking as a parent tonight to the honorable members of the Board of Education. Thank you for your time and attention.

Catharine Nicholson, 69 Pineridge Road, had the following comments: This is my first year, I'm a sixth grader at Wallace Middle School, and I've been attending Ms. Porzio's class in FOCUS. I'm a little nervous, I have to admit, but I do stand up for what I believe in so these are one of those things. So my brother has been in FOCUS in the

past and has graduated now, moved onto the Talented and Gifted, and I'm in FOCUS, as well as he used to be, so we both believe that like it's been a very great program so we think that it would be very harsh and not good to cut the program. And also I understand that it's like been a hard time and like it's a tough decision as everyone but this is a long-term investment just to save all the kids who actually want to have an education. And Fairfield and Westport they actually have a lot of money and they have very good programs so it's actually unfair for us as students to have to compete with them without the talented and gifted and all the other programs that give us an advantage in the future as in college. So that right now while we're in all these programs we actually have the opportunity and actually the experience to at least have the slightest idea of what we're gonna have to be dealing with when we get into college and what we're gonna have to compete with in order to have the best jobs or the best family or how we're gonna even support them. So I think that just keeping the programs at least would have the greatest impact on everybody and would save a lot. Thank you.

Andrew Manger, 76 Fiske Street, had the following comments: I attend North End Middle School and I attend the talented and gifted FOCUS Program taught by Mr. Atkins. The FOCUS Program has really helped like order and I also attend the Accelerated Academy and in there it's not enough to have all the . . . smart kids in, we need another program for the brighter kids and get away from all of the commotion and all the other stuff that happens in the Academy, FOCUS is a time to get away from that and without it, I probably would not want to come to school every day but knowing that one day a week I can come to school and be in FOCUS and have fun while learning that motivates me to come to school every day, not that I would not come but, it gives me motivation to want to get up and go to school every day and know that I have that program there and that I'll be able to do hands-on projects and a whole bunch of stuff on that day. Today we presented our independent study projects and they were very well and everyone did a very good job on them. That shows that everyone is benefiting from FOCUS and they're doing their job. And the TAG Program in high school sounds very well and I'd like to attend it. With all the projects and the teachers, they seem very nice and I'd like to participate and if you cut this program, all the other kids that have been looking forward to it or their parents want them in it because they don't think that the other classes will be enough for them. My brother is in fourth grade now and he's going in the fifth grade and I really would like to have the experience of FOCUS and to be able to attend and to have the same experience as I have in FOCUS. When I moved to Waterbury last year or around this time of year, I really didn't want to come to Waterbury because I don't know it just didn't, it just didn't feel right so when I came to the Talented and Gifted Program, I knew that that's why we moved to Waterbury to attend all these programs that some schools, other schools don't have and without the TAG Program I'd probably go to another high school in another district because they'd offer other programs. So that's mainly why we moved to Waterbury for these programs and so I don't think the budget should be cut and so, thank you.

Athena Wagner, 1558 Highland Avenue, had the following comments: I'm so impressed, I really am, that must be a wonderful program. But I just wanted to say that first of all I'd like to say thank you to Dr. Snead, Attorney Mosley, and Joseph Nole, who is not here, but they were instrumental and assisted me in doing voter registration in the high schools. No pay, I volunteered on my own, it's something I want to do, it's something I like to do, and I just want to say thank you for allowing that and I was able

to register out of the four high schools, Adult Ed, Crosby, Wilby, Kennedy, 75 new voters. Last year it was more, two years ago it was more, but I thank you.

The other thing is I appreciate the Board of Ed for including me in some of the discussions in bridging the achievement gap. And, I didn't know all this was going on tonight, but it chimed right in because when you're talking about bridging the achievement gap, as you heard from some of the students tonight, they were bored with the normal curriculum. How many other students are bored with the normal curriculum? How many of the students really aren't challenged enough? And as far as you know what Ms. Calhoun spoke on, the transition from kindergarten to first grade, I mean that's where it all begins. You know, I don't understand how in one area you can say well lets work on bridging the achievement gaps but then the underachievers or the overachievers are disregarded as far as budget cuts, possibly, and what does that leave you with – mainstreaming all the students? I just don't understand the logic in that and I'm sure that there are other areas that can be cut and to leave these programs in place for the students. I mean the two just don't go hand-in-hand.

But the other thing I wanted to say is it's so good to see so many people come out in support of a program that they believe in for their children. But what I would love to see is more parents come out in support of their children who may not be in the TAG Program or who may be underachievers and come out and let these people know what the problem is in school and what needs to be done so that your child's needs are met. Also I'd like to say on June 15 at UConn Branch right here on East Main Street in Waterbury, Governor Rell and a commission of business leaders that she selected will be there to address the public from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on bridging the achievement gap. So thank you.

