NYC Racial Justice Commission
Eradicating Education Inequity Panel
July 23, 2021
View online

APPEARANCES:
• Jennifer Jones Austin, Chair
• Henry Garrido, Vice Chair
• Ana Bermudez, Esq
• Lurie Daniel Favors, Esq.
• Darrick Hamilton
• Reverend Fred Davie
• Chris Kui
• Melanie Ash
• Jo-Ann Yoo
• Anusha Venkataraman
• Phil Thompson
• K. Bain
• Yesenia Mata
• Una Clarke
• Reverend Herbert Daughtry
• Hazel Dukes
• Reverend John L. Scott
• Chirlane McCray
• Mayor Bill de Blasio
• Deacon Maurice Reid
• Kapil Longani
• Darrick Hamilton

Jennifer Jones Justin (JJA): 00:00
Everybody knows Henry Garrido and I'm sure everybody knows Commissioner Bermudez as well. We also have been joined by leadership and staff. Good morning Chancellor Porter, good to see you.

Meisha Porter (MP): 0:17
Good morning, good morning. Hey, good morning. And Henry Garrido in person -- Morning chancellor, morning.

JJA 00:27
We just brought everybody together just so we could just say hi and check in right -- This is my workbook, not the case at all, so, as but, as I'm just you know, welcoming you all into the space, I'm appreciating that others are joining us as well. Commission members Henry Garrido, Ana Bermudez, and Philip Thompson who also serves as Deputy Mayor from the City of New York have joined us, and then leadership and staff at the epic mission themselves, are here. Specifically our Executive Director, Anusha Venkataraman, and our General Counsel, Melanie Ash, and I also see a person who was here before probably any one of us was here -- Our leader and Director of Policy, Jimmy Pan, and so it's good to welcome all into space. And as we begin, I just want to, you know, make you aware that others may be joining, other Commission Members and other staff persons and even other persons who are scheduled to present today. I want to welcome you all to our second panel of "Transforming Foundations," which is a series of virtual panel discussions being hosted by the Racial Justice Commission with Guest Practitioners and Thought Leaders to talk with us about what is necessary to disrupt systemic racism and make racial equity in areas such as health, education, housing, and economic justice, you know, a real reality here in New York City. Each week, Commissioners are engaging with Thought Leaders to gain and to better understand ideas for transforming the city's foundational laws to embody racial justice and fairness -- As I just went through, I shared with you some of the Commissioners who are here with us this morning, but there are several others -- Commission Member K. Bain, Commission Member Lurie Daniel Favors, let's see, the list goes on and on -- And just need to see it for me, but let's see who else, who am I forgetting guys -- Fred Davie, help me guys, hey Bain, I'm gonna get in trouble, Jo-Ann Yoo and Chris Kui, they all help from the City of New York all about -- Each borough is represented in many different disciplines, represented all persons who are seeking the work of equity and justice from different vantage points, and we are very fortunate to have them. And then our staff is also very much steeped in this work and and yet we're all, you know, professing you know, that we are, we know some things but we don't know everything and we need to learn from people who are experts in certain disciplines in certain areas so that we, at the end of this process, can put forth the best report with recommendations for bringing an end to structural racism here in New York City. I want to say just a word or two about this Commission so you really get an understanding of what we're doing. The Commission's work is centered on structural racism -- What I mean by that is the looking at the Charter of the City of New York, which is the Constitution, and looking at how it's structured to help birth and perpetuate permanently it seems, structures of racism that then get carried out in institutions and policies and practices. Our aim is to essentially identify, examine and then uproot those laws that work to perpetuate inequity and to replace them, or to add to the Charter -- Laws that will essentially bring about greater equity through greater power sharing, ensuring greater access and really enabling opportunity for all to live in this city and take full advantage of whatever is available to ensure equity for everybody. And so we are looking to individuals like yourselves to both help us pinpoint what are the problems, the inequities where you see them, to help us think about you know, policy yes, but then how policy ties in to structural underpinnings that hold up racism

and what we all should be doing about it. We're inviting you to give us your perspectives, to share your experiences, to tell the stories that need to be told to help us understand these issues as this weekend. And what I can assure you is that your input is really going to help inform the recommendations that ultimately, as part of the Charter Commission's work, are essentially transformed into proposals, ballot proposals, to be presented to the voting public here in New York City in November of 2022. What I want everybody to appreciate is that the way this is going to work is each panelist will present and share their you know, whatever it is you want to bring forward -- Again, your experience the knowledge informed by experience, your ideas, your thoughts, your proposals, just you know, whatever you think is important and relevant for us as a Commission. You will present, each panel has three participants, each panel will present and then we'll have a half an hour of dialogue, Commissioners with panelists. This is not a forum where the Commissioners are going to debate one with another what you put forward, but rather, it's a session we're engaged, where we're engaging directly with you, so it's distinguished from a formal public meeting in that way in that Commissioners are not debating and talking one with another, but with you. And we're inviting you all, the public and panelists, to listen to upcoming meetings with the Subject Matter Experts and Thought Leaders, as well as the public meetings themselves, where the Commissioners debate what we've heard. So I'm gonna jump right into the first panel, and the first panel is comprised of three panelists whose work I just admire and appreciate greatly. Coming at the work from a similar yet different vantage point, the first is our Chancellor, Meisha Porter. She's the first black woman to lead the NYC Department of Education, and some might think, well you know, why is that relevant and significant -- It is very relevant and significant, and we're glad to have her here. David C. Banks is the President and CEO of Eagle Academy Foundation and he's the Founding Principal of Eagle Academy for young men, for a school in a network of innovative all boys public schools, public schools in New York City. And the third person who will be on this panel is James Kimball, the Executive Director of the Research at Mines, the New York City schools, and Research Professor at New York University -- He's particularly well known for his work examining high school reform efforts, assessing performance trends in New York City's educational landscape and designing rigorous impact evaluations. We will begin with Chancellor Porter, good morning.

MP: 08:20
Good morning and thank you. It is absolutely an honor and a privilege to be here and I'm so excited to serve as the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, the largest public school system in the nation. I'm so honored to be able to share my thoughts and engage in discussion with this esteemed panel of members of the New York City Racial Justice Commission and the other panelists whose work I know well. David Banks, who was my principal and the founder of our school, Lebron School for Government Justice, and James O'Neal, who did so much work to really support the curriculum in our school. So it's just truly an honor to be in this space -- the charge of the Racial Justice Commission could not be more important for our public schools. 85% of our students identify as Black, Latinx, Asian, or otherwise non-white. This is why we work every single day to combat and unravel generations

of entrenched racism as it manifests in our education system. As you know in New York City, everything is connected -- Racist policies and history in housing for example, creates a lasting effect on schools in equitable education. Then it creates an unequal job market and enormous gaps in economic mobility. So while an education policy proposal alone cannot solve every problem the school faces, I'm pleased to share a few ideas today that from my 20 plus years working in our schools, attending our schools, and as a parent in our schools, can make a difference. We need to start before students set foot in their schools with admissions. The reality is segregation exists and we cannot shy away from looking at the inequities around admissions processes and push forward for ways we can create opportunities and access for all students. We're doing this now -- Middle schools have suspended screenings for all students for the coming year, so no student has had to do an interview, an essay, or hit an academic threshold to get into a school. High school principals have been given choice and flexibility to do the same thing. This is because those kinds of screening tools often penalize students who have already suffered from a lack of opportunity. We must continue to do the work that we need to do as a city on acknowledging the inequities in our gifted and talented programs so that we ensure all students have access to programming, high level academic, and enriching programming that meets them where they are. Excuse me, one second, sorry. We also need a curriculum for and by New York City educators because once our students are in our schools, if we're serious about racial justice, we need to look at what our children are learning and how it does and does not reflect who they are. We need a curriculum for and by New York City students because students are more engaged when they see themselves, their identities, their experiences in lessons and materials. And for a very long time, that has simply not been true for many of our children, that's why we're developing a new universal mosaic curriculum, which takes its name from our Mayor David Dinkins, the gorgeous mosaic to address that schools will see new books this fall, new English language arts and math curriculum down the road. So now we're at the point of asking, how are these culturally responsive materials being taught? We need educators who are trained and prepared, we need educators who have the beliefs and mindsets to know and appreciate who our students are, who recognize the bias-based beliefs we all bring, so we can interrupt them and have a culturally responsive curriculum taught by culturally responsive educators, led by leaders in culturally responsive schools. I had a gym teacher when I was a principal who would always say, "you can't just throw out the ball, you have to give students the tools needed to effectively play the game," that is why continuing to develop the hearts and minds of educators through our implicit bias and other trainings will continue into the next school year. Finally, I want to talk about money. There are no books or teachers or training without funding, and I'm excited that New York City already has a funding formula that helps address historic under investment by directing more resources to schools with higher need, schools that serve mostly students of color. For the first time, we are receiving the resources we need to fund every school at 100 of their Fair Student Funding amount for the coming year, and we will and must continue to do more to develop equitable funding patterns that acknowledge the complexities of the various communities we serve. We have a responsibility to ensure every school in every community is well resourced to provide students with not only the education they deserve, but also, are entitled to each school is home to students who are carrying with them a history and legacy of generations before, and

for our students of color, we have to do more to help them shoulder that weight. In other words, without equitable funding, structures that acknowledge the complexities of varying communities we will never achieve true justice in our schools. We've recently received stimulus funding via the federal government's American Rescue Plan and are expanding on a tailored approach with this funding to further support these schools. We look forward to seeing the outcome of this new approach and how we might learn and build on it in the future. You know, making the doe an actively anti-racist organization is work that has no wind -- It's work that has no end in this city and it requires that in this moment, that not only we think about our schools but as we think about how we come together as education and other agencies across the system, because our schools are microcosms of our communities and as long as we commit as a city to using every tool we have, including and most importantly, the powers of this Commission, I know we will continue to make amazing progress. Thank you so much.

Anusha Venkataraman (AV): 14:37
Jennifer, you're muted -- yeah.

JJA: 14:41
I thought you all were good at reading lips, forgive me. I thank our Chancellor and just reminded us that I have several questions. I'm sure several Commission Members do as well, but we're going to hold them until we've heard from the other panelists. Mr. Banks.

David C. Banks: 14:59
Good morning Jennifer and good morning to all the Commissioners and to the other panelists who are presenting today. Thank you all for taking the time and thank you for inviting me to participate in this very important process. I join you today as a product of the New York City public school system from kindergarten through 12th grade, and over the past 30 years, I've raised four children, I've been a teacher, an assistant principal, a principal over the course of 11 years, and an educational non-profit leader. So allow me to offer my perspective on how structural racism in the public school system prevents black children from knowing who they are, rendering them powerless and ultimately fosters the inability or lack of desire to even participate in our democracy. We must make education more relevant to encourage our students to become active citizens in our democracy. Prior to 2020, voter turnout in recent presidential elections has been low, around 58%, New York State ranks 41st in voter turnout in the nation. In the 2013 and 2017 general election for Mayor, only 24% of eligible voters even voted in general. Turnout within black and brown communities is consistently lower than turnout among white voters -- These patterns of voter turnout registration can be attributed to barriers for participation and a lack of programming designed to get students and young people invested in the civic process early on in their lives. Studies show that voting is a habit-forming activity and in order to encourage a lifelong habit of voting and civic engagement among younger voters, it is important to introduce prospective voters to the process as early as

possible through pre-registration initiatives and voting centered lesson plans. Students should and deserve to be taught political theory, political process, and the concepts of civic engagement -- Research shows that students disconnect when school is boring and when their curriculum doesn't tap into their real-life interests. It's critical that we make lessons engaging, relevant, and representative of the specific issues students are facing in their own communities. Teachers should be trained and expected to leverage the surrounding community and beyond as an extension of the classroom in order to create an environment where students are meaningfully engaged, intellectually challenged, and action-oriented. Too many of our students are disengaged from the political and civic process and they're unaware of their ability to create lasting change for their communities. By addressing real-world problems in the classroom, we will develop our students into engaged citizens who participate in the governance of their communities. One of the systemic barriers of greater voter participation is that far too many of our young people have no idea that they stand on the shoulders of people who have fought bled and died for them to participate in the democratic process, that is why it is essential that all of our students are taught African-American history as part of American history. It's critical that teachers show that people of African descent have contributed more than forced free labor to this nation. Students deserve opportunities to examine Black literature, art, innovations, and customs that have helped shape the culture of the United States, and the world teaching Black history helps all students to see how their stories, their histories, and their cultures are shaped and informed by global influences. Allow me to read an excerpt from the New York State Board of Regent's framework on diversity, equity, and inclusion in New York Schools, a call to action which was published in April of this year. It's a process that I was a part of, it's called "The Danger of a Single Story," Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi warned of the dangers inherent in telling a story from only one perspective -- She explained that the single story creates stereotypes and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story. When one story becomes the only story, it becomes the definitive story but when that happens in school, it cheats students of the opportunity to learn the entirety of the nation's history and it deprives many of them the chance to see themselves as part of the American story. We must tell the stories of all those who have contributed to the development of this country and all those who continue to make it diverse and as a beautiful tapestry as it is today. Those who are indigenous to the land, those who are taken from the African homes, their African homes, and brought to America's shores, and chains those who journeyed here as part of the great European migration of the 19th and 20th centuries, those who traveled from Asia and India, the Caribbean, Puerto Rico, Mexico Central, and South America, and those who today seek refuge from poverty, violence, and tyranny. The founding ideals are democracy, rather, the nation's leaders laid the groundwork that established America as a democratic republic -- The founding ideals are democracy, rights, liberty, opportunity, and equality; however, our history courses often fail to underscore our nation's long, often turbulent struggle between the ideals of freedom and equality, and more recently, voting rights. All students deserve to learn about America's entire unvarnished history even when that complete story casts an unflattering light on historical figures who have long been revered. Schools must create opportunities for all students to learn from multiple perspectives that are just as

important and valid as the narrow point of view from which history and other content areas have traditionally been taught. We must always be vigilant to guard against the danger of a single story. Now the real canary in the mind for all of this has been Black boys, and for the past 15 years I've dedicated my life's work to the work of the Eagle Academies and Eagle Foundation. The Eagle Academies were created as the brain trust of the byproduct rather of the 100 black men. I've been a long-time member of the organization and we created it because we were looking at the data which showed that at the time in 2004, when we opened outdoors, the graduation rate for Black boys was 32% in New York City public school system, and Columbia University had put out a report that said that 75% of our state's prison population were coming from seven neighborhoods in New York City -- That was the impetus for us creating these schools in the first place. They're traditional public schools, we have one in every neighborhood now in New York, but here's the challenge -- About 80% of public-school teachers are women and the same percentage of white. Most of these teachers have never received a day of training on what it means to work with black and brown boys, so it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy not because our teachers have ill intent, but because they haven't faced any realities of teaching black and brown young men. In New York City Schools, currently less than 8% of the teachers are men of color and that's less than 2% nationally. Boys of color in particular face unique challenges and there's a unique energy that they bring to their learning. To properly educate boys of color, we must institute culturally relevant training for educators at the Eagle Academy Schools -- Faculty take part in specialized teacher trainings and students partake in daily town halls and expanded day programming that creates a foundational culture which recognizes their trauma as young men and works to make students feel seen and validated. Finally, I want to ask the Commission to require, number one, requires structured curriculum for grades K through 12 that ensures students are actively engaged in civic experiences so that they understand why the democratic process is essential to their lives. Two, to implement a mandated African American history curriculum K-12. And three, to ensure that every teacher in New York City be mandated to receive a series of culturally relevant training that meets the needs of all students and specifically, trained in best practices for educating boys of color -- Not as a rhetorical exercise, but as part of the teaching requirement. I thank you for this opportunity to present to the Commission.

