

*Teacher Listening Session from the June 28<sup>th</sup> meeting- Transcription (00:00:00-1:04:03)*

**Erica Taylor (00:00:00-00:01:30):** Good afternoon, my name is Erica Taylor and I do communications here with the CCSD. And I want to welcome you all for being here educators in the audience thank you for being here. Today is the 4<sup>th</sup> listening sessions that we've had, 3<sup>rd</sup