Linn Asplund, 167 Madison Street, had the following comments: Okay, this is going to blow a lot of people's minds especially when you have a picnic and what comes out of the mouths of babes. And I jotted a lot of this down and I got this information from kids. Okay, I may see mouths open wide or they may be closed, I don't know if you people know about this, but you will now. Gay boys approaching other gay boys in restrooms and locker rooms and what goes on after that. Adults, I heard this from two parents, smell of urine in the stairway and other places. Girls sneaking into the boys' locker rooms and having sex. Having sex on the track, under bleachers in the gym, a drunk girl hitting on a teacher, kids going to school drunk and getting in-house suspension, but kids that are out of dress code get out of school suspension. I don't understand that, I figured if you were drinking you would get out of school suspension, dress code, well it's mezza mezza. I think you should check into this because from what I've heard this past weekend, I don't know if I want my grandkids attending middle school or high school. Grammar school right now, my grandson, I'll deal with that because they're watched. These kids are roaming around in the hallways, so who's watching them? I mean, I'm concerned for my granddaughter and a couple of my grandkids that are between middle and high school so what do I have to look forward to? Please supervise these kids quite often. Thank you.

Jahana Flemming, 49 Englewood Avenue, had the following comments: . . . I am a parent of a student who graduated from Kennedy High School. My daughter was not in the Gifted Program. However, as a teacher, I have recommended several, hundreds of students to this program. I go to Ms. Ring and I say you have to see this child, this

child has potential, she never turns a child away. Some kids come in from the middle schools by recommendation, other ones you see the light go on halfway through the year – freshman year, sophomore year, you take them in, she talks to them, she evaluates them. I've even had students who would not per se be identified as gifted, who say to her I'm willing to do the work, give me a chance, and she says you're welcome in this room. I have students who are not in the program who go to her, can you read over this essay, can you help me with this college application? We have kids, as you see here, who come back four years later, five years later, eight years later, I'm applying for this job, I'm moving to the city, I need help. The kids are there all the time; they receive help while they're in Kennedy, when they graduate from Kennedy, life decisions, job decisions, college decisions. I guess it's hard to understand but as a teacher I think we have to remember, there is no golden band, all of our students are not middle of the road, special education exists in many forms. We have students who need special attention, who fall at the bottom of the bell curve. What do I do with a child like Thomas Vecca? I cannot address him in my regular education classroom. Does it make me a bad teacher? No, but I cannot attend to his needs and leave the other 28 students behind. If the class sizes are going to get bigger, if we are expected to do all of these things, these kids deserve a special education, also, and I think to use the word elitist, these are children we're talking about, people are different, they come all different shapes, sizes, forms, and we have to address all the needs of all those children and if we fail to do that then we have failed as educators, you have failed as Board members, we have failed as a society. These are the people who will be on the tax rolls, who will be on the voter registration rolls, who will, as these kids have said, keep this City moving keep this City going. These kids are coming back to the City, they're helping to rebuild it, to build it up, they're raising their families here, and I think we have to remember them and let them know that their children, their needs are important and we will be mindful of that when we make our decisions in the City. Thank you.

Liz Pantoni, 312 N. Harker Avenue, had the following comments: I would like to address you as a young woman from . . . as well as a student at Kennedy High School. Four years ago I entered Kennedy and I had previously also been in the FOCUS Program during my time at Wallace Middle School. I came into high school confident with the direction that not necessarily 100% committed to what I think I needed to do. As I entered Ms. Ring's class, it was really intimidating, you know she gave you this look; this look changed a lot of things for me during my time in her class. We don't need to stay in TAG, it doesn't give us a grade, we don't get any credit for it, but we stay in it anyways and I think that that makes a difference because for you to stay committed to that sort of classroom where you have to do papers, you have to read books as you would in any other classroom and for you not to get anything on paper but as an individual I've grown and I can owe that to the TAG classroom and to Ms. Ring. I've also participated in things such as Close Up and Model UN and while I'm probably repeating things that you've previously heard, I just want you guys to really consider that this has made an impact in so many students and I think that just by us coming here it can really make a difference. I mean this is not just, I mean you have seen people who graduated five years ago, I mean people who are freshman, I mean this is a great opportunity. I've been accepted into Central Connecticut State University and Ms. Ring pushed me. I'm now a member of their honor's program which is paying for my tuition. I received more than \$7,000 in scholarships. Ms. Ring has sat with me for every single one of those essays and has corrected them with me more than two times, more than five times. And because of her, not because of Guidance, because they pointed out

what scholarships for me to get, it's funny, I received a letter and it was from the Retired Teachers' Association and they wanted to thank the Guidance Department for recommending a scholarship to me. It was because of Ms. Ring who pushed me to go to Guidance and to look for these scholarships and who sat there with me and reviewed my application . . . to be done in order to make up for other things but I really think that you should consider finding a way to keep this program. Thank you.