JJA: 24:40
Thank you, thank you Mr. Banks. I just want to quickly share that we have a few other Commission Members that have joined us -- Commission Member Darrick Hamilton and Commission Member Fred Davie. We will now hear from our third panelist, Dr. James Kimball.

James Kimball (JK): 25:05
Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Commission. I serve as the Executive Director of the Research Alliance for New York City schools. Based at New York University, the Research Alliance was established in 2008 as an independent and non-partisan partnership between researchers, policy makers, practitioners, and other stakeholders who

support public education in New York City. Our mission is to conduct rigorous studies on topics that matter to the city's public schools -- We strive to advance equity and excellence in education by providing non-partisan evidence about policies and practices that promote students' development and academic success. I'd like to take a few minutes today to set some context for the role of education in promoting racial justice and equity and to suggest a framework for enhancing those efforts, including four potential modifications to the city charter.

So let me start by noting that when we consider the role that public schools might play in addressing the effects of racism and achieving the goals of racial justice, it's important to take stock of how schools have functioned historically in New York City and across the United States. Decades of research provide compelling evidence that generally speaking, public schools have reproduced, reinforced, and even exacerbated rather than narrowed disparities associated with race, ethnicity, home language, poverty, and other factors that accompany students to schools. By most estimates, disparities that can be measured at age four when children are about to begin Pre-K, map directly onto similar and even larger disparities 10 years later when they're getting ready to enter high school. These disparities typically persist throughout the life cycle and across generations. Irrespective of the schools we attend, further increases and decreases in school inputs like teacher salaries, technology, and curricula account for relatively little of the disparities in educational outcomes. We value outcomes like social and emotional skills, word and number recognition, and other school readiness indicators for young children and later outcomes such as reading and math proficiency and preparations for college and careers. Now, I mentioned this evidence to emphasize the fundamental necessity of reforming larger systems and structures that perpetuate racial and economic inequality if we hope to eliminate education disparities -- The impact of racism and poverty on student schooling is well documented. Indeed, researchers have identified income support for parents as among the most effective ways to improve students' educational outcomes. International comparisons provide strong evidence that countries that invest heavily in social services including universal health insurance, universal preschool, paid parental leave, and other supports are much better than the United States in facilitating early child development that is fundamental to later academic success. Our own work in New York City has highlighted the barriers created by homelessness in particular, and how aggressive policing in students' neighborhoods have negatively affected academic achievement. Decades of housing discrimination and financing mechanisms based on property taxes have resulted in substantial inequities in school funding, particularly when the state and city fall short in their Fair Student Funding formulas. With all of that said however, New York City could be unusually well positioned to tackle these kinds of cross-cutting inequalities. Mayoral control makes it possible at least to link education reform to reforms and other systems and to assess how those policies and practices throughout city government either undermine or support young people's development and academic success, and we believe that our work at the Research Alliance and across the city points to a number of important principles that could inform these efforts. Now I want to suggest, I don't want to suggest in any way that the education systems and the New York City Department of Education are absolved from responsibility from promoting racial justice and equity, nor that they're

powerless to make an impact despite prevailing evidence. So when turning to the school system, I'd like to propose a framework that might guide city officials to work together with educators, researchers, and community organizations across the city to improve educational equity and particularly those that stem from systemic and structural racism, this framework leverages important insight from prior research to propose policy initiatives in three broad areas. First, it'll be important to set an evidence-informed foundation for structural and systemic responses to racial injustice and inequality. In short, it's important to measure, publish, and hold ourselves accountable for what we seek to change. Second, it's important to reframe the equity agenda in my view by investing more in the communities and schools that have been most victimized by racism and structural inequality. In short, directing discretionary resources toward places with the highest level of need and using those resources to uplift and support local assets. And then thirdly, it's important to require that we rigorously build evidence about the use and impact of discretionary resources aimed at enhancing opportunities and outcomes for our most vulnerable students. So I'd like to step back for a moment and provide some clarifications and motivation for this three-part framework and to suggest four ways that this could be reinforced by changes to the city charter. Let me focus first on setting an evidence-informed foundation. In other words, measuring what we seek to change over the last 20 years -- Policies at the federal, state, and local level, beginning with no child left behind, and following up with the state and city initiatives aimed at accountability have focused on student outcomes, almost exclusively, predominantly achievement test scores and graduation rates. In fact, the City Charter only requires annual reports on such indicators with no requirement for reporting disparities by race or other factors -- No information about crucial dimensions of students, other educational experiences, and most importantly, little insight about the factors that may be driving outcome disparities across the city. New York City should move beyond simply tracking progress against pre-specified standards of performance and should develop a robust system of measuring equity in education. So I would propose that the City Charter should require that the City Council, the Mayor, and the Department of Education build a system of educational equity indicators, and produce an annual report on the state of educational equity in New York City. This information should be clear and accessible to the public as part of a larger effort to orient the city schools around equity and racial justice goals. The structure and content of such a system was spelled out recently by a National Academy of Science panel on educational equity indicators -- That system should include among other things, indicators of educational opportunities and resources, not just outcomes, measures of school segregation measures of disproportionality, and disciplinary actions and disability classifications and access to accelerated learning and enrichment opportunities. It should include measures of social and emotional learning, it should include measures of access to authentic and culturally responsive and inclusive education. The second piece of the framework involves reframing the equity agenda or calculus. In other words, aligning resources with needs rather than spreading things out equally. Typically, efforts that ensure equality to reflect the goal of evenly distributing resources, opportunities, and even outcomes across a population irrespective of individual assets or needs, aspirations, toward equity on the other hand, take account of individual and group assets and needs with the central goal of ensuring that everyone reaches their full potential equity, means the distribution of certain goods and

services, purpose, is purposefully unequal. For example, the most underserved students may receive more of a certain resource often to account for their different starting points and for the systemic and structural biases that prevent them from reaching their potential; so therefore, the City Council should demand that the Mayor and City Council use the best available evidence to implement policies that disproportionately allocate discretionary resources and opportunities to schools and communities with the highest level of need. This would include for example, requiring that Fair Student Funding be prioritized first and foremost for the highest needs schools. Even if that leaves gaps for others, it should include meaningfully integrating schools by investing in their internal dynamics and practices rather than just changing their demographics. It should include improving service, coordination, strengthening community partners to meet a wider range of student needs and provide a richer array of opportunities inside and outside of schools. Fourth, to facilitate and reinforce this realignment of the equity calculus, the City Charter should create an Office of Educational Equity of Monitoring and Enforcement, whose leadership would be appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council, but whose six-year term would not coincide with either. Such an office would be granted autonomy to coordinate efforts across agencies and to direct disproportionate investments in communities that have experienced the largest effects of structural and systemic racism and inequity, and have the least power and capacity to respond. Finally, let me turn to the domain of building for the long term; in other words, leveraging innovation and learning to improve equity. I'm sure that all the priorities by this Commission will benefit from what I would call strategic evidence building. In many cases, we have strong intuition about promising approaches or important areas of focus, yet we have little evidence about the keys to successfully implementing a particular policy or initiative. This is particularly true when we attempt bold and creative reforms that arise from community initiatives and are funded by precious supplemental resources that are likely to be time limited. The evolving responses to the pandemic for example, providing an ideal case in point on this issue, with hundreds of millions of dollars currently on the table -- The city now faces, in my view, a two-fold opportunity. First, the city can engage the communities most affected by COVID to play a central role in crafting responses that capitalize on their assets and address their needs. Secondly, the city and its communities have an opportunity to learn from this unprecedented investment and inform decisions about what is worth keeping and what should be discarded when these resources disappear. Therefore, to maximize the benefits of opportunities like this, the City Charter should grant waivers for communities, schools, or groups of schools that may need temporary relief from regulations in order to plan, implement, and improve innovative and bold initiatives aimed at promoting racial justice and equity and education. Now, accompanying these waivers would be a requirement that the public and private expenditures on innovative and potentially transformative initiatives be subject to rigorous research on their use and impact. Similar provisions have been enacted at the federal level -- For example, through things like the 1115 waivers in the Social Security Act and flex waivers in the elementary and secondary act and evaluation requirements embedded in the Investing and Innovation Fund as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. In short, because the strategies that prioritize racial justice and equity are largely uncharted territory, flexibility and evidence will be vital to informing continuous improvement efforts and helping to make future

decisions about what to continue or scale up, what to modify and what to reject.So in summary, my four recommendations for the City Charter include requiring an annual equity indicators report requiring the allocation of any discretionary resources be based on evidence of assets and needs rather than equal distribution formula, creating an Office of Educational Equity of Monitoring and Accountability and Enforcement, and providing for regulation waivers to promote community driven innovation and rigorous evidence for the future.

JJA: 37:17
Thank you, thank you, all three of you. As I shared, when Chancellor Porter completed her remarks, I had many questions. I have questions for Mr. Banks and for you, Dr. Kimball, but I first want to begin with our Commission Members. The first Commission Member whose hand is raised is Vice Chair Garrido.

Henry A. Garrido (HAG): 37:41
Good morning Mrs. Chair, good morning everyone -- Madam Chair, I should say. Thank you all for your testimony you addressed this morning. I have two questions -- The first one is for the Chancellor. Good morning and thank you for what you've done on behalf of the New York City schools. One of the main focuses of the Commission has been about addressing institutional racist policies. That aim of creating on inquiry application of the same principles, I think Mr. Kimball referred to some of those. One of those to me, has been the issue of the first student funding formula, which was established with much fanfare in 2007; the idea that schools of the greatest needs would have the greatest resources, or at least try to align the sources. But you know, in spite of the press conferences and all that stuff right, this is a first year that just received that funding over 600 million. Why do you think, well, let me let me refrain it, let me rephrase -- How do you think I want to make this possible, that this charter can look at funding for education in a way that doesn't tie the hands of those educators like yourself, but at the same time, aim of changing the institutional funding inequities which has existed in the city? So that's Part A of the question, and Part B has been referred more to federal funding right -- Title One is the biggest measurement of poverty that has occurred; the New York City schools receive about 15% of funding from the feds, but yet, we have the one issue, which is Title One of being based on districts where district level of poverty are measured differently than others. Staten Island for instance, has a 35% poverty level threshold, which means they get more funding than, for example, a kid up in South Bronx. Again, another system. They're two different questions but both aim of trying to get the Charter to address the inequities but at the same time not, so if you could address that please.

MP: 40:13
Thank you, sure, thank you, and it's so good to see you. So I would say, I think my response would address both questions and you know, first of all, Fair Student Funding in many of those places has been at a 100% prior to this investment right, and so this investment made ensured that all schools were at 100% Fair Student Funding. But what we know, is that there are communities that have greater needs than others and you know, Mr. Kimball talked about it as

well -- We need to ensure that we are directing direct discretionary funds based on need, based on you know, in for rockaway if a school, that it loses enrollment, then they're going to lose resources. That should not happen. Our responsibility is to make sure that every school has what they need to provide students access to the arts, to an engaging and enriching curriculum that James and David both talked about, that the teachers are trained and prepared to show up for students in the ways that they deserve, and so I, we need to look at a new way and a new structure for how we fund schools right? The Fair Student Funding brought us to a place you know, the American Recovery Act has brought us to a place, the American Recovery Act is not going to be with us forever, and so we need to look at the resources that we have within this city. To say what is our most prized possession in New York, it has to be our children, and our children are educated in our schools. And if we value them all equally, if we truly value them all equally, then we will fund their schools equitably -- And that means looking at the South Bronx, looking at South Jamaica, looking at the neighborhoods that David has looked at and ensured that there's a school for black and brown boys in each and every one of those neighborhoods to meet them and meet their needs. That's what we need to do, we need to ensure that we're looking at funding patterns based on, need based on community, based on the things that are happening in particular neighborhoods you know. This moment isn't about what schools will do alone, it's about the way the city is prepared to step up for children.

JJA: 42:24
If I just quickly may, Vice Chair, I just want to jump in here real quickly -- I'm not necessarily looking for an answer in this moment, but I am curious to learn from the Commission Members, your thoughts about the inequitable inequity in resources that are brought in from, by families, into schools that change the game, you know. Commun schools where parents are investing sometimes one million dollars plus in one year through PTA funds in educational resources, adding paraprofessionals to the classroom, Mandarin after school, being being taught in after school robotics, things of that nature that we know aren't getting caught, but are contributing to the the educational experiences of children and furthering the inequity. We, this in my mind, we have to figure out how we address that as well, and so I just would appreciate again, if we have time at the end of the discussion, we can get to it, or if you can send us your thoughts about that -- I'm sorry --

HAG: 43:32
Thank you, Madam Chair. Just in my next question and last one has the, I think it's directed more -- And Mr. Davis, Mr. Banks, regarding curriculum on something he mentioned, we have seen in Texas where the Senate has moved to remove some curriculum-based, you know, ideas from the school system that not only remove references to the KKK, but also have, also removed references to Dr. King, and says that Chavez and others as a way of it, and I think it's a way of a powerful weapon that we have not explored. Have you seen the New York City school system an opportunity to do the opposite, which is for us to begin to move to a curriculum that is more racially sensitive, in addition to what you suggest to be the training for the New York

City school teachers? And if you have, what are some of those things that we could, the Commission should consider in our deliberations, as far as addressing the inequities that exist in the system? Thank you.

DCB: 44:41
Yeah, I think -- And thank you for the question. There are cities across the nation now who are leaning in with respect to the redevelopment of curriculum. That speaks to telling the truth about American history and we ought to not get caught up in a diversion or in these issues around critical race theory, which I see as a diversion in many respects. We should be intentional around making sure that all of our children are exposed to the history of our city and of our nation, and that we tell the unwanted truth. When we don't tell the full story, it impacts everybody black, brown, white, asian -- everybody. We ought to tell the story of how this nation was built. It's not meant to put anybody on a guilt trip, it is meant to tell the truth, because you cannot move forward in building a strong city and a strong nation if all of our children are not exposed to the real history that has brought them to where they are. You know the old saying right, if you don't know where you come from, you won't know where you're going. So many of our children have no idea about the history of America, and I just think that that is critical.
I think we have a great opportunity here. I have been working with a group of educators together with legislators in the City Council. The City Council has just put into its budget at 10 million dollars for the creation of a Commission to develop a Black studies curriculum K-12 for New York City, so it's the first time that that has happened. I seek to figure out, how does the, how can this Commission institutionalize efforts like that, and I think that's when it goes to what what Dr. Kimball has said, you know, around creating an office right, and developing this whole notion of equity indicators that are very intentional and not not just happenstance, and that, what we have dealt with up until now has just been happenstance depending upon who the Mayor is, who the Chancellor is, you know. How people are feeling on a given day, what may roll out, is an announced initiative today and doesn't happen tomorrow, but institutionalizing that so that we are not moving like Texas and other states, which are working overtime to ensure that the truth is not told because that is ultimately about how you preserve white supremacy, that's why those efforts are essentially in place to maintain the status quo. We have to do better by the children and the families in the communities of New York City, to build a bigger, bolder nation, but it has to be built on solid ground, and you can't have solid ground without all of our young people understanding the truth. When when black and brown children do not see themselves represented in the curriculum, when they see that, when they have no idea about the fact that their forefathers and foremost built this this country, when they have no idea of that, it renders them more powerless over time and, when other children don't recognize that, it creates this perverted sense of importance, that somehow you are more important than others because you know, if we weren't, I guess we would have heard about -- Black folks must not have contributed much to America because we never heard a thing K through 12 other than a week on Martin Luther King and a civil rights movement, that's about it. That's as good as it gets in our school system today, and and when that happens, everybody loses.

HAG: 48:39
Thank you.

JJA: 48:40
Commissioner Bermudez

Ana Bermudez (AB): 48:47
On mute. Thank you everybody, this has been an amazing set of presentations -- I could talk about these issues for days, but I won't. Chancellor I'm sorry we haven't met yet since our worlds you know, intersect so much and just as a way of background, back in 2004 I co-ran a school you know, within the doe as part -- Yeah, I was the Co-Director from ACBL for young people coming out of detention and placement and all that stuff. So we were working with a lot of the forgotten children of the education system. Having said that, Chancellor, I just want to ask you before coming up with an actual plan, or you know, within this Commission, what's your view of the whole -- Frankly, I've put it very starkly, the over policing of children in schools through a system of, quote on quote, school safety, that is not grounded in social con and transformational relations in within the school, as opposed to this entity that is coming in a uniform right? So I just wanted to get your thoughts around that. I know you have a lot of things on your plate and this may not have been yet on your agenda items, and then anybody else who wants to comment, you know, on that as well.

MP: 50:23
Absolutely, thank you. I look forward to meeting you. You know, I would say that we need to and we've done a lot of work around engaging and creating more restorative environments in our schools. We have to, when I talked about training, that has to be inclusive, it has to be inclusive by our school safety agents. We have to change the way we view school safety and really look at it from the perspective of an asset-based place as opposed to a deficit based place right? Like we put metal detectors, we put more agents, more police officers in certain communities, without addressing that community in a very real and deep way, you know. What is happening outside the building, how can we support schools from that space but also, how can we train and develop our agents, wherever they sit, whether they sit at the NYPD or they sit at the New York City Department of Education, to be more culturally responsive, more restorative. I've had the honor and privilege of being a principal, you know, David has had that same honor, we actually work together. We had an amazing school safety team who worked closely with us, they were our partners, they took care of our babies with us, and so we didn't have this. It wasn't allowed to police students in LGJ, and I know they weren't allowed to police

students in that way in Eagle Academy, and so you have to develop deep partnerships between school leaders, between school safety, and wherever they sit, those structures that train and develop the agents. One, we need to change the language, right? You know, we can think very differently about how, what we call that role. There's some states that call them peace officers or you know, restorative agents, and so let's change the language, change the experience, change the way we train agents, and also be, and be intentional about the types of agents that you put in certain school communities, right? I think what tends to happen is you put more aggressive agents in schools where they are, you know, they are high crime areas right? But that is not necessarily the solution to the root cause of the problem right? The solution is in having relationships with students, the solution is in having relationships with community members, the solution is in having people who know how to develop those relationships. When we moved Law and Government from our original building at Health Opportunities to 163rd Street and Sheridan Avenue, I remember, David probably remembers this too, one of our students, Daniel, said that is blood neighborhood, you all have to be very careful, but what we did was we made sure our building was open. It was a part of the community, students can come in on the weekends and play basketball. Our building was protected, there was never graffiti, we never had vandalism. It felt a part of the community, and so the the school is an extension of the community that agents in a building need to be reflective of and they often are, but also, you know, uniquely prepared to build bridges and relationships across the community and again, wherever they sit, the training has to be different, and how we expect them to show up in service of students and not against students.

JJA: 55:51
Thank you. Commission Member Hamilton.

Darrick Hamilton (DH): 53:58
Well, let me lead with gratitude, I thought all the presentations were very informative and I think spot on as to what we need to do to reform our school system to make it more equitable, inclusive, and engaging. So I want to lead with a query around access to talented and gifted magnet schools like Stuyvesan, t where if we look at the demographic makeup of those, they're not reflective of our city and we know that that access offers a great deal of privilege, and a theme that we've been having at least in the previous meeting as a Commission, is this notion of seemingly race neutral information as a criteria for access. So you know, we have a criteria for admissions into Stuyvesant that has disparate racial effects. Any advice or concerns about what we should do about, about just, that the magnet schools and then you know, a few other points I want to make and then then I'll be quiet, and that is, I'm going to push back on the narrative around family structure and family resources as it relates to educational access and achievement. There was the Harlem Children's Zone evaluation project by Dobby and Friar, which demonstrated that all the useful outcomes that came about from the Harlem Children's Zones they found were attributable to school at school activities and not family, not family resource, so obviously, we should be concerned as a Commission about equity as it relates to

family resource, period. But are we in any way doing any this justice when we put the onus at all on families and not entirely take the responsibility up as a municipality of what we can do and what we should be doing as it relates to forging the equity as a, in education, is that even a cop-out at all? Can, what should we be focused only on, what we can do in that dimension of the work, and of course the other dimensions of the city, this should be focused on family equity.

JJA: 56:09
Commissioner, before you go on, I just want to clarify for both my edification and possibly for the panelists when you're speaking of the family resources pieces, are you referring to, are you speaking to what family members are considered not to have, are you speaking to the point that I was raising, I just want clarification so that I can follow along.

DH: 56:31
In the dimension of education equity, it is my reading of the literature that there's things that municipalities can do strictly as it relates to curricular reform, to forge equity periods. And that I'm concerned about, the political narrative of putting some of the onus on families, and I know that's not the intent of people speaking today, but it very well may be part of other political movements that are not necessarily sharing the values of of equity, and I guess I'm trying to see if there are any reactions to whether in the dimension of education access, should we even be framing it as it relates to family resources at all -- And is there evidence out there to suggest counter that we don't need to and and I believe there is through the Harlem children's own study as one example. The other points I want to make is, it seems like there's unison that curriculum reform with regards to access, equal access to talented and gifted curriculum, that having empathetic and well-trained teachers to make the curriculum culturally relevant is certainly something we should do, so I'm trying to summarize some of my takeaways for, just as edification and the work moving forward and the the last summary that seems to be unison from the testimonies, is a notion around, we need to be, offer clear values of what we mean by equity, what we mean by inclusion, what we mean by engagement, so that they're not used for again, nefarious purposes and that we need the measurement behind it, that we need to measure things that reflect those values with data to reflect those values. And then finally, that we have clear accountability, that there's audits to ensure that we're achieving those values, and that there are some needs, assessments, to ensure that we're using metrics that aren't seemingly race neutral, that have disparate race effects -- So any reactions to those things.

DCB: 58:41
Well, I'll say on a couple of things. First of all, around the issues of responsibilities of municipalities -- To support schools and the ability of schools and almost schools, only we properly fund them and give them what they need as it relates to the home, children's own example -- We cannot separate any of the efforts that we demonstrate in schools from the

larger notion around poverty and how poverty actually impacts all that we do with our students and families. I don't think this should ever be a question of one versus the other, I think we ought to be focused as much as we can on our schools, to be the best that they can be, to give them the equitable resources, for us to try to ensure the success. But issues of poverty are real and they're deep. How families are affected, how their health is affected, income, supports all of those things actually talk, actually connect to how kids even show up in our schools and how much work we have to do as school personnel to unpack a lot of baggage that kids bring, and trauma that they bring as a result of poverty. So we got to do this and that, we have a responsibility as a municipality for the broad scale, as well as just very specific efforts that we make in our schools. In fact, you know it's one of the reasons I have so much respect for Jennifer and the work that she's done in this space, is because you really can't separate it sometimes. The narrative is separated, which I think is part of the problem unless you are aligning as a city, all of your agencies in every way that they connect to families. We're playing around on the margins, and that has often been the problem, the reason why we've not been able to solve a lot of these deep problems because we work on them in silos. They have to work across purposes and have to be aligned with a very strategic vision. I'm sure Meisha would have something to say on, Mrs. Chancellor, but the other part I would just speak to is this specialized high school's notion and argument that has been made. I personally do not believe in the notion of a single test. Just like I spoke earlier about the notion of a single story, all of these issues are complicated and the ability for students to get into a school based on their ability, to just pass one test, is not the way that we should be developing our young people to prepare for advancement in school and for life. Albert Einstein was a notorious poor test taker based upon the structure in the system that we have right now -- Albert Einstein, a genius for the ages, would not get into the Bronx High School of Science, so we think about that and the notion of intelligence, and how we measure it. Intelligence is measured across a vast spectrum and to suggest that there's one exam, I'm not suggesting that there'd not be an exam, but to say that one exam is the only way to get into any school, you don't get into Harvard University just based on one exam. We have to look at a broad range and in fact, just last week in the New York Times, it was a story of, in Massachusetts, they basically, for their specialized high schools, they're moving away from the single exam as the sole criteria.
New York is standing alone essentially now, across the nation, in the space that the only way to get in those schools is the passing of that exam, has nothing to do with how well prepared you are in middle school. Like, if we just make our middle schools better, more black and brown children will have a better chance to get in. That's nothing to do with that exam. Is a standalone exam, has very little to do, even connected to what your middle school experience is. Even across some of our better middle schools in New York City, it has its own purposes. I think New York City has an obligation to control the admissions policy for the schools that it controls. New York City does not control admissions policy for the big three -- Stuyvesant Brooklyn Tech and Science, but it does control, for five or six others, and I think we want to take another look at that that has been presented to the Mayor in the past. His position has been, I think they should all maintain the same approach. I don't agree with that, I know he can't control the other three, but the other five, he has made the argument that we should have a

broader, more comprehensive approach. Well, let's do it for the schools that you control -- That would be my position.

MP: 1:03:56
And I'll just add briefly, because I agree with so much of what David said, you know, first of all, there should not be any school in New York City, it doesn't even demonstrate college and career readiness, that there is a single criteria for admissions. And then on the the school family part, you know, schools were originally created to educate white children, they were not created to educate students of color -- They would not educate, they would not create it for black children, and so we have to answer a different question today, and that is what is our responsibility as a municipality to our communities, to our families in schools, and I think that's the question we need to begin to address in this moment.

JJA: 1:04:40
Very helpful. I see that Dr. Kimball has his hand raised, don't know if you want to add to this at this moment.

James J Kimball (JJK): 1:04:45
Just very quickly, the Harlem Children's Zone actually provides, I think, a very useful example and case for why we think about why we should be thinking about -- Disparities as a systemic and structural problem, and not a problem of individual or family or even community characteristics. The Harlem Children's Zone treated education as a holistic enterprise, and although this the research on the Harlem Children's Zone suggested it was the school component of this that made the largest difference, it was so intimately integrated with its wide range of community assets, and drawing on a wide range of supports for children, for families, and for the community at large that you saw these big effects, a very important lesson from that however, is that, it's the exception, not the rule, that we have places like Harlem Children's Zone making such a difference and having the evidence to support it such that it can be continued, expanded, and improved over time. It's just a rare case that that's so unfortunate that we don't have more evidence and better examples that we can accompany places like the Harlem Children's Zone that really demonstrate the importance of thinking about equity not as an individual family or community characteristic, but as a structural and systemic set of issues that can can be addressed through the mechanisms of schools but not by schools alone.

JJA: 1:06:19
Very helpful point. We're going to talk about this more as part of the Commission meetings, just you know, we should note that Harlem Children's Zone has better than a 400-million-dollar endowment -- That roulette also speaks to and addresses the kind of the financial inequities there are, using their dollars to help address some of the financial hardships that the families

have that contribute to education inequity, so that's just something we have to always keep in mind. Darrick, I know you want to add a point, if you look, you quickly will because we need to move on to the next panel and I know that our Commission Member Thompson wants to get in here real quickly, we do have to move on.

DH: 1:06:59
Yeah, so really quick and I think this is an important point -- The point of the study which I put in the chat was to isolate the effects of the curriculum independent of the community by frankly, looking at students who entered the children's zone from outside of the community and looking at their impacts especially in relation to other children within the community zone that did not get access to the curriculum, and their lack of effect, and why is it important? It's important because where can we put the onus with regards to education reform -- Obviously, we're all concerned with ending poverty of any form, period. And that's the role of the Commission, but again, I want to make sure that there is at least some competing data out there to refute the notion that we have, to have a holistic approach with regards to education reform specifically.

JJA: 1:07:54
Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Phil Thompson, you have the last word.

J Phillip Thompson (JPT): 1:07:59
Well, thank you, all this has been so powerful and uplifting in many ways, to hear so much unanimity on this issue, on this topic, on what we need to do. I just want to say a few things -- Two comments quickly and two quick questions, I don't need an answer now -- The comment I read, college applications for 19 years at MIT, hundreds every year and we moved away from SAT scores, and all of that because it just doesn't predict performance in college, it does not, and at MIT, you're required to take calculus two after calculus one, it's a requirement -- I don't care how smart you were in high school -- That breaks you down, and a lot of kids just weren't, they don't know how to deal with real hardship where you got to confront obstacles and you know, mommy daddy and your you know, privately hired tutor isn't around to like guide you through this, and they literally break down. And then we had a lot of other students who just don't know how to socialize and at MIT, you do a lot of labs where you have to work with other people, that's like foundational, and they just can't work with other people, and so I just want to underscore, I think you know, colleges are moving away from the test, so I really agree, why are we doing that when it's, when it's something where higher ed is moving away from, because it doesn't work. Second comment, I used to work at NYCHA during the Dinkins Administration. We ran 42 alternative high schools for kids who had dropped out of public schools, I'm not saying it was an ideal model but the connection with the schools was really ingrained in NYCHA, and I'm really curious to, I'd love to hear from those of you on the panel, your ideas on how we better integrate NYCHA and public schools, because I think something

was really lost when all that funding got cut out you know, from NYCHA. My two questions are for school safety agents. I believe they're now being trained at the police academy and I don't think they're getting the kind of training that the Chancellor spoke about or that, you know, David Banks spoke about, but I'd love your recommendations on who should do the training and where should that training take place. So that's one, and the second question I had is around K-14, K-16, versus K-12, and are these distinctions like you know, should we even be thinking just K-12 and should there be some requirement around CUNY DOE collaboration or coordination on curriculum and other things? I would just love your thoughts you know, in writing or elsewhere, on how we think about that because we have a huge 500,000 young people in CUNY, most of whom come out of DOE and how can we better coordinate and prepare you know, so it's a more seamless kind of a system, is my question.