Ryan Dickey, 222 Bradley Avenue, had the following comments: Actually last week I found out, I was sitting in third period in TAG and I found out from Ms. Ring that the Board of Ed was considering cutting TAG. I sat there; I thought school without TAG that would be boring. Where else will I have the time where I could just sit there and talk about stuff that's actually interesting? And I sat there and I thought it through a little bit, I remembered that somewhere around the industrial revolution or sometime over there when brass was important, Waterbury used to be important. Nowadays we're not so much and nowadays there's all those problems like we're spending money we just don't have, we have a bunch of, we have to fix our economy, we have other issues like healthcare and stuff, we have China, they're trying to make their cheap stuff and buy their cheap stuff . . . we have foreign oil to deal with, we have everything else, we have climate change and all that stuff to deal with. People that are gonna sell those products in the future are gonna be talented and gifted. The Talented and Gifted Program will help make some of these people realize their potential. Without it, they'll be lost, and, frankly as far as TAG goes, as far as I'm concerned, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. But it's not up to me, it's up to you guys and as far as I'm concerned if you guys are okay with robbing the children of Waterbury of their chance to make Waterbury some place again, to solve . . . where did they come from, they came from Waterbury . . . robbing our City of our pride that we can get from our children, or from my generation that when we get older could solve all these problems that we're facing. it's up to you guys, if you can sleep soundly at night knowing that you robbed us of that, okay, do whatever you want.

Dillon Costa, 100 Maybrook Road, had the following comments: I didn't come here with the intention of speaking, but I guess that's the least I could do for Ms. Ring, who basically for four years has kept me inline because without her I don't think that, I don't necessarily would say I wouldn't be in college right now but I wouldn't be at the colleges that I am right now. I got accepted to every single one I applied to. I think I owe most of that to the Talented and Gifted Program, but enough about her, but I guess we've already heard a lot about her today, you can go on for days about her because she's honestly the best teacher I ever had and probably will ever have, and that's the truth. Without her, basically she keeps me in line and basically makes me want to go to school every day because without the TAG Program, I don't think that I'd enjoy going to school. Every day that I go in there is an intellectual discussion with people who are at my intellectual potential. And Ms. Ring facilitates that talk very, very well. Without the TAG Program I wouldn't be exposed to such things as Harvard Model United Nations, I certainly wouldn't know words like decorum or anything like that without Model United Nations. Close Up, as well, was a very great experience and I met people from all over the Country. I don't really think that would be possible without Talented and Gifted and I'm sure you all know that as well. When I came to Kennedy High School I was scared, I was really, really petrified even though my brother had just graduated two years earlier and he was in the Talented and Gifted Program. And for me and my brother, Ms. Ring was like a second mother to us, she always made sure we were where we were doing our work and following through without homework and stuff like that. So in closing, I

don't really think the Talented and Gifted Program should be removed even though you do face a hard decision to make. You need to think about the positives of the Talented and Gifted Program and how it is nurtured and how it has helped the brightest young minds in Waterbury, not only at Kennedy, but at Crosby and Wilby, to essentially reach their academic potential and I'm a testament to that. So with that being said, I hope that you do keep TAG, not only for this generation, but the next generation to come as well. Thank you.

Hafsa Khanum, 12 Maybury Circle, had the following comments: The first thing I would like to say is a few years ago I would not have had the nerve to stand up here and speak in front of you and the reason that I do have the nerve and the courage and the confidence is because of Mock Trial which was offered to me through the Gifted and Talented Program. Without that program, there is so much that I would not be today. I would not have the courage to be in front of you, I would not have the courage to apply to all the colleges I plan on applying to next year. I would not have the courage to be the President of the National Honor Society, there is so much I would not be able to do. And the first thing I would like to say is there's so many programs that Gifted and Talented offers us and without it no one would be where they are today. An example is Mock Trial and Crosby has been going to quarter-finals every year. There's also the LifeSmarts program which I was part of the State team this year, we have been going on to Nationals for 10 years and this year they added a new portion to it and I was really nervous because when we were in Miami, Florida, I just wanted to have fun but I also wanted to win and Ms. Mancuso urged me to participate in the health and safety test, I did not want to do this, I am strong in environmental science, I believed that I would do great in this, but I took her advice because she is one of the greatest role models for me, she is my mentor, she's my teacher, she's almost a friend, and she has taught me that if I listen to her advice, I will never go wrong and she urged me to do this health and safety test, and I did. And on the last day of the competition, during the awards ceremony, they called my name and I was so surprised because I came in first in the nation and I won a \$500 scholarship for this and I would not have had that had it not been for Ms. Mancuso and the Gifted and Talented. I would like to urge you to consider the facts that the youth of today, the kids in Gifted and Talented, will come back to Waterbury, they're an investment, you will put your money into this program and you will see the return 10 years down the road, 20 years down the road, when they come back and they're taxpaying citizens of Waterbury and they help out with schools, they help out with the community and the library. Without Gifted and Talented there would not be a lot of these students, a lot of students will be put by their parents, my parents wanted to send me to a boarding school out of this country because they did not believe in the public school system and I would have agreed with them if it hadn't been for this program I would have been in the American School in Switzerland right now, and that is something that, I would have missed out on this program and this social experience and everything that this program has offered to me and I urge you, don't cut this program, because without it a lot of students will feel out of place, they would have their creative thinking, their critical thinking, everything squashed by the regular school curriculum and do you really think that so many students, can I have a showing of hands of students that are here for the Gifted and Talented Program, I doubt that this many students would show up to save a math class or a social studies class. This group has really helped, this class has pushed us and made us better people and I believe that I will come back when I graduate from whatever college I get into, which no doubt will be

because of TAG, I will come back and I will help this City and I really urge you, don't cut this program, we really need it. Thank you.

Upon a motion by Commissioner O'Leary and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 8:00 p.m.