JJA: 1:11:31
I'm going to ask that our panels, if they want to respond, please just try to limit your remarks so that we can then move to the next panel and give them their due time.

DCB: 1:11:42
Well I'll just say very quickly on the piece around school safety that we have to reimagine a whole different kind of way in which we train. I remember my friend Dr. Lenora Fulani, was doing a series of trainings with the New York City Police Department, just around better overarching community engagement, and so, the the training of police officers, rather, the school safety, and I used to be a school safety officer before I was a teacher, so I wore the uniform. There needs to be a training that goes beyond what the police department does and in order to engage community and community leaders as part of that overarching training, so I couldn't give you so definitive an answer now -- Can certainly follow up with some thoughts around that.

MP: 1:12:32
And I'll just add very briefly, happy to submit some recommendations in writing, we absolutely should be thinking beyond K-12 -- Disrupting poverty is about what happens after students leave the 12th grade, whether they go to college, whether they engage in careers right after, and so we need to be thinking beyond K-12. I definitely think thinking about deeper partnerships with CUNY, New York City, and fellow students, and I have joked about this. You know, we are the K-16 school system together and we really need to be more, you know, deeply connected. So many of our New York City public schools students leave our school system and go to CUNY, and so they're definitely places where partnerships exist, but how we build a deeper bridge I think, is super important. Lastly, I'll say on the NYCHA piece, I think is really connected to Dr. Kimball's recommendation really around a Commission division that really wraps itself around how do we bring agencies across the city together in service of children and families and schools, and NYCHA you know, is a really important community that

feeds our school system and so, how we engage and to you know, perhaps in a Harlem Children's Zone model in NYCHA schools, in neighborhoods where you know most students live in nature housing, you know, could really be a transformational moment and so again, happy to put some recommendations in writing. A lot there in those questions but really important to you know, moving our school system forward and interrupting racial disparities across our city.

JJA: 1:14:16
Thank you, thank you, Tremendous discussion. We're going to request that your doors remain open to us and that you take our calls because we will be coming back to the well as we unpack the you know, your thoughts and the information provided, the recommendations. I want to thank you all and appreciate you for your time. We're going to move on to the next panel, the next panelists are here with us. They are steward of CUO, the Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director of the Asian American Education Project and President Emeritus of Asian American Advancing Justice -- Mr. Kowh is a nationally recognized leader and expert in race relations, Asian American studies, non-profit organizations, and philanthropies, civil rights and legal services. Jackson Collins is the Executive Director of Prep for Prep and since 1978, Prep for Prep has identified New York City's most promising students of color -- I paused on that, we're going to talk about that, promising students of color and preparing them for success at independent schools throughout the Northeast. James O'Neal is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of Legal Outreach, incorporated an early intervention long-related college preparatory and pipeline to diversity organization established in 1983. Legal Outreach has received diversity awards from the ABA, the NS, the NYSBA, and the NYCBA for its work in building the pipeline to the legal profession. And our fourth panelist is David Kirkland, he's the executive director of NYU Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, and an Associate Professor of English and Urban Education. Dr. Kirkland's transit disciplinary scholarship explores a variety of equity related topics, including school climate and discipline, school integration and choice, and intersections among race, gender, and education. We will begin with Mr. Stewart. What I do want everybody to know, is that we're going to kind of shift the timing so this panel will get its full hour beginning now. Thank you.

Stewart Kwoh (SK): 1:16:36
Thank you Jennifer. It's a pleasure meeting all of you and joining the New York Racial Justice Commission. I want to thank Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson for introducing me to a lot of friends in New York, we've met with the DUI CD, the Department of Youth and Community Development as they're doing their summer program, and then we met Deborah Lotter, and then we have met the Department of Education, so Joe Lynn Nagy, Eunice Lee, Lam Lawson -- We're actually having a session on July 27th for the leaders of the Department of Education to explore our curriculum, so let me just mention two ideas which we think are very important. One, is we were struggling. I am a former President of the LA City Human Relations Commission. I was the President of the Asian Americans Advancing Justice for 35 years, we

became the largest civil rights group for Asian Americans in the country with over 80 staff, and more recently, I've become Co-Director of the Asian American Education Project. What we were confronting this last year is over 6,000 hate crimes and hate incidents against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States. They happen all over the country, including in New York and Los Angeles. The president, the then president, helped to ignite the hate by calling the virus the "china virus," "kung flu," etc. etc. and he didn't back down, he just kept on pushing it so we were trying to figure out what are the solutions, so we have a bunch of short-term solutions like bystander intervention training, dealing with the victims, social workers building alliances between Asian Americans and Pacific Islander groups and Black and Latino groups, Native American groups, but we also saw that we turned to the schools and we were wondering, what do the schools do to combat the stereotypes of their perpetual foreigner, of seeing asians as not Americans but as foreign agents or foreigners. So the kung flu and this and that become part of the narrative of isolating Asian Americans and we were wondering what kind of long-term education are students getting to combat stereotypes like the model minority, otherwise when something happens, you just believe the stereotypes or you believe the accusations, or you believe the denigrated comments. So we looked at the schools and pretty much Asian Americans are invisible in the school system in Los Angeles. Los Angeles County has the most Asian Americans of any county in the country -- New York is very close, but in Los Angeles, there are no Asian American ethnic studies. In fact, even in the survey course, which is with Blacks, Latinx, and Native Americans, the four weeks on Asian Americans has a series of questions but has no lesson plans, so there is, there is nothing for Blacks and Latinos -- There's a bunch of links, but there aren't lesson plans either, so you know, your comment about the 10 million for good Black studies would be very helpful in Los Angeles as well, but so there's no, there's no lesson plans, and the talk about integrating Asian American history into American history is very light. Let me say, we think all three approaches are necessary integration survey courses -- Asian American ethnic studies, but we're proposing to the LA school system probably next week, a series of modifications on their school plan, so I'm taking you through a journey that we're going through right now. It's you know, it's very time sensitive, we're working with about 10 other states activists and leaders in 10 other states. Two weeks ago, Illinois became the first state to actually mandate Asian American ethnic studies and we've been working with Asian Americans Advancing Justice Chicago as they took the lead to bring that into the state. We're working with states like Texas, Georgia, New Jersey, Connecticut, Colorado, and other states that are trying to bring ethnic studies on Asian Americans to either follow Black and Latino studies or combined with African-American and Latino studies -- Just one of the, so what we've developed is 51 lesson plans on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. It came from a book I wrote about 15 years ago called "Untold Civil Rights Stories: Asian Americans Speak Out for Justice" and in that, my wife developed a team of four teachers and they developed 12 lesson plans, then about seven years ago, PBS came to see me to get them help on their documentary that aired in May of 2020 and they asked us to develop the curriculum for that series, so we developed 36 lesson plans at the end of last year on that. Then we developed three new lesson plans on the current wave of Asian hate and I would just say, we hired Stanford to develop a teacher's guide, so the teacher's guide has five themes: racism, civil rights, identity, immigration, and citizenship. So we, if you

look at our website, it's asianamericanedu.org. You could see how we've laid it out, so basically we are now in the process of reaching out to school districts around the country and as I said, the New York Department of Education has a training on July 27th for their leaders, and we hope to get into the New York City schools as soon as the Fall. The last thing I'll say about this particular topic is that we are continually developing new methods and new lesson plans, more lesson plans on Pacific Islanders and we're trying new methods. So we have a project to develop a comic book, a graphic novel for sixth graders on Asian American history where we have a draft, so we're hoping that that will be finished in about three months. We have a Marvel DC writer who's helping us develop the comic book. I would just say that you could have a good policy but then you need about 10 other steps to get the lesson plans in the schools. My favorite story is a woman I just spoke to yesterday, Eugene Hosea Banks, she's a black educator in Inglewood, and I called them last month and they said but we only have 1% asian students, but then she said but because of the Anti-Asian violence, that doesn't matter. I'm going to help you bring it into the schools. So she has already set up trainings for all the teachers in the K through 8 and all the history teachers in the Inglewood system next month in September, so we're very pleased with that kind of response to the curriculum. The first big idea is to help us get the Asian American studies into the schools. We think it will make a long-term difference. Our goal over the next few years is to reach a million students of all backgrounds across the United States. The second idea I have follows on what you had said, our organization, Asian Americans Advancing Justice has been working on educational equity for years -- We fought for affirmative action, we keep on losing on that, but we also fight for educational equity in other ways, so in 2019 and 2016, we fought for senate bill 201050, and we were able to get 250 million for low-income schools so the low-income schools in California are 90% students of color, so in actuality, it's affirmative action with a different name that expired in 2019. Then our staff looked for an author and they found Senator Leyva, and so she introduced this and then just two weeks ago, we were able to get 547 million dollars for the low-income schools, so the low-income schools can apply for funding. The 547 million for students to repeat the a through g, which is the college requirements, or to take completion, to take courses that will prepare them for college readiness for the four-year colleges, so we're -- That's the latest thing we've done to try to get educational equity in the State of California, and I think that other states can consider that, to use the low-income students, that they were really affected by the pandemic, to really push educational equity right now, so let me just stop there.

JJA: 1:28:35
Thank you very much, I appreciate it. Very helpful. The next person to speak is Mr. Collins and we thank him for being with us.

Jackson Collins (JC): 1:28:45
First, I want to thank the Commission for including me and more importantly, Prep for Prep in this important dialogue, and thank you Commissioner for inviting me to the mix. I guess first,

I'll start with, with the promising piece, because you know, it's such a thorny word, and you know, recognizing that Prep is situated in an interesting position -- Vis-a-vis public schools and educational community in New York City at large, yeah. Before I dive into Prep for Prep, I also want to just preface this by saying that I come from a family of public school educators. My grandmother taught elementary school at PS178 for over 30 years. My aunt is a K-8 special education teacher in Brooklyn. My grandmother worked for the district office back when it was at 110 Livingston Street. My mother also worked for her, for the high school suspension hearing office many years ago. I'm also a Prep for Prep student, and you know, somewhere along the way, my mother, who was public school educated, she went to Thomas Jefferson and my father who went to Brooklyn Tech made the decision to have me go through Prep for Prep when I was nominated by Ms. King, my fifth grade public school teacher, at PS308 on Gates Avenue and Bedford Simonson. At Prep, we have currently 700 plus students in secondary school in independent schools in New York City and in the Northeast, we have over 800 students in some of the top colleges and universities around the country. We have 400 or 4,000+ adult alumni out there in the universe. Our second highest profession of our alumni group is education. You know, the one I'd love to highlight is Leslie Bernard Joseph, who runs Coney island prep in Coney island here in Brooklyn. So I do want to name that we do have a deep connection with education. More broadly speaking, of our current students, currently they're going through our preparatory program. 85 public schools are -- sorry, 150 public schools are represented and we partner with over 85 predominantly white independent schools. So from that perspective, we get a chance to see what's happening in both public schools and independent schools or private schools. I'll use independent and private school interchangeably sometimes during this talk with, that you know, what we've seen over the years, is that, or I should say, that Prep is really born out of a response to inequity in education right? Our founder saw that he had a group of students who could do the work but their needs were not being met in their public school. And when you look at our program now, you know, I think parents and families are choosing Prep for Prep in response to what they are getting or not getting in their public schools, and I would also say that our curriculum and our services also respond to meeting students where they are, where they are when they get to our program, and also what they're not seeing in their independent schools. So the notion of, you know, racial literacy training in public schools also carries through in independent schools as well. So some of the things you know, certainly carry through. I would say, largely Prep takes a systems approach to education, so it's not just a formal instruction, but also some of the wraparound services so the mental wellness support, we also do respond to some of the income and means based disparities that students have in their public schools, which is affecting their performance with us and in independent school, and you know I'd also say that you know, I agree with a holistic approach, that you know, we heard in the earlier panel that it can't just be the school -- It needs to be a connection between healthcare and the environment and housing and so on and so forth. You know, I'd say most recently, the pandemic has highlighted some of the inequity you know, in particular around access to instructional materials and access to, and when I say instructional materials or instructional resources at the school level, but also at the individual family level, so that looks like internet access to devices, access to teachers who are prepared to pivot to this new, new ways of approaching education,

and that's the disparity that's really highlighted in our work at Prep you know. We see what's happening in independent schools in parallel with what's happening in public schools, which is fascinating and sometimes sad at the same time. I would say in a perfect world, Prep would have to pivot, you know, it is not lost on me or the organization that it is perceived, that we are cherry-picking students out of neighborhood schools. We do recognize that that does have an impact on those schools and at the classroom level, but we also need to name the fact that you know, families are making this choice, necessity. I guess the other thing I would highlight in you know, recently is our Director of Academic Program has a question of like, what are we in particular. What are, you know, public schools preparing students for right? You know, one specific example is you know, if we're teaching to the test, what else is being missed? So a lot of our work is to catch our students up with the curriculum in independent schools. I'm not saying that independent schools are the only way to do education, but it is a lane that we're in and that we try to prepare our students for. I guess you know, kind of moving to the key questions that were sent with the pacet, what change in government would I like to see. You know, I would echo the remarks around education funding that we saw in the previous panel. I think there should be an equity lens applied to school funding and then you know, I would love to see schools have the ability to be -- Public schools in particular have been, charter schools for that matter, have the ability to be more nimble around the needs of students. That's one of the things that is really highlighted with the many different independent schools that we partner with, is that if there's an issue with a student or if there's an issue with their curriculum, you know they can pivot very quickly to address whatever it may be. That said, you know we are still seeing challenges of critical race theory and some of the other diversity, equity, and inclusion or belonging initiatives on the ground at independent schools that we help our students navigate. Just to be clear, you know, yes, we do identify students. They choose us, we prepare them for independent schools and we also go through that journey with them. So when I think about you know, holistic approach, I'm thinking about a village. It's not just the school, but also the family or some entity or organization or a group of people that can help lfit students up if the family can't do it themselves. I would also hope that you know in addressing you know, some of the family means, tests or issues around resources that we would think of education more broadly -- How do we upskill parents so they can participate in the new economies? The second question of what are some of the biggest challenges over the next two decades -- I would say, keeping pace with aspirational and new economies right? You know, I want our students to be prepared to participate in what the next thing is most notably, around STEM and computer science, computational thinking, things like that. And then, sorry, also you know, again, thinking about the village, uplifting the village to be able to participate and then you know, to the question of how can we help BIPOC communities you know, achieve power and decision making -- I think the first step is collecting mixed methods data, so both quantitative and qualitative data right? Hearing stories right? Making the numbers and the narratives talk to one another and then using that data to make change, but also delivering on decisions that are being suggested by the BIPOC community right? If you don't see your voice implemented in the policy right, it's my opinion, you're not going to engage right? So I mean, I don't want to repeat a lot of the things that were already shared, but yeah, I would love to just, I just leave with that. You know, Prep, we're, we respond to the world as it is. Hoping that it will

be different in the future, you know. Our ultimate goal is that Prep won't have to exist and then another interesting statistic out there is that you know, children only spend 13 of their lives in school right? So when we think about education right? Other pieces need to be included in the mix to educate the whole child. And then lastly, we're also seeing the same challenges, or I wont say challenges -- We have the same concerns about boys that were highlighted in the previous panel. So I'll stop there and save time for q.