HAYES: Motion made and seconded. All in favor, opposed.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Snead read and distributed the following report:

Today students participated in the annual Olympics of the Mind competition. The winners from the competition are:

Third Grade Divisional Winners (1st, 2nd, 3rd):

North: Regan, Wilson, Sprague

West: Maloney, Hopeville, Barnard

East: Rotella, Chase, W. Cross

District Winners:

After the district competition, there was a tie for first place between Regan and Rotella with 17 correct answers each. To break the tie, judges reviewed the second round team competition and awarded first place to Regan, who scored slightly higher in that round than Rotella. The final placements were:

Regan (1st), Rotella (2nd), and Maloney (3rd).

Fifth Grade Divisional Winners (1st, 2nd, 3rd):

North: Regan, Wilson, Carrington

West: Driggs, Maloney, Tinker

East: Rotella, Generali, Chase

District Winners:

After the district competition, there was a tie for first place between Regan and Rotella with 16 correct answers each. To break the tie, judges reviewed the second round team competition, which also resulted in a tie (each school scored 18 in that round). To break the tie, judges then reviewed the first round individual competitions and compared the scores of Regan and Rotella team mates, taking the highest individual score not counted in Round One. Regan had 39.0, while Rotella had 39.24. After that review, the judges then awarded first place to Rotella.

The final placements were:

Rotella (1st), Regan (2nd), and Driggs (3rd).

We had some very good surprised in today's competition. I was pleased that some of the schools that scored well and competed well had not made it to the finals before, in particular a school like Driggs and then we also had Sprague. Boy your sister did one hell of a job at Regan. They were in the money for first place all day.

O'LEARY: She's only been there one year though Doc; she can't take all the credit, probably can't take any of it.

SUPERINTENDENT: It was assume. We had several Board of Ed Commissioners there – Commissioner O'Leary, Commissioner Stango, Commissioner Sweeney – do you wish to say anything?

SWEENEY: It was a terrific competition again this year and it's great to see the kids; they are just so into it and so excited and rearing to go. It's a great competition; great job by Dr. Sequeira and staff, again, they did a wonderful job. And all those teachers who gave their time and their energy to get those students as excited as they were, it's wonderful to see every year and it's something that I try my best to make time for. I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

STANGO: I agree with everything Commissioner Sweeney said. Every year it just seems to get better and the thing that impresses me is if you saw that double or tripled ballroom opened up full of students and you can hear a pin drop while the questions were being put forward. Just well behaved, well executed, really on task. Everything is fine. And just to watch the mechanics of it throughout the course of the day and especially at dismissal when all, you have to transport each one of those students back to their home schools again. The busing was all set up and it was planned out and executed to the tee. Very, very well done.

O'LEARY: There's not much left to say but it was exciting, it was fun, as Ann said there was a room full of young students, you could hear a pin drop, and kudos to everyone who put it together. And as Dr. Snead points out, I was happy to see some of the schools that hadn't performed as well over the last six years who did very, very well. So that's a great step in the right direction. But it was for me personally it was the single most exciting event I've been to this year and I wouldn't miss it for the world. And I would invite everyone to attend next year, it was really that much fun to watch these young people to compete and have so much fun in doing so. Thank you.

SUPERINTENDENT: Thank you. And it can't go without saying, to see all those parents there was wonderful. The room was full of parents. Kudos Dr. Sequeira to you, your staff, to everyone, Mrs. Anne Marie Cullinan was there, everyone that took part in organizing, especially Pam Barker Jones' secretary. And the Mayor came.

Tomorrow morning at 9:15, students from Kingsbury School will visit the residents of Southmayd Home next door to the school, to celebrate the conclusion of a grant-funded project to study trees on the property, especially a copper beech that is very old.

Also tomorrow, from 9:30 – 10:30, Maloney School will be having a Japanese Summer festival in their cafeteria. First graders will perform traditional Japanese dances, tell stories, and sing songs. They will be dressed in Kimonos made by Wilby Family and Consumer Science students and sushi, made by Wilby students will be served.

On Thursday, students from feeder elementary schools will visit Crosby High School for an ice cream social and field-day type activities.

On Friday, the winners of the State of Connecticut Black History Essay contest will be honored in the Mayor's office by State Comptroller, Nancy Wyman at 11:00 a.m.

The Board of Aldermen will be holding the last of two public hearings on the 2010-2011 budget this Thursday at Kennedy High School. The Board is required to adopt the budget by Friday, June 11th.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: I did mention before, there is a Finance Committee meeting immediately following our meeting tonight where we'll have discussion on some of the items that were brought up this evening. But also, I just wanted to address briefly, obviously we'll need to spend more time on it, Commissioner Theriault, I think that the work that you've done in bringing to light some of these problems that, unfortunately, we weren't aware of and unfortunately the School Inspector's office wasn't getting information to us as we had asked for, I do appreciate that effort, on your behalf, and I do believe that we are now moving forward. We had a good meeting, I know you were unable to attend because of a scheduling conflict, but Commissioner White and I, we all had, it was a great meeting, the newspaper story there and since you weren't there, there was no camera on it either, but I was really impressed with what was going on. We have Mr. D'Agostino and a gentleman from O & G; I forget his name at this point, John Cross. They are actually going out and inspecting the schools, what a novel idea. So you don't have to do that and we shouldn't have to do that. And they're going to be putting together a plan, coming forward with a plan for us to address these things. It's been clearly stated that the conditions that you have found unacceptable and we'll do everything we can to address them. But again, we'll have to do them in a prioritized fashion from the things that are most needed. But some of those cosmetic things were discussed that shouldn't be there, there shouldn't be paint chips anywhere. And they did also assure us, under Commissioner Sweeney's request, just to clarify the whole lead paint situation, they are investigating and testing for lead paint throughout the buildings that they're going to, they have found some spots and they're trying to address those. Those get priority on the list. I don't know if, Vice President White, did you want to add anything more?

President Hayes proceeded to read the list of Consent Calendar items.

10. CONSENT CALENDAR

Upon a motion by Commissioner D'Angelo and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to approve the Consent Calendar, Items 10.1 through 10.6, as listed:

- 10.1 With the approval of the Committee on Grants, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval to apply for the Nellie Mae Education Foundation "Opportunity Fund Grant".
- 10.2 With the approval of the Committee on Building, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the ED042, Phase 2 of 4, for the North Main Elementary School Project, State Project #151-0253 N/PS.

- 10.3 With the approval of the Committee on School Personnel, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the revisions to the job specifications for Stepping Stone School Guidance Counselor from part-time to full time.
- 10.4 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approve the use of school facilities by school organizations and/or City departments, as listed.
- 10.5 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the use of school facilities by outside organizations and/or waiver requests, as listed.
- 10.6 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to A. Mango, WHS, and one chaperone to take 12 students to Providence/Newport, RI from Sunday, May 30 to Tuesday, June 1, 2010 to visit Johnson & Wales University.

HAYES: Motion has been made and seconded. All in favor, opposed, Consent Calendar passes.

12. SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTIFICATION TO THE BOARD

Upon a motion by Commissioner D'Angelo and duly seconded by Commissioner Theriault, with Commissioner Theriault "abstaining" on Items 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, and 12.6, it was voted to receive and place on file items 12.1 through 12.7, Superintendent's Notification to the Board, as listed:

- 12.1 Athletic resignations:
Fryer, Deneen – Varsity Girls' Basketball Coach, CHS, effective immediately.
- 12.2 Lateral transfers:
Phillips, Jan – from Driggs SVP to Gilmartin SVP, effective 08/10/10.
- 12.3 Middle School Summer Transition Program appointments, July 6 – 29, 2010, salary according to individual's contract:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>BUILDING</u>
Jodi Sarlo	Lead Teacher	NEMS
Miriam Wilson	Language Arts	NEMS
Ronald Brandes	Math Support	NEMS
Melissa Gugliotti	Mathematics	NEMS
Michael Pannoni	Read 180	NEMS
Yvonne De LaVega	Science	NEMS
James Hurdle	Social Studies	NEMS
Matthew Calabrese	Lead Teacher	WALLACE
Kara Mazurek	Language Arts	WALLACE
Janet Frenis	Math Support	WALLACE
Lisa Palombo	Mathematics	WALLACE

Sandy Carlson	Read 180	WALLACE
Jennifer Magnavice	Science	WALLACE
Joseph Bandurski	Social Studies	WALLACE
Cathleen Greene	Lead Teacher	WSMS
Kathleen Scanlon-Ferrucci	Language Arts	WSMS
Donald Shulenburg	Math Support	WSMS
Kimberly Carlone	Mathematics	WSMS
Angela Gizzi	Read 180	WSMS
Desiree Gotlibowski	Science	WSMS
Paula Forman	Social Studies	WSMS

12.4 Extended School Year Appointments, salary according to individual's contract for 16 days:

<u>LAST</u>	<u>FIRST</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>SCHOOL/PROGRAM</u>
Felton	Margaret	Paraprofessional	Bucks Hill
Pal	Faizia	Paraprofessional	Bucks Hill
Phottoli	Sean	Special Educ. Teacher	Bucks Hill
Jones	Sarah	Paraprofessional	Bunker Hill
Deen	Shafiela	Paraprofessional	Bunker Hill
Scanlon-Ferrucci	Marie	Paraprofessional	Chase-CoTaught
Dwyer	Donna	Paraprofessional	Driggs
Moran	Francine	Paraprofessional	Generali-CoTaught
Francisco	Roxann	Paraprofessional	Generali-CoTaught
O'Donnell	Jackyln	Paraprofessional-Sub.	Gilmartin
Ivers	Elizabeth	Paraprofessional	Maloney
Luzio	Eugenia	Paraprofessional	Maloney
Zittell	Melissa	Paraprofessional	NEMS
Laliberte	Doreen	Paraprofessional	NEMS Essential Skills
Cipriano	Lisa	Paraprofessional	NEMS Essential Skills
Coit	Tracey	Paraprofessional	NEMS Essential Skills
Koxha	Rozeta	Paraprofessional	NEMS Essential Skills
Harris	Keisha	Paraprofessional	NEMS Essential Skills
Waldren	David	Paraprofessional	NEMS Essential Skills
George	Kendra	Paraprofessional	NEMS Essential Skills
Andrikis	Robin	Paraprofessional-Sub.	NEMS Essential Skills
DelMoral	Denise	Paraprofessional	NEMS Resource
Kasidas	Karrie-Ann	Paraprofessional	NEMS Resource
Smith	Julie	Paraprofessional	NEMS Resource
Perusse	Joseph	Special Educ. Teacher	NEMS- Resource
DePaulo	Leslie	Paraprofessional	NEMS SCOPE
Rotar	William	Paraprofessional	NEMS SCOPE
Lopez	Marlene	Paraprofessional	Rotella
Delmonaco	Kathryn	Paraprofessional	Sprague