JJA: 1:39:34
I very much appreciate your remarks and looking forward to learning more from you, and also just want to thank you for in the moment, just responding to what, for me was a same thing, happens with my own mission statement that I read, where it speaks to vulnerable people and it's like, are people vulnerable or they have persistent names. Let us now hear from Mr. O'Neal.

J. O'Neal (JN): 1:40:08
Here we go, okay. So first, thank you to the Commission for inviting me to share a few ideas for eradicating educational inequities facing Black, Latinx, and other people of color within New York City. So as introduced, you know I'm James O'Neal, I serve as the Executive Director of Legal Outreach, which is a non-profit college prep organization that I co-founded upon graduating from Harvard Law School back in the 80s. So for background, I've not worked with the Department of Education nro within a large non-profit that serves a significant portion of our student population, nor am I an academic who has researched and written about the inequities within our system, though I hope to do so at some point in the future. As I say, what I do come with is experience as a practitioner, as one who started a non-profit for the very purpose of offering Black and Latinx students from underserved communities with opportunities, not just to pursue higher education but higher education at some of our nation's most selective and competitive colleges. Our mission is to change the educational trajectory of students of color in our urban communities. We are small, we serve approximately 230 high school students annually each year, we accept a new cohort of 60 students who join us at the start of their 9th grade year. We work with each cohort from their 9th grade year through their graduation from high school, we are an out of school time program operating during after school hours on Saturdays and every summer. Though we're located in Long Island City, our students come from every underserved community throughout each of the boroughs except Staten Island. They are representative of the greater New York City school population, about 75% are Black and Latinx, 15% are Asian and South Asian, and 10 are from other underrepresented backgrounds. The vast majority are spread out over 60 high schools across the city, with only a very few attending any of the specialized high schools. 33% come from single-parent households, 84% qualify for free and reduced lunch, and the average household income for our families this round is around $35,000 per year. Where we break from the norm of the public schools of New York City however, is with our outcomes. 100% of our program participants graduate from high school, over 99% have attended college, 97% have attended four-year colleges, and 80% of those attending four-year colleges have matriculated to the

nation's most highly or very selective institutions. We've had multiple students who've attended the Ivys, including Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Cornell, Brown, New Pen, and Dartmouth -- All the small Ivys including Williams, Amherst, Swarthmore, Wellesley, Wesleyan, Hamilton, Trinity, Tufts, Middlebury, Smith, Mount Holyoke, and a host of other highly regarded schools such as MIT, Carnegie Mellon, Pomona, Georgetown, NYU, Rochester, UVA, and Michigan, and so many more, but the news gets even better. Over 90% of our alumni have graduated from their respective colleges with over 35% attending graduate schools in various fields, so the question is what accounts for the success of these students right? These are common ordinary students from New York City, and the answer is simply, our ability to close four major gaps that could have hindered them from achieving their full potential. Those gaps are the opportunity gap, the achievement gap, the support gap, and the college matching gap. We operate 12 different programs over the span of four years that seek to plug those gaps with each placing these young people a step closer to the realization of their dreams and the fulfillment of their potential. We close the outlook gap through exposure to professionals, partnerships, and internships with corporations, firms, agencies, and organizations, and mentoring by lawyers. We close the achievement gap through a specific set of skill building programs designed to develop and enhance students' writing, reasoning, analytical, critical thinking, advocacy, test taking, and study skills. We close the support gap through partnerships with parents and concerned mentors and through relationships with culturally sensitive staff. And we close the college matching gap through a structured program that helps students find the best schools for them in light of their achievements, performances, desires, and aspirations. The students who are the recipients of these services are devoting over 2,000 hours over and above whatever they are required to do at their respective high schools. When people hear about our graduates and their accomplishments, the question that comes to mind is, can this be taken to scale, and the question is yes, it can. More funding is needed because we actually spend or are pouring in six thousand dollars per student per year to achieve these results. There are however structural changes that we can recommend to the DOE for the use of these types of additional monies based upon our experiences. But before I mention the recommendations first, it's important to understand that few students are automatically willing to put in 2,000 additional hours above what they're required to do at their high schools, but those hours are necessary to achieve the types of success that reflect our students. They are not willing to do it unless they have internalized a reason for doing so. For us, the internalization process takes place through our Summer Law Institute, the very first program in which all of our students participate. It is easily the most critical component of our model because it sets the foundation for what will take place over the next four years. The SLI, as we call it, is conducted annually in conjunction with six law schools for eighth grade graduates who express a desire to learn more about the law. The five-week full-day program introduces students to lawyers on a daily basis, engages them in relevant curricula about our criminal justice system, which excites the students about learning and involves them in activities that place them in the role of professionals. In this case, lawyers upon completing the five-week program. SLI participants make the choice to apply and join the four-year college bound program previously described. They do so because they have internalized their success and experiences and are now willing to do whatever it takes to place them in a position to achieve

their goals. it's not easy, they need constant support along the way. But at least a spark has been lit before the high school years begin. If the Department of Education wants to change outcomes for a significant number of Black, Latinx, and other students of color, I highly recommend -- It's one of my recommendations that each middle school be restructured and required to adopt a career focus where students can vicariously experience the life they could have if they take full advantage of the education being offered at their schools, even when it's not up to par. The second system-wide change that I recommend is fully funding or full funding of after-school programs at the middle and high school that bring life to subjects being taught during the school day. There are professions that are related to every subject under the sun -- Why can't those who are learning math during the day participate in a stock market or business or finance club that meets after school? Why can't those learning English language skills during the day have the opportunity to join a digital writing, advertising or marketing club after school? Why can't those learning social studies during the day participate in moot court mock trial or political action clubs in the afternoons, etc. etc. The choices are endless and so too are the partnerships that can be formed with corporations and institutions that are more than ever focused on diversity and want to do their part to expand the pipeline to their industries. Again, bringing classroom material to life through professional after school activities can motivate and inspire our young people and propel them to success. Legal Outreach has established this model, it has been around for over 25 years. The results have been consistent. The only question is whether our city is willing to allocate or redistribute the resources and do the restructuring necessary to bring equity into the system again. Thank you for the opportunity to share.

JJA: 1:50:53
Very much appreciate it Mr. O'Neal, very much appreciate it. The last panelist from Hong Kong here, before we have dialogue with the Commission Members is Mr. David Kirkland.

David E. Kirkland (DEK): 1:51:08
Thank you and good morning everybody. I want to thank you all for inviting me to this conversation. Again, my name is David E. Kirkland. I am a Professor, not an Associate Professor of Urban Education at New York University. I also serve as the Executive Director of the NYU Metro Center. My pronouns are he, him, and his, and I do want to acknowledge that I'm sitting on the unceded lands of the Lenape people. I do this in recognition of the land, but also as a reminder that struggles for justice continue because we're all on occupied land. So I believe deeply that we must all reconcile within ourselves and others, a project of remembrance. We must do this while we also engage the revolutionary work of recovery, which is the opposite of cultural and social deletion. Two incredible projects of human subjugation that education at its best seeks to interrupt. Now with that said, I think it would be premature to frame racial justice solutions without framing racial injustice problems. That said, it would be an understatement to say that we're living through life-changing and challenging times in the past years, so we face multiple pandemics, the health crisis, precipitated back over the social crisis, reignited last year

by the murders of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd, among a string of other horrific events, and the economic crisis legislated by a series of poor decisions from our political leadership. But through it all, we have remained diligent finding ways to hold each other up and hold things together and as some of you know, I've been blessed to partner with communities and schools around the nation, joining the fight to advance equity in education and beyond it. And though we fight to advance equity and education, which is a principle of fairness based on the recognition that all of our students are different and come to their education with different needs. We also fight to end the systemic tide of racism and white supremacy -- Yes, I'm naming it that -- Make advancing equity impossible. This is the conversation that we must have, not how to change our babies, but how to change our system so that those systems smight better serve our babies. The question isn't the deficit of solutions or ideas. There are solutions everywhere, as my colleagues have you know, I've pointed out, that's not what it is, that's not the problem. The question is, you know, how do we get the solutions to the people that has our boots beat to the ground to pay homage to the blood spilt from the violence of systematic racial oppression. I believe that we will best serve our children by standing in resistance, the systems, ideological and otherwise hewn from the bedrock of the question that site before us, is about how do we make education more culturally responsive and sustaining and reimagined for all of our students and our communities, particularly our racially vulnerable students? And yes, they're racially vulnerable because the system makes them racially vulnerable. How do we call for new sites of pedagogy that instead of murdering their bodies, assassinating their souls, love them and nurture them? That is, how do we call for like a pedagogy of love as my colleague Antonio Darda calls it, that truly upholds justice, because as Cornel West reminds us, justice is what love looks like in public. Even in public education, these questions are essential because we cannot think what's happening in the streets across the country has nothing to do with us before Derek Chauvin dug his knee into George Floyd's neck. A teacher on the South Bronx of this city stood ont he back of a young black boy so that he could know what slavery felt like, and though we might want to argue that in education, we have no fired one shot that claimed innocent life, we can no longer deny the may ways in which we help load the guns.

We're in the midst of multiple pandemics and I'm not talking about code, I'm talking about the many ways in which we take as normal the idea of structural needs bearing upon the necks of our children, vulnerable young people who find themselves at the bottom of every desirable statistical category. We collected at the very top of every least desirable one in spite of our best solutions -- Is not about us, the pandemics that we face in education are ones of amnesia and indifference and apathy. So transforming education must be about more than words, more than fancy sound bites and constipated terminology and good ideas that don't emanate from the people but are imposed on top of them. It must be about more than targeted time on task and those other punitive sentiments that are too often expressed against these babies because what if the barrier that stands in the way of our children is not the children themselves or their families -- What if they don't need fixing, what if it's us in our racial justice work?

Moving forward we have to center BIPOC students more. Yes, the very lives of young people who lean on us in spite of their circumstances, who look to us for care and safety, who look to our collective imagination and powerful wheels to invent a world that deserves them because

this is what I know. The best way to predict the future is to invent it and so often, that invention does not include designing systems that sustain and support film. Giving these young people the schools they deserve are, better yet, creating schools that deserve these babies, because I also know that when we look at education we must stare at a series of realities that should make each of us uncomfortable that education in our nation is a tell of disparities and racially vulnerable students are suffering inequity, is a condition of their lives. Structural racism is real and it intersects with other social realities such as gender and language, bias, housing instability and food insecurities, age and ability, hierarchies, economic oppression. Even though this moment is showing up what we perhaps already knew that our present understandings of teaching and learning are not currently designed to favor the racially dispossessed and the Milan that even before, we were forced to stare at things like the digital divide. Finally, understanding that the material possession of technology isn't evenly distributed across our country before we acknowledge that some kids would struggle economically -- Less advantaged kids, black, brown, and indigenous kids, multilingual learner kids, kids with IEPS and five or four plans in this moment of Black Lives Matter, COVID 19, and against screams of "I can't breathe," we are being taught that a new world is possible. It's true that various narratives of disparity shape how we understand the outcome data as it pertains to human development, and this is why we march. This is why so many of us in education have joined countless others in the streets last summer, because our poor, our black, brown, and indigenous babies are disproportionately suspended. Places in a special education, more graduate at lower rates, perform less well on standardized tests, etc. It's true that these disparities increase at intersections of linguistic difference, ability difference, gender difference, and at the apex of other vulnerabilities as I've said. But none of this is known, none of it is new. Here's what's new -- Our solutions in response to this moment to the situation of our most vulnerable young people, must be new and renewed. They must be shaped out of not what the world has taken from them or us, but out of what it has given us and them. This is my advice on how to move racial justice and education forward first. We listen and there are many ways to listen. My friend, psychologist, and gender theorist, Naobi Wade, speaks of the science of human connection, which is beginning to help us understand the root systems plaguing our culture and our social communities. Within this frame, Naobi speaks of what she calls the "crisis of connection" or the idea that so many of us, so many of our ideas, our solutions, our systems, our fundamental human practice, is shaped by disconnection. This is what structural is -- It speaks to how systems are disconnected from the very people they may serve on the fundamental basis of race. This is what irrelevant curriculum is -- It is curriculum disconnected from the lives of the students we teach and this disconnection shapes a far more powerful narrative of success and failure than anything else in education. But worse, it leads to consequences of structural and emotional violence that turn into structural forms of trauma and the kind of threats that make education a hostile site for many of our children. So how do we connect? We listen thickly, and we listen thickly by introducing into our work, into our classrooms, into learning spaces, things like equity, audits, and other instrumentalities that allow us to hear from the people, so that we might get crucial information about them because how do you teach someone you don't' know? How do you resolve solutions for individuals when you don't know what the problems really are? Our teaching must not only include but

begin with listening sessions, empathy interviews with students, focus group conversations with parents, we must get a sense of their experiences and their wisdoms because when we do, they tell us how to teach them. They have the solutions, we listen by dreaming up the protocols and the system that give us time to hear, time to learn from those who are more implicated by the decisions that we will make. I know this isn't the Western way, which is in so many ways concerned with the opposite of stopping and listening. But one of the most important lessons we are learning with COVID is that we don't have all the answers that life and death quite literally depend on. Our ability, our boldness to chart new courses, so too, after we listen, we must dare to partner effects in education are not random, thus education should never be done randomly nor in isolation. But by partnering, we resist the impulse to make random decisions, to make those decisions by ourselves and without information or support to ground them. We listen by enlisting the support of those parents and those students we have listened to because those who are closest to the problem are closest to the solution. The other important lesson that COVID has taught us is that we're in this together. I'm going to, I am because we are. The decisions that I make affect you and the ones that you make affect me. This is the big picture -- If we are to build brighter and bolder opportunities for our children on the other side of pandemics and protests, if we are to find shade amidst the intense heat of this moment, we must grab hands, put all of our answers on the table, and do as James Baldwin has said -- To search deeply within those answers for the questions they conceal, and once we get to the right questions together, we'll be closer to getting to the right answers together. Perhaps the biggest issue with this current system is that it was not designed by all of us, for each of us. The current system however, works well for those who designed it, but it works horribly for those of us it was imposed upon. And because of this, so many of our babies go to school hurting. So the third thing we must do is radically act and that in the first part of that radical action must be understanding how to create an experience that starts with an acknowledgement that something has happened. And indeed, has always been happening to our most vulnerable young people. The system is a historical artifact -- It functions as it s designers intended -- Shaped by the weaker impulses of those designers, it clings to the dark cosmetics of social hierarchy, tainted by sexism, racism, language, oppression, economic aggression ,and other social economic culture and political forces of violence, which are real. Each of these has had historical consequences that manifest regularly in our schools and magnify over time and continue to this day. Unfortunately, the acknowledgement of this means that the first step of our radical action must be about locating the wounds so that we can focus on healing them. But not just the broken bodies of those of us who have suffered, but also healing the broken souls of a system that hurts. How can we turn the lens of trauma-informed care outward and onto our systems to see where and when and how they are sick and hurting and hurting our children, to be sure our babies aren't broken, but too often the systems we send them to are from an anti-racist perpsective. The action required right now is about curing us of the global pandemic that afflicts our world and even our pedagogies. With bias infecting these institutions, processes, procedures, and practices, even our solutions with the disease of sight that makes these solutions incapable of seeing certain bodies as valued or valuable, or even human. Healing the system, of course, will take time. So we must sek to reimagine our work by allowing time for healing because this time spent healing ourselves will take us farther