McDonald	Barbara	Paraprofessional	Sprague
McKay	MaryAnn	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
Cianciolo	Anne	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
Alvarez	Isory	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
Phelan	John	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
DiVito	Donna	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
Seeley	Robin	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
Field	Regina	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
Seeley	Catherine	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
Lacerenza	Rose	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
Barnes	Cindy	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
Samaha	MaryAnn	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
Farina	Cheryl	Paraprofessional	State Street-CBT
Gibson	Karri	Paraprofessional	State Street
Nowell	Dolores	Paraprofessional- Sub.	State Street-CBT
Battle	Stanley	Paraprofessional- Sub.	State Street-CBT
Badilla	Manuel	Paraprofessional- Sub.	State Street-CBT
Ramos	Maria	Paraprofessional- Sub.	State Street-CBT
Morales	Carlos	Paraprofessional-Sub.	State Street-CBT
Esposito	Janet	Paraprofessional	W. Cross
Leonardo	Viola	Paraprofessional	Wallace Scope
Justs	Patty	Paraprofessional	Walsh CoTaught
Merrill	Sandra	Paraprofessional-Sub.	Walsh CoTaught
Hensley	Zinnia	Paraprofessional	Walsh Essential Skills
Goodman	Maribel	Paraprofessional	Walsh Essential Skills
Orsatti	Donna	Paraprofessional	Walsh-Wilson
Acosta	Jimmy	Paraprofessional	Wilson E. Skills
Fisher	Deborah	Paraprofessional	Wilson E. Skills
Mcintosh	Peggy	Paraprofessional	Wilson E. Skills
Cabrera	Maribel	Paraprofessional-Sub.	Wilson E. Skills
Graveline	Anne	Paraprofessional	WSMS
Saaidi	Llham	Paraprofessional	WSMS
Whidbee	Audrey	Paraprofessional	WSMS
Santiago	Genevieve	Paraprofessional-Sub.	WSMS
Johnson	Holly	Sign Language Interpreter	WSMS
Arroyo	Maria	Paraprofessional-Sub	WMS
Hernandez	Sofia	Paraprofessional-Sub	Wallace-Sub for ESY not EESY as previously approved
Greene	Melinda	Paraprofessional-Sub	Wallace-Sub for ESY not EESY as previously approved
Benner	Danielle	Speech & Lang. Pathologist	ESY not EESY as previously approved
LaPointe	Cheryl	Speech & Lang. Pathologist	ESY not EESY as previously approved

12.5 Soar to Success Summer School appointments, salary according to individual's contract:

<u>Teacher Names</u>	<u>Grade/Assignment</u>
Michelle Lucian	Overall Soar to Success Program Administrator
Kristine Fitzgerald	Overall Soar to Success Program Secretary
<u>Bucks Hill School</u>	
Darlene Cofrancesco	Administrator
Heidi Greguoli	Secretary
Karen Angurio	K
Susan Brown	K
Alana DeFazio	K
Kristin O'Hearn McGee	1
Cherie Corbo	1
Megan Budd	1
Feigie Radner	1
Marilyn Baker	2
Michelle Montes	2
Suzanne Newman	2
Diane Quatrano	2
Doreen Lawson	3
Kaja Cichowlaz	3
Melissa Ciccone	3
Laura Galanti	3
Francene Ouellette	4
Christina Guerra	4
<u>Carrington</u>	
Claudia Biello	Administrator
Denise Stribling	Secretary
Olga Martinez	K
Karen Cavanaugh	K
Aimee Misset	1
Sonya Fleming	1
Lucy Sheets	1
Toni Brogna	1
Jos Gagnon	2
Vanessa Salvador	2
Justine Kuncas	2
Donna Lyons	3
Brenda Cavanaugh	3
Karen Griffin	3
Maria O'Rourke	4
Betzaida Vega	4
Nicole Scarzella	4
<u>Chase</u>	
Annette Dillon-Miserez	Administrator
Carol Salvia	Secretary
Marylou Raider	K
Melissa Lund	1
Dana Brunetti	2

Nancy Silva	2
Michele Knightly	3
Anthony Santiago	3
Erica Tutino	4
Julie Copeland	4
<u>Driggs</u>	
Mark Levy	Administrator
Imelda Wallace	Secretary
Jodi Lucarelli	K
Hether Healy	K
Ashley Treichel	1
Ariola Raidhi	1
Zita Blake	2
Cindy Albizu	2
Mardelle Ruffin	3
Jessica Scanziano	3
Nicola Buonocore	3
<u>Generali</u>	
Kathy Stamp	Administrator
Tania Mendoza	Secretary
Karen Hartery	K
Kathy Scovill	K
Odet Simones	K
Nikki Barbieri	1
Robin Medina	1
Stefanie Dyer	1
Michelle Predzimirski	2
Doreen Lopez	2
Timothy Coughlin	2
Michael Theriault	3
Jennifer Dwyer	3
Amy Manning	3
Rebecca Harrison	4
Amy Neibel	4
Lenore Gagain	4
<u>Hopeville</u>	
Maria Moulthrop	Administrator
Amy Davis	Secretary
Christine Diorio	K
Nilsa Garcia	K
Mauralee Connolly	K
Christine Guerrero	1
Laureen Lambo	1
Charlotte Brady	1
Ralph Cantito	2
Alicia Brandes	2
Maria Costa	2
Stacey Tomasko	3
Jessica Ayala	3
Margaret Perugini	3

Kelly Brooks	4
Aurea Perez	4
Mark Esposito	4
<u>Kingsbury</u>	
Pam Baim/Dena Moura	Administrator
Norma Guedelha	Secretary
Nicole Dean	K
Christine Capaldo	1
Rachel Cardella	1
Emily Summa	1
Anthony Ciuffo	1
Bret Bisailon	2
Tina Polletta	2
Eric Feeney	3
David Greene	3
Lee DiBella	4
Kari Knightly	4
<u>Tinker</u>	
Debbie Ponte/Lauren Elias	Administrator
Susan Cote/Therese Colella	Secretary
Mary LaFountain	K
Maureen B. Giuffre	K
Sharon DeFeo	1
Jean Lyons	1
Chris LaVallee	1
Janet Sagendorf	2
Robert McGrath	2
Branden Strileckis	3
Danielle Carlson	3
Nancy White	4
Frances Finkenzeller	4
Claire Brogna	4
<u>Walsh</u>	
Julissa Crespo	Administrator
Dawn Kitney	Secretary
Leocadia Quinones	K
Kelly Fengler	K
Stephanie Ciuffo	K
Josefa Perez	1
Orlando Ruiz	1
Valerie DePalma	1
Roseann Pelletier	2
Melissa Howles	2
Zuheill Aviles	3
Shannon Kindelan	3
Chakisha Canady	4
Molly Mendez	4
<u>Washington</u>	
Roxanne Augelli/Lori Kramarz	Administrator
Diane Kuskowski	Secretary

Stephanie Carpentieri	K
Maria Jimenez	1
Kelly Jenkins	2
Jaime Butkevich	3
Alicia Schiavo	4
<u>Wendell Cross</u>	
Joe Amato	Administrator
Karen Elwell	Secretary
Michelle Cervero	K
Nirmala Vowe	K
Tricia Meaney	K
Elizabeth Gedraitis	K
Elizabeth Marshall	1
Marnee Capabianco	1
Martina Northrop	2
Lorraine Trudeau	3
Linda McGill	3
Shernett Evans-Faster	4
Kristine Kijak	4
Karen Okoski	4

12.6 High School Summer School appointments, **subject to student enrollment,** salary according to individual's contract:

Name	Subject
Baird, Jeff	Algebra I
Caouette, Crystal	Biology
Chabot, Albert	US History I
Clark, Michael	Biology
Cybart-Persenaire, Alena	English 9
DeStefano, Carmella	Spanish
Dibble, Carly	English 10
Docherty, Fiona	Business
Ferrare, William	PE / Health
Franks-Blanchard, Lauren	English 10
George, Ann Marie	Integrated Science
Gonillo, Mark	PE / Health
Gopie, Jade	Biology
Hughes, Mary Jo	English 9
Iverson, Cazzie	US History I
Lescoe, Jane	English 11
Levesque, Melissa	US History II
Maley, Robert	English 9
McDonald, Brian	Algebra I
Morin, Keith	Algebra I
Murphy, Chris	English 11
Perugini, Christine	Chemistry
Perugini, Gianni	PE / Health
Piccolo, Alan	Science & Society

Reid, Thomas	Substitute
Robinson, Kristina	Geometry / Math Exit Criteria
Rossi, Steve	English 12
Sarlo, Chris	World History
Scialla, Marlana	Geometry
Sullivan, Michael	US History II
Szwaba, Bridget	Algebra 2
Valletta, Marnie	English Exit Criteria
Walton, William	Roots of American Citizenship
Webster, Monroe	Substitute

12.7 Resignations:

Celozzi, Aimee – Art Teacher, WAMS, effective 05/13/10.

Da Silva, Susie – Principal, Wilson School, effective 07/01/10.

HAYES: There's a corrected Item 12.5 handed out this evening. Motion has been made.

THERIAULT: I wish to recuse myself on Item 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, and 12.6.

HAYES: So noted. All in favor, opposed. Do we have anything under Unfinished Business of the Preceding Meeting? Other Unfinished Business?

HARVEY: Dr. Snead, I know during the public speaking there was mention of voter registration. Is there some way, normally we receive information regarding the breakdown of how many were registered and from what school. Could we get that this time?