than pressing forward while sick. There's an African proverb that says "if you want to go fast, you know this, you go alone. But if you want to go far, we go together," and together, we must refuse to go back to normal. We must press forward, toward improvement and part of that improvement means envisioning a system or set of environments that are welcoming and firm where the least desired or redundant components of the curriculum are omitted. It means dealing with the idea that school is a place of punishment for so many of our babies and that this punitive narrative is usually based in some of our most dangerous and biased logics. The question isn't why do we have failing students, the question is why are we failing students? Succeeding them however, will be about helping them, because our most vulnerable students experience their schooling as a side of joy because joy is one of the basics of learning. Foucault said that learning is erotic and Audrey Lord tells us that the erotic can be a powerful tool. It can be used to motivate, transmit, connect, and radically transform. However, too often, schooling for too many of our beings is constructed as a site of what Michale Dumas called "suffer." So again, how do we instead imagine a system or set of environments that center joy and love and compassion and all those ingredients that are key for engagement and interaction of learning itself? Pleasure, play, curiosity, creativity which we refuse to cetain bodies but we provide richly to others -- This joy base culturally responsive sustaining anti-racist reimaginign of reducation will involve more human interaction, collaborative learning, lesser no homework, very few assessments that are continuous in nature major, and group assessments that feel less burdensome. This joy base reimagining of education will be one that we replicate spaces that center our babies regardless of the hue of their skin and let go of anything that continues to marginalize, exclude, and harm.

HAG: 2:07:00

Thank you, thank you, Mr. Kirkland, and thank you for the panel for the presentation. I'll be sharing the second half of the meeting, let me turn it over to any of the Commissioners who may have questions or comments. Alright, alright -- Well I see -- No, thank you very much for your presentation today. We're going to take a five minute break, a bio break and then we will then move on to our third and last final for the day in five minutes. It's 11:40 right now, we will resume at 11:45. Alright, so it's 11:45 -- Would like to resume it's been a very long day but very substantive, the discussion. I would like to introduce the next panel of presenters. First, let me start with Vanessa Leung -- Is the Co-Executive Director of the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families. Ms. Leung has served the education community through her career, advocating on behalf of Asian Pacific American students that are English language learners in New York City public schools. She was appointed by Mayor Bill de Blasio to the panel for educational policy and has been the chair of the PEP since January 2014. The next member of the panel is Claude Steele. He is an American social psychologist and a Professor of Psychology at Stanford University. He is best known for his work on stereotype, a threat and up, in its application to minority student academic performance. Next we have Kim Sweet, who is the Executive Director of Advocates for children in New York City, which promotes access to quality education for low-income children in New York City schools. She oversees a wide range of projects focused on educational rights and the needs of children in the school system that

the system often overlooks, children with disabilities, immigrants, multi language lingual learners, children who are homeless and children involved in the child welfare or justice system. Welcome, all of you, and let me start by in no particular order, but let me start with Mr. Steele, who will begin the presentation. Welcome to our panel today.

Claude Steele (CS): 2:16:14
Thank you, it's a pleasure to be here. We were asked to contribute what we thought would be big ideas about education, so I want to take my six to eight minutes, to do, is argue for a basic paradigm shift in our approach to education. These remarks are especially focused on K through 12 but I think they generalize the higher education as well. The nature of the paradigm shift I want to advocate for is a shift away from our cognitive accountability paradigm, as I want to call it. I'll define what I mean there, and more toward a paradigm where the aim of schooling is to help students identify with the community of school, of their schools, and with that, with their development in general. An identification paradigm focused on building identification with with the enterprise of education word about paradigms; in Aristotle's day, people thought the way they understood astronomical phenomenon was to think of the sky as a canopy and it had holes in it that at night, let light through from the quote, other side, and that's how they used, that's how they understood the sky and the stars. The stars were the lights coming through the holes in the canopy, and that's how they got by with that understanding of of astronomy and in that paradigm, a perfectly reasonable question would be how high is the sky in our modern paradigm. That's a ridiculous question but in that paradigm, it was a meaningful question that's how paradigms shape our thinking -- They kind of set out what seems to be logical and reasonable and I want to argue that a lot of the issues with regard to education and especially its ability to to educate a broad diversity of American citizens has to do with this paradigm -- Inherent misguidance in the paradigm we use to think about education. What is the cognitive accountability paradigm? Well, it comes to us sort of from the industrial age -- The purpose of education is to convey the students, to train students to have the skills they're going to need to function well in society and in the economy in general, and usually that means something like read and writing and arithmetic, and that is the focus of schooling, that is the business of school. That's the paradigm, the framework that we view schooling with. But it can now, let me just describe for a second what it's like to be a poor kid, which is the majority of our students in public schools in the United States. What is the life experience like? Well, you're living in a community, probably with the high unemployment rates in a family with very unstable income. Maybe poor access to health care, extreme and unstable working hours. Family stress that is chronic, an ongoing basis, and kind of a limited bandwidth with which to deal with the future and planning and this -- There's a lot of pressure on our low-income citizens. Now, a child from that home comes to school and meets this cognitive paradigm, that's the situation I want us to think about. What's that going to be like? Well, for the most part, that paradigm and the way it's executed in schools is going to seem to that child pretty irrelevant to their basic needs and pressures in life. It's, I've got all this family challenges under stress, this has happened, that's happened now. I'm in school working through a workbook page that is asking me to do something that as far as the needs in my life are concerned, is

very abstract and it would take almost a heroic commitment for me to take that enterprise seriously in the context of the life that I'm actually living. So the paradigm that meets students is very poorly calibrated to their needs. At the outset, the curriculum is likely to be rather rote and uninteresting in its own right and the child, if they have nay, if they don't do especially well, they could be characterized in that school as deficits, as having a deficit. So now, in addition to all other circumstances, this child has sort of been born into, they go to the institution of schooling, meet the cognitive paradigm. It's boring and they get labeled as a problem, so it shouldn't be any surprise to us that this thing is not working well for us. As a basic framework for thinking about education, it quickly alienated children who could otherwise be really interested in what the society has to offer. Identification paradigm is different -- The business of schooling here is to entice students to have a sense of belonging in the community of the school and the enterprise of learning and exercising one's curiosity and creativity. I think some of the speakers in the last panel referred to this, it's a very different framework. it's not so much focused on immediately testing and constantly evaluating your skill level, which makes no sense from the cognitive paradigm. It's focused on having you feel like you're a member of a meaningful community and that you're embarking on a path of development that this community values as important and its curriculum is built, rooted in student interest first. What's interesting, you can imagine in this paradigm, when this child arrives at school, rather than the teacher having them work through an hour of workbook pages, the teacher just might read to them from an interesting book for a whole hour, so they begin to see what's interesting in the world and to be themselves. Interested, it mobilizes their own engagement and identification with the process of school and I think above all, it focuses on building a trusting relationship between the student and the school that the students can trust in this community. "I'm going to be regarded well, it has beneficence toward me. It's invested in my welfare and in my development and I can trust that and be comfortable in a cognitive accountability paradigm." That is often not the case. "I cannot trust that they value me, I'm always under a test as to whether I've got some adequate level of schooling or not and that shrouds my whole experience." So the coming together of the cognitive paradigm, the circumstances of low-income citizens is, I think, a tragic element of American society and it's remediable. Also, the research literature gives profound support for the detriments of the cognitive ability paradigm and for the benefits of a more identity focused paradigm. It's the soft skills, the ability to persist, the ability to value curiosity and interest, those are the things that actually predict, measured at an early point in life, actually predict life outcomes like income later on in life, and how far one gets into the educational system to our surprise, it isn't cognitive skills. I'm speaking here where I hope you give me some credibility as a psychologist. Cognitive skills can be picked up, these other school skills need development, they need institutional scaffolding so that students can see them and pick them up and internalize them, and those are the things that sustain them across the life and that sustain their effectiveness in an economy later on. And the cognitive accountability paradigm is having us miss best entirely, okay, or almost impact -- I just want to, there are the research letters, if full of examples of successful demonstrations of this, of the value of this kind of paradigm. Of demonstrations taken at scale, the comer approaches to schooling, the Harlem Children's Zone. I mean, they're all, they're really quite frequent. The problem is because we use this, we're so entrapped in this cognitive

accountability paradigm, we don't, we see these as kind of irrelevant exceptions to the rule and not as something to be taken as the central norm of how education could be seen. It's like we're the victim of our larger framework for thinking about what education is about, and that's why we don't value them, but how to do it -- It's out there and it's been demonstrated, and I -- I have a word of criticism for the educational establishment. We too, easily dismiss these demonstrations and if somebody doesn't take a commerce school and really mashes it all up and then claims that they couldn't replicate it, we tend to take that seriously and miss the larger idea there. But in fact, there's a lot of evidence of how to do this effectively. I want to end with an experiment that will give, I think, a crisp example of the points that I'm making. This is an experiment we did at the college level, but I think it generalizes well throughout schooling, the basic question we ask, how does a white teacher give critical feedback to a black student and have that feedback be trusted and have that feedback be motivated -- That is to pull out a situation so common and fundamental to education, if we could answer that, it would have some significance for a broad range of educational experiences. So we had students write an essay and put their best in it. If it was a good essay, we told them it would be published in a magazine on teaching, a campus magazine on teaching. Do their best and come back two days later and they would get comments, criticism of that essay, and our question was, how do you give the feedback in a way that they trust criticism, so what we measure is how much do they trust the criticism and then how motivated were they to use the criticism to improve their essays? That's the basic setup of the experiment and what we varied is how we gave the feedback and what we found is some of the more unsettling findings I think, in our research program over many years, is that just giving the feedback straightforwardly -- Here's the feedback on your essay -- Or preceding that feedback with a very positive compliment to the person -- Boy, you bring a lot of good energy to my class, here's the feedback. Interestingly, Black students did not trust that feedback while White students trusted it. They're not under the pressure of negative stereotypes about their abilities and so on, they're not, but Black students are. And when you think about, you ask them why, why wouldn't they trust the feedback -- They are in this case, they're college students, privileged in a sense, why wouldn't they trust the feedback? But when you think about it, you see something profound about American life and the challenge of the diversity of our American life from the standpoint of a black student. They don't know whether the feedback is about their work or whether it's coming from how the feedback giver views the abilities of their group. They don't know for sure is that, where is that, and not knowing the feedback is sort of ambiguous and it's hard to trust. It's hard to trust it and our, that is such a structural reality in our education system that I think it has profound resonance. It's not something that would just happen once, this would be a feature of this, for this student, for the book, for African American students throughout their school in America. This challenge of trusting, it can, I trust with what I'm hearing, can I just ignore that how my group has been viewed historically in this country, ignore that, and just take at face value the feedback I'm getting here? That's the psychological situation of a minority student entering into an American classroom. Can I trust this and this shows how the normal ways in which we do it, ways in which the paradigms tell us are quite reasonable, have this unfortunate effect. Well, that's the reality, but there is good news. There was a way to give that feedback that enable black students to trust it and be highly motivated by it, and it's a very

simple way that will sound familiar -- The feedback giver said to them look, we use really high standards in evaluating this essay because we might publish it, but so we're suing high standards and evaluating the essay, but I think you have the potential to meet those standards. Here's the feedback. Well, when it was given with those comments, black students trusted it more than white students, then they were three times more motivated to improve their essays than other students in the experiment. So that offers to me, a concrete path of, sort of hopefully pathway. Here it is, it is a pedagogy that is designed to deal with the reality of the, with the students' realities in the school situation that those African-American students, these are Stanford African-American students, they're very privileged by given the history of race in the United States, it still makes that feedback ambiguous. So you can imagine what that is going to feel like in many schools throughout the nation. I don't know if I can trust it, I don't know if how people see my group, if I can just ignore that in this, in this situation and what that effective feedback does, is give the signal that I believe in you, we have high standards and I believe you can meet them. That is transformative and it has and addresses the fundamental issue and enables learning to just happen. Drill and kill is not, that's driving in the wrong direction, that's using the paradigm to take things in the wrong direction and it's causing so many of the problems that we see. So they have been so tenacious here, but a pedagogy that meets students where they are and addresses what their needs are can be, shows transformative effects. So I just want to and with that, I think we could get a lot, we could go a long way if we just drop that cognitive accountability paradigm. It's huge, it's so wired into everything we do, I don't want to be naive about that but I think the degrees in which we can inch ourselves away from that, the whole testing infrastructure, the constant of beating ourselves up about test scores, the best way to get our piece of scores up is to forget about getting our piece of scores up and to help students value their experience and enjoy their experience in school -- That should be our primary, our first building community, a community that is invested in students' development. I think that should be our priority rather than worrying with this whole infrastructure of evaluating cognitive skills, that when people are motivated, they can pick up very easily. If you're read to every day and you get the excitement of hearing a story, you'll learn how to read. You don't have to go through a molecular boring exercise of phonics sounding out everything that makes it, that makes this whole experience -- It's something that makes sense from the paradigm but it's something that's devastating to many students in our society. I think our schools weren't designed to function well for the full diversity of our students, and I think as a society, we're in the process of moving our schools in that direction and we have to recognize that that's what the pros, that's what goes on, that paradigm is not sacred in its own right. It has a logic that is so captivating but it's not sacred and we need to challenge that paradigm, that basic way of thinking about it away form these, this infrastructure of cognitive accountability and toward building a sense of community, and it's not something that we don't know how to do if you're well off and you're in the top 1% income against the United States. You're probably sending your kid to a school that does exactly that -- Builds community, builds soft skills, focuses on pleasure, oy, creativity, that's what a lot of our independent schools look like. When you go inside, it's the schools that are trying to deal with the whole diversity of the population that are still anchored in this cognitive ability paradigm. Well, I'm going to run out of time so I'll stop at that point. I think I've gotten my major things I

wanted to say out of the way, so thank you very much. I appreciate your patience and time. Thank you.

HAG: 2:34:23
Thank you Mr. Steele, thank you for your presentation. I'm sure people have questions but now we'll go to the second panelist I've introduced previously. Kim Sweet, the Executive Director of Advocates for Children. Sorry, I had a moment there. So Ms. Sweet, would you take it away please.