SUPERINTENDENT: Sure. I'll make sure it happens.

HARVEY: Just so that the Commissioners have that information. Thank you.

THERIAULT: Certainly, I'd be remiss if I didn't congratulate all the people that participated in the discussion tonight with regard to the TAG Program. Certainly, it's nice to see the intellegencia come out, the brightest and the best, and so articularly defend their program as they should and as they have been taught. And even people that were a little bit nervous knew that the challenge of democracy is to fight for what you believe in and I congratulate every single one of them for having the courage to stand up and fight for what they believe in. That's the American way. But I do want to talk a little bit about the maintenance without being redundant and I do want to thank you, President Hayes and Commissioner White, for your support in getting the ball rolling. We have an absolutely monumental task ahead of us with regard to the tremendous amount of disrepair and negligence that has occurred over the last 20 or 30 years. The problems that we face are huge. Many of the problems can be accomplished in some schools in as little as two or three months with regard to the chipped and peeling paint. Some of the problems with regard to the discoloration and the possibility of whether it could be mold or not and other things with regard to insulation around pipes that it's free-flowing and literally disgusting conditions in lavatories that really should be shut down; no animal should be going into some of these

lavatories, much less people. Some of our schools are in such disgusting disrepair and such neglect; it would bring a tear to your eye as an educator and human being to see people going into these buildings living and working and being educated there every day. So I look forward to meeting the challenge as we go forward and to really see something being done and a School Inspector that inspects the schools; not someone that sits on his backside and lets everyone else collect overtime and oodles and oodles of favors and favors while our schools go down the tubes. So as we go forward, I look forward to this new plan and I look forward to working with a diligent, diligent committee in correcting all of these problems that have occurred over a 20 to 30 year period. They are just overwhelming. And I'm sure there are other agencies within the City without naming them that should come forth and do a much more thorough job in investigating and analyzing the materials that are in our schools and determining whether or not they may possibly be short term or long term problems with regard to the health and safety of all our students. So as we go forward, thank you for acknowledging my very, very hard work. I spent 110 hours in all 29 buildings. I have 21 hours of videotape. It is staggering; it took me two months to film this, but as we go forward, I'm gonna look on the positive note now that I've been to hell and back and I'm gonna look for heavenly improvements. Thank you very much.

O'LEARY: I just, to continue on my charter school quest, and I would like to inform the Board and members of the public that are here tonight as I think all these things are kind of related – charter schools, TAG, FOCUS Programs, but it's amazing to me in the City of New York, now the New York Post broke a story recently and I'll just read you a couple of lines – “it's not just in math and reading that charter schools are dealing out aces, new data, obtained by The Post, shows that charter school kids outperform traditional public school kids in three of the four grades tested in science, in social studies, last year by leaps and bounds. The results are sure to lend ammunition to those who support the state's raising of the charter school's cap which has been at the center of heated debate among many Albany lawmakers. According to the City's Department of Education, charter school eighth graders vested their public school peers by 19 percentage points in social studies, 18 percentage points in science, 10 percentage points in math and reading.” So, like Johns not giving up on this maintenance issues, I'm not giving up on my charter school issues. Another note, I do want to personally thank all of you who came out today, most of which, I personally know most of you, but I think it's great when the community comes down and visits the Board and lets us know what's going on in your minds and I think it's even better when our students come down and do the same. So thank you all, very much, for being here tonight.

HAYES: I just want to add that, as well, sometimes these meetings get a little long but it's great to hear, not only from our current students, from our former students, coming back and standing up for a program that benefited them. I think that's part of the message that, obviously, you're learning in that program, as well.

D'ANGELO: I wanted to thank everyone for coming down; it's good to see this amount of people getting involved. I had the pleasure of spending some time at Kennedy High School last week and a little bit of time at Crosby, also, and I was pleasantly surprised at the quality of education, the things that I've seen and heard going on in the TAG Program and I hope, I'm confident we will, but I hope we can find a way to find the money to leave this program, and from what I'm hearing from the teachers and the

students, hopefully, we can leave it as an unchanged entity instead of trying to change it, to phenagal it, to add or subtract. I think based on what I've experienced last week and what we've heard tonight, I think we have an opportunity to leave it exactly as it is. So hopefully we'll do that.

HARVEY: Alright, this is my soapbox. Dr. Snead, or Paul, I would like the grant department to look into a grant that is being offered by the United States Government, Ernie Duncan, who is the Secretary of Education, stated that there is a federal grant for parent involvement and that we could go on the website to obtain more information. So, I would like someone in the grant department to look into that and to report back to the Board in regards to that. Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner D'Angelo, and duly seconded by Commissioner Stango, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:24 p.m. into Executive Session for discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health, or dismissal of a public officer or employee. Present were President Hayes, Commissioners D'Angelo, Flaherty-Merritt, Morales, O'Leary, Stango, Sweeney, Theriault, and White, Dr. Snead, Dr. Sequeira, Mr. Guidone, Mr. Frost, and Mr. Mosley. The Executive Session ended at 8:34 p.m. with no votes taken.

ATTEST: _____
Carrie A. Swain, Clerk
Board of Education