Kim Sweet (KS): 2:34:50
Thank you and I want to thank all of you for inviting me to participate in this really important discussion. I also should say, I really enjoyed Dr. Steele's presentation and I think, if there were such a paradigm shift in New York City, there would be a lot less need for outside advocates for families and students. Every year we see the impact of structural racism in our work with students and families, every day there are stark racial injustices across a wide range of education opportunities and outcomes, from admissions policies to graduation rates, from school discipline to special education placements. I'm going to focus today on three areas where we see pervasive racial inequity deriving from deep systemic challenges -- These areas are literacy, school, discipline, and policing and school admissions. So literacy is a major racial justice issue that gets nowhere near enough attention. Schools have a fundamental responsibility to teach students to read and the ability to read is essential to succeeding in school and beyond. Year after year, we hear from hundreds of Black and Latinx parents whose children are struggling with reading and can't get the help they need at their public schools, we regularly work with middle and high school students who are still non-readers, unable to read menus or picture books let alone their science text textbooks or job applications and the data confirms what we see in our case work that there are systemic racial disparities in who is taught to read in the New York City public schools, and I am going to refer to test scores here because although we're not you know advocating for enhancement of testing regimes, I think they do show some stark disparities that have to be recognized.
Only 35% of Black students and 36.5% of Hispanic students showed proficiency on the most recent state reading exams compared to two-thirds of white and asian peers and at more than 150 New York City schools, less than a quarter of students in grades three through eight scored proficient on their most recent state reading test. These schools are particularly concentrated in communities of color including the Central and South Bronx Brownsville and East New York, and this is probably where I differ from Dr. Steele a bit in that I believe the research shows what works to teach children to read and for many children it's not just reading to them -- Many schools are using outdated literacy curricula that's not in line with the science and many teachers haven't been trained on effective reading practices. When children are behind in reading, families who have the resources to do so often have to sue the city for private tutoring to get evidence-based reading support as they're unable to get help from their public schools. An education system where the majority of Black and Latinx students are not being taught to

read is a terrible manifestation of structural racism that has profound ripple effects. This administration has taken positive steps such as hiring literacy coaches to train kindergarten through second grade teachers and effective approaches and most recently, including funding in the budget for a universal K-12 literacy curriculum. But there is much work that remains to be done. One of the most transformative changes that could be made in the New York City public schools is to revamp and restructure the way we teach reading and this does not have to be a punitive approach. I think it could be done very much in harmony with a paradigm shift that Dr. Steele is talking about,j but we have to ensure that every school uses evidence-based culturally responsive reading curricula for core instruction, so that all students receive explicit instruction in foundational literacy skills that research has shown to be essential for many students to learn to read and when students need more help learning to read because they don't respond to that initial approach, the city has to provide targeted one-on-one or small group intervention delivered by well-trained professionals. If the city would commit to teaching every child to read and hold itself accountable for that result, it would be a huge change in the way that government works and it would truly transform the lives of many thousands of BIPOC students and their families. Another area where we see the impact of structural racism is in school discipline and policing, and this is an area that is talked about more often in the context of structural racism, but I think important to name at ASC, we receive many calls each year about students who are suspended from school, experiencing behavioral challenges, and to police involvement, these students are always disproportionately black while the number of suspensions in the city has decreased racial disparities persist in this 2019-2020 school year. Black students who comprise about 22% of DOE students faced 51% of out of school or long-term suspensions and 41% of short-term or principal suspensions. Black students, and especially Black boys are dramatically over represented in what the NYPD calls Child and Crisis Interventions, and this is where a mental health crisis leads to an interaction with the police and removal to the hospital for psychological evaluation, sometimes in handcuffs. In the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years, more than a quarter of Child and Crisis Interventions involve Black boys who are only 13% of the public school population, Black girls comprise 12.4% of enrollment but 20.1% of those subject to child and crisis interventions and during that same two-year period, more than one out of every three students handcuffed while in emotional crisis, was a Black boy, Black girls in emotional crisis were handcuffed at twice the rate as white girls. The administration has made some positive reforms from significant changes in the discipline code to adding hundreds of hundreds of additional school social workers, but these racial disparities continue and they're going to continue unless we make more structural changes. We need to reimagine how we do school safety -- We believe we can keep students safe without criminalizing BIPOC students who in fact need mental health and other forms of support. To do this, we need to end policing in schools and another structural thing we need to do is build an integrated continuum of mental health services that students can access through their school communities and finally, I want to talk about segregation in school admissions, so as you all know, New York City is home to one of the most racially segregated public school systems in the nation, while housing segregation is a major contributing factor. School admissions policies exacerbate the problem by using discriminatory screens and relying on application processes that are so difficult to navigate that many families don't even participate

during the 2019-2020 school year. 60% of age-eligible children living in shelters who are disproportionately Black and Latinx did not submit the kindergarten application at all, they just didn't participate in the whole process. The city should address barriers to admissions for students from historically marginalized communities, and build inclusive, supportive, and effective school environments where all students can thrive. I was proud to serve on the city school diversity advisory group and I urge the city to move forward with that group's recommendations. Ultimately, we would like to see an expansive vision for integration that goes beyond who gets into the most coveted schools -- That means providing a much more robust system of support for families at the stage where they're filling applications out or making choices about where their children will go. It also means setting aside seats at each school for students who need placements after the start of the school year, newly arrived immigrant youth students placed in shelters or foster homes far from their original schools, students re-entering school from juvenile or german or criminal justice placements and other students who need placements mid-year should not be relegated to schools that didn't fill during the admissions process. Importantly, as schools accept, I hope a more diverse group of students including students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are homeless or in foster care, are coming out of detention schools must have the resources and tailored support to meet their needs. 76% of students with disabilities are Black or Latinx, and more than 90% of students living in shelters are Black or Latinx. When we think about racial justice for students, we have to think not only about the general education population, but also about he specialized support for these particular populations and when we think about integrating schools, we have to think not only about changing admission policies, but also about ensuring the full range of students feel welcome and get the support that they need. Thank you.

HAG: 2:45:46
Sorry, thank you Ms. Sweet. Now we're going to turn over to the last, certainly not least, member of the panel -- Vanessa Leung is the Co-Executive Director of the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families. Welcome Ms. Leung.

Vanessa Leung (VL): 2:46:00
THank you so much and thank you so much to the Commission. Again, my name is Vanessa Leung, my pronouns she, her, hers, and I'm Co-Executive Director. I'm also a child of immigrants, born and raised here in New York City and a mother of three boys in our public school system. CACF -- We're the nation's only pan-asian children's policy advocacy organization and we bring together community-based organizations, our young people, community allies to fight for equity for really, the diverse Asian American diaspora. And since 1986, CACF has focused on advocating for equity and opportunity for marginalized Asian New Yorkers. Our work is focused on systems change to transform our communities for the better, but we know to be effective, we need to have strong community leaders, strong community organizations, because we can't do this work on our own. SO we work closely with groups of

Asian American young people -- Our parents, service providers, educators, and administrators to really develop our education equity agenda for the Asian American community. But we also make sure that we are aligned and supportive of our allies in educational justice, so we are part of the integration coalition, the New York Immigration Coalition's Education Collaborative, and on the steering omitted of New Yorkers, for racially just public schools, we have been, also been part of the city's middle school task force -- The school's diversity advisory group with AFC and more recently, the healing-centered school task force so again, I really want to thank the Commission for hosting this session today to really take a deep dive into the long-standing education quities and we're all grateful for the other panelists who shared really innovative recommendations and shifts in thinking on how we can take some bold steps to transform our public schools. You know, our belief is we need to ensure that our system is not based on a scarcity mindset and focus on affirming the full humanity of every student by putting in place the healing centered and culturally responsive practices up and down the system to support all of our students. So Asian American students right now account for about 16% of the New York City student population with over 180,000 students attending our schools and moreover, in New York City alone, the Asian American community consists of over 40 ethnicities, tens of tons of languages and religions, and a multitude of cultures and immigration experiences. In fact, Bengali, Chinese, Korean, and Urdu are four of the top 10 languages spoken in the city. Unfortunately, our students' experiences and needs remain invisible in our education system that continues to overlook their challenges and barriers as well as their hopes and dreams, so when we talk about education inequities, we need to be conscious as advocates and policymakers not to fall prey ourselves to upholding the model minority myth. We need to look beyond the personal impact of the model minority myth that may have created additional anxiety to live up to certain expectations or even limit the ability of our young people to embrace their full and beautiful complexity. But we need to acknowledge that systematically, the model minority myth erases the experience of marginalized Asian American students who need our support and we need to challenge the notion fo the model minority because when you're a model, it just seems that you're doing fine but we know the experiences of our Asian American English learner,s our students with disabilities, our low-income students, our immigrant students, especially those who are undocumented, refugee, and or newly arrived -- Our students who are in temporary housing or students facing homelessness in foster care, students in juvenile justice facilities, students from underrepresented ethnic and language backgrounds within our community who are facing really, linguistic isolation because there's not enough services around language justice -- All of those stories and experiences are rendered invisible in a system that's this big, so even more egregious is that this perceived success of Asian students in education, particularly around testing, is consistently used as a reason to validate injustices against other students of color and because our community is highly immigrant and mostly limited English proficient, many lack the exposure and the racial literacy to understand the racialization nature of these inequities, of the challenges that are often compounded so their vulnerability to misinformation, their fear and anger in response to reforms, are really rooted in that scarcity model. So what you know, I just wanted to share a quote of one of our young youth leaders from our Asian American Student Advocacy Project. The Asian American community itself is rife with inequities, colorism, and anti-blackness, yet

among the flurry of ignorant accusatory voices, we are here and committed to working with our fellow students of color, immigrant students, and marginalized students for equitable access to resources and opportunities because truthfully, we need it too, so we need cannot continue to race the stories of our Asian American young people who often do not see themselves reflected in their curriculum, who are led to believe that their struggles are their own fault and not a system that has failed them. So just as the nuances of the Asian American community positionality and racial justice and equity in public schools must be explored. Its rich diversity must be recognized as an asset so the community again, is not a monolith and continuing to treat it as such, does a disservice bot to its members and any school environment, and so, when they enter the classroom or interact with teachers and there's other school staff, Asian American students and families bring unique and valuable funds of knowledge, they have recently immigrated to the United States or their families may have decades or over a century ago, and they have a personal degree of experience with Western Imperialism and/or colonialism, and they may speak and understand multiple languages, they may observe a host of cultural religious traditions, and inevitably, all those traits and innumerable others impact Asian American students and families experience in our public schools, so whenever we, the system interface with our Asian American students and families, the education system must honor these characteristics in refusing to allow them to sustain the perpetual foreigner stereotype that has been directed as Asian American people since they first came to the US, so we call for an education system that not only values diversity, inclusivity, and integration, but also stands in solidarity with and empowers all marginalized communities to have a real influence, a real voice on the system. We believe that such a system cannot exist until there is a democratic equity-minded education system that prioritize the most marginalized learners and is powered by the input of students and families so strong, community informed policies can be developed if we work through often times hard discussions that we try to avoid, but those include about gender and race, class, immigration, history, and ability -- The Department of Education must create and support those processes that capture and implement the input of families and students, policymakers, and advocates and educators from Asian American, Black, Latinx, and Indigenous and other marginalized communities -- We need to see a reformed pedagogy that incorporates social, emotional learning and inclusive curriculum that really fosters a safe, healthy and engaging school culture. We need our educators and school staff, including counselors, social workers, to be trained in culture responsiveness to better support our Asian American immigrant students in their social, emotional learning. A truly inclusive curriculum requires fully implementing a cultural responses sustaining education framework that fosters a sense of belonging and incorporates various narratives from historically marginalized communities for Asian Americnas including deconstructing this Asian model minority myth through data disaggregation through language access and cultural responsive support. CRC would not only allow for increased visibility and understanding of Asian Americans, but also would illustrate where they belong in conversations surrounding racial justice. And looking at student success measurements are used to help determine to what extent students are being adequately supported with their academic and emotional well-being and are not wielded as justifications to take resources away from classrooms. So we believe that student success measurement should transcend traditional test-taking measures and

expand to include non-traditional measures that holistically consider students' interpersonal experiences with peers and adults, their academic abilities and interests and physical and emotional wellness. To understand learning and success, the system must also evaluate educational inputs including school facilities and availability of high quality teaching and resources -- This will allow the system to evaluate how well students are doing on a more comprehensive level and provide adequate and equitable resources to support them. So specifically we've been calling for the Department of Education schools to take certain key steps to address inequities, and the first and foremost has been around better data, disaggregated data by ethnic asian ethnic group and languages, so better data on our community allows for proper policy and community responses to meet those needs. By erasing the individual unique experiences of many Asian American subgroups, particularly those who are the most marginalized, the model minority myth perpetuates the falsehood that Asian American students comprise a monolith naturally successful in education, so having clear transparent data disaggregation dispels this myth and acknowledges the diversity of our community while allowing for opportunity to recognize and target interventions and supports to meet those students needs. So for example, data from Washington show that for the 2013 to 2014 school year, the graduation for Cambodian and Laotian students was below 70% -- Well, it was at 95 percent for Japanese and Taiwanese students. Researchers described that Southeast Asian Pacific Islander students are much more likely to be disciplined than their East Asian peers. They conclude that although Laotian, Cambodian, and students of other ethnic groups face great structural barriers to their education, school officials do not notice these disparities and disregard their needs -- So ultimately, because data remains aggregated in New York, we're really unable to identify potentially similar trends and struggles affecting our Asian American students city and statewide, so we've been working very closely with New York City to kind of create what those measures, of how to create those systems, data systems, to properly support and actually make public the information. So really looking and cross referencing across socioeconomic needs across, looking at l-status ability, gender, home language --

Again, I think we need to look at admissions and enrollment, so integration is really important and you know, we believe that integrated learning environments that reflect the diversity of the city provide tremendous benefits to all of our kids. It just helps them develop the critical thinking and empathy skills they need to be successful in life so looking at emissions and enrollment although the public discourse about Asian American students is historically centered on our specialized high schools. According to the IBO, of the 54,700+ Asian students enrolled in high school, only 10,000 of them attend specialized high school. In other words, over 80% of our high school students do not attend a specialized high school. Moreover, when considering the entire school system, a mere 5.6% of all Asian students attend a specialized high school, so a large majority of our students in New York City are from first generation immigrant and low-income, limited English proficient families, and we need to kind of again actually reiterate what Kim Sweet had mentioned -- That we need to look at the recommendations put forward by the school diversity advisory group and implement those and implement the you know, ensure that there is a permanent elimination of any kind of academic ranking for admissions to screen schools and develop a system that is reliant on inclusionary

and equitable admissions processes. Again, the cultural response of teaching and learning, so you know, part of that is actually our teaching force and how is that reflective -- And although the percentage of Asian American students in New York City has doubled since 1990 to 16%, the share of Asian American teachers are only about 7% and these disproportional rates exist in spite of evidence showing that when students of color learn from teachers who look like them, they perform academically and feel greater sense of belonging -- So similarly ethnic study courses across the country have resulted in academic social and emotional benefits for students who take them. Moreover, teaching Asian American history and culture as well as the history of solidarity between communities of color will provide all students with a greater understanding of our communities, which is a critical way to dismantle the modern minority myth and counter Anti-Asian sentiment. I think mentioning, we need to when we look at issues surrounding equities, we have to be conscious of our English language learners and our students with disabilities who definitely face much more compounded challenges in our system as a whole. EL students remain largely invisible in conversations in educational equity even as their needs are significant and they continue to be underserved in the school system. Similarly to Asian American students with disabilities, are often overlooked in policy discussions even while they and their families frequently face large barriers to accessing a free appropriate public education -- Including not receiving the translation and interpretation that may be essential or experience and adequate services that are legally mandated. Well, we have a system that encourage that our students with disabilities get services in language to ensure that they can continue to connect to the support in the communities we know, that's, our system currently lacks a number of multilingual providers from our special ed teachers to our OTs, PTs, and speech. So part of that is how do we expand that pipeline of folks, of our educators and providers who are, who can actually connect and speak the languages and provide the services that our families need. We also need to come with the belief that all family engagement is beneficial to our kids compared to the city-wide rate at 25% nearly half of Asian American New Yorkers of working age are limited English proficient and LEP rates of specific languages including Chinese at 63% and Korean at 52% are much higher, so moreover 42% of Asian Americans have the highest rate of linguistic isolation of any group in New York City, meaning no one in the household over the age of 14 speaks English well at or at all. These LEP rates make language accessible, culturally responsive outreach even more essential for our Asian American families and to be truly included in their children's school and their community -- So meaning we know meaningful family engagement is more than just celebrating cultural holidays or even just describing traditions or school -- We need them to be equal partners, parents, or and guardians are clearly a source of support for supporting our young people's success. And lastly, I think we wanted to make sure that we're approaching holistic support. Our students are including their, addressing their mental health and well-being you know, due to the cultural stigma and the lack of culturally responsive providers and lack of knowledge. Asian Americans are less likely to seek support for mental health concerns than other groups; however these supports are pivotal in their well-being and Asian Americans were the sole racial ethnic group in 2017 for which suicide was one of the top leading causes of death in New York City. The COVID19 pandemic has also exacerbated anti-aging sentiment and violence across the country in 2020. More than 80% of 10 to 18 year old Chinese Americans directly experienced or

witnessed COVID19 related discrimination or harassment, either in person or online. Higher levels of islamophobia have also been reported and these events further eliminate the need for comprehensive mental health services for our students in schools, yet mental health support is often perceived by the Asian American community as a western solution to a western problem and considering the dearth of culturally responsive providers, it's pretty inaccurate. Fully incorporating social emotional learning and emphasizing how vital it is to helping students handle these challenges will help Asian American students develop a strong sense of identity, self-confidence and belonging, as well as help them navigate the changing perspectives and beliefs in the world around them. So in closing, I just wanted to meet, I wanted to just emphasize the need to bring visibility to the needs of all of our young people. We need to make sure that we strengthen strong collaborations across our sectors, across racial groups to support our public schools and really address the range of needs centering our most marginalized students across our systems in our decision making and ensuring that all of our young people feel connected and supportive, so thank you.

HAG: 3:04:26
Thank you Ms. Leung, it's been a long day, I'm sure that people have questions --
We've had a rich panel, thank you all for your presentations and your contributions today. Let me start with some questions, comments, and concerns that Commissioners may have --
Starting with the premier, Phil Thompson -- Phil.

PT: 3:04:49
Thank you and thank you all for these presentations. When Professor Steele was speaking about the elite schools really having a different paradigm for education, it struck me that the the top tech firms also for their upper level employees have also tried to create a very different approach towards how those companies run that really mirrors what Professor Steele was saying about the elite schools -- Where learning is fun, where you know people are all appreciated, where you build community, because those top level programmers are really in a learning organization, that's what's making those firms so innovative and dynamic. And my question is, I know Dr. Steele is a social psychologist and my question is, are you suggesting that we are cognitively, by sticking to the cognitive accountability model which was really you know, training assembly line workers for Ford Motor company or something, are we ourselves implicitly and unconsciously relegating our own children to not really just playing the traditional role and not being able to play a leadership role in these new evolving kinds of economic firms, or in essence are we ourselves adopting a racist and classist structure in our thinking? Because, which really reflects lack of confidence in our own kids and maybe I was reading into that but I wonder if we are doing that and related to that, we as a Commission have been thinking about developing a kind of a preamble to the City Charter that states our values as a way of really tackling the mental models that implicitly people have in this city about who belongs and who doesn't belong, about who can achieve what, etc. and I'd love your opinion

on whether you think we're on the right track in doing something like that and whether tackling mental models that imply that are implicitly racist is part of tackling structural racism.

CS: 3:07:32

Yes and yes, I think that's a very eloquent description of what some of the cutting edge challenges in education are, is to look at those models and those understandings. You know, I could develop in theory an effective, what would seem like from the standpoint of a cognitive accountability paradigm, an effective pedagogy in some area or another, but what I think we're missing in that paradigm is an understanding or a representation of the the psychology of the student in the in the circumstances, and if a student is alienated, my sense, my bet, is that no sophisticated cognitive paradigm is gonna make much difference. They're alienated, they're not ready to engage it, they're not ready to identify with, to bring into, in as something that they care about, and so they won't benefit from something that might be incredibly effective in another context. I think that's one of the big points that I could point to more or less. A lot of those instructional strategies portray the student as having a deficit -- You need this particular thing, so it's in its own right, it's giving a mental model to to the student that diminishes them or puts them under suspicion, they're already under suspicion from stereotypes, about their group stereotypes, about their income level, they're already struggling under that, so I guess I'm just pointing most fundamentally to the fact that the answer is not in I want to argue now, maybe our arguing, I stronger than I would believe it in every circumstance but I want to argue that that we're looking in the wrong place for the the solution. The same kid that is you know, failing it on standardized tests, verbal standardized tests and the like, is out there rapping like Jay-Z, and using language beautifully with curiosity and that same skill could be applied to physics or something but the school not recognizing that that student is the circumstances of that student's life, and how alienating they are, and how difficult it is for that student to just trust that this school has his interest in mind and is willing to invest in his potential -- Those are the things that are difficult for students. We're talking about, to believe in, to hold as an assumption, so when we bring them something, it's hard for them to trust it. Just like in that experiment I described, they can hear it, they can understand the stigma, but it's hard for them to trust it, to make that connection to it, and use it. As such, and I think that's the problem, that a paradigm shift needs to, why a paradigm shift needs to to happen, is to bring that part of the learning reality into view. It's not in view now and we keep doing different variations on the cognitive paradigm that don't work, that don't, and we still get gaps we still get these, we just haven't made progress -- Stalled, and i think this as a, as in our approaches to education, I think we're stalled in big part because our paradigm is too narrow. It's as you point out, it's an old, it's an old-timey thing, and it might have made sense in an earlier era but it's not up to the challenge now and it's really not up to the challenge of really offering a broad variety of kids of the sort that we've been talking about today, the same kind of experience with that, with it, they're not going to experience it in the same way. Anyway, I could go on and then --

HAG: 3:11:46

Let me connect, doctors, let me just interject because I apologize, I think this is really important. You know what you describe is not just the equivalent of turning a big tanker around, you're describing turning the tanker perhaps into a small speed boat when necessary or large fishing boat when necessary right? So that it's building a new paradigm where the infrastructure completely differs from the one we have, so I guess my question to you is given what you heard on on Ms. Sweet's testimony and about the skepticism that exists already, the institutionalized problems that we have in the mission in policing and what you've heard about the approach for Ms. Leung's testimony, how do you begin to build that trust with a student who is coming into the system, already skeptical to begin with, because from day one they walked in and they were told if you don't score 90% or above, you are marginalized, or you're not sufficient to be in our system you know, and I know that would like to be a, you know, aspirational and say well, maybe we start young but that is not how our system is constructed right? I mean, you would want to see that and I think that Sweet did and this is for any other panel members, how do we begin to transform the ship for you know, just the lack of it in a, in a system that's so big that doesn't even allow, even the smiles variations seem to create such a huge uproar in our society. Right, yes it's incredible, even class sizes which is something that should be intuitive right? The less students, the better right? And it's not even controversial in many eye circles, I don't think any parent would say I want more kids in my classrooms right? But even the issue, class sizes has an impact on the budget and it has an impact, those where are you taking this money elsewhere to feed a class size discussion -- That would ought to be not a no-brainer, so I would be interested for the entire panel to hear that perspective. Thank you, sorry Phil --

CS: 3:14:06
Well I would jump in and I do think there's a lot in the idea of a student-centered approach to schooling so that we see who's actually in our classroom and we bring their life experience into the classroom and the instruction and curriculum is organized around that bringing. So now, I'm a student and I see me in the classroom and I see that it knows who I am, it knows a little bit about my background, some of the challenges that I'm dealing with, and it's actually trying to help me think through those things. It's trying to help me deal with my life, a totally different way of thinking about the classroom that comes from the cognitive skill accountability thing that just says put in another, you know, technique for somehow cramming this skill down their throats, when if you would enliven the community of the classroom by allowing students to tell you who they are, what they do, what their aunt does, what they do when they go to church, what foods they like, what they think are their real challenges and what they're reading and thinking about, and learning quantitative skills, are dealing in that kind of substance. Then I think we would see a transformative effect in in outcomes, but it, it doesn't, so many things in in life over focusing on the outcome and under focusing on the things you need to do to produce the outcome leads to a real dysfunction and and I think in big systems, it's so tempting to focus on outcomes and to establish the systems of accountability that way for the, for politics, the politics of the reality that that I think that is, maybe itself one of the biggest problems we have in schools.

It's so easy for us to think of the problems that somehow rooted in the in the children and in in their families and cultures and I remember I grew up in Chicago on the South side, I went to these school and you know I always knew the kids were so much smarter than what the school thought we were. I knew that at some intuitive level and that we had a lot more interest and capacity to bring to things than they ever did. We were just playing games for the most part in the classroom that's what, that's what it felt like to the student. The teachers were exercising what they thought was the best but it was totally missing things, so the only way to try to express this gulf, this chasm, is to think about the pair of a paradigm shift that tries to focus and put aside the issue of cognitive skills. I think, if I don't want to disagree with Kim because I think so much what she said, I completely agree with, I think is really innovative and great, but I think we ask ourselves, how do we learn how to read? Many of us learned how to read because we were in families and people just read and they read to you and you got into it because you wanted to do that too and so by the time you show up at school, you already know how to read. So I think some of that bespeaks the capacities people actually have to bring to this that aren't being used because we're problematizing their deficiencies when they come to school and we're using the cognitive paradigm to redress those deficiencies when when really, the issue is helping the student identify with the community of school and the enterprise of growing intellectually and developing their own skills and getting excited about getting better and seeing progress in their own development. So anyway, those are the suggestions that I wanted to leave you with.

HAG: 3:18:18
Ah okay, we're running out of time but I know that Commissioner Hamilton has been wanting to ask a question.

DH: 3:3:18:26
So yeah, so again, thank you to the expert witnesses, definitely learned a lot. I continue to learn from you Professor Steele, so I guess to me, one takeaway of many is that a raceless identity is very beneficial to white students of not having to process an interpretation of a stigmatized identity when thinking about their cognitive accomplishments or abilities. But then, there's some irony in that the solution seems to also rely on making the curriculum culturally relevant for those that don't have a white identity elevation of those experiences, and not stigmatizing that identity and making it relevant, which becomes useful and also creating expectations for success and under at a baseline expectation that these children will succeed and do well. That seemed to be a takeaway from the example you gave, but I guess here is my provocation that's directed to the panelists in general, and that is, should New York City be thinking about not sorting curriculum of talented and gifted but making it pervasive to everyone and literally making the specialized school random access that -- And I'm outgoing to throw that provocation out there. What if we had a notion of everybody gets a curriculum that

is not centered on cognitive accountability but one of high expectations, talented and gifted synthesized and big ideas -- One that elevates all experiences and literally make the privileged schools random. What are the reactions to that provocation?

CS: 3:20:23
Yeah, I'll jump in again. I like that, I like it as a general direction. I think these divisions by quote "ability" are mysterious and rather, when you look at research literature or you look about what we know about the human psyche, there are differences in skill level that have to be responded to. I'm not denying that for a minute but the idea that I'm going to give you a test, you're going to score well on that test, you probably are going to score well on that test because you came from a family that had the resources and scaffolding and the platforming and the connections to get you the experiences that would enable you to have a pretty high test score. When you got to school now, I'm going to put you in a gifted program or something like that and continue to give you real resources and an atmosphere and a belief in you that is going to pull, help you really develop those those skills, and I'm gonna kind of underneath, justify all that by saying you really have ability but the kids who don't get that have the opposite experience and they could very likely be doing the same level of of work. If those kinds of approaches were available to them too, if they were, if somebody approached them and said I really believe you have the potential, let's go, and and here's this, here's support for that, I'm gonna I'm gonna stick with you as you grow in this process; rather, the cognitive accountability paradigm characterizes that kid as having a deficit and being a problem and needing probably yet another and being really frustrating to the whole school system and pretty soon the kids gets alienated and he goes outside to schools to look for some kind of decent sense of themselves that that the school system is itself creating the the problem that it likes to blame on the, on almost the genetics of the students. You know, there is a hint of eugenics throughout that whole kind of, as rational for for why we have quote "gifted programs."

KS: 3:22:42
I'll just add to that, I very much like the idea of all students having enrichment opportunities which is essentially what the gifted programs are supposed to be and about being able to pursue lines of interest in a deeper way. I think in terms of motivation of bringing out talents of keeping kids engaged and loving school, I think that's something, there's no reason that that should be reserved to the privileged few and I do think that if the system could pull off bringing enrichment to all students there would be less of a demand for this, for the self-contained selective specialized schools because students, more students would be excited about attending the other schools because they would be places of excitement and learning and particularly as an advocate for students with disabilities. I have to say, one of the problems we see is that when students are put into special education classrooms, there's often very little opportunity for any kind of enrichment or really, for students who have often very strong abilities in certain areas to flex those abilities and to grow.

HAG: 3:23:56
Thank you, thank you very much. Thank you, the panel members, unfortunately we've run out of time. We've been over the time and we are going to have to close this presentation down. It's been a very enriched and you know, very interesting conversation. I think on behalf of the Commission, we want to thank the panelists for coming on board. We may have to come back to you for additional recommendations and information. I think you've given us a lot to think about and a lot to move forward, but I want to thank your participation in the dedication of your time today. Truly the Commissioner, we thank you, we are now about three hours and a half into this program. It's been great again. I just want to remind everybody that we're going to be doing the next panel on housing that is scheduled for the 27th of July, from three to six P.M. I want to remind everybody, including the Commissioners, that that too is going to be our next subject that we are going to be doing a presentation on and receiving presentations on. So thank you everybody. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon and have a good weekend. Thank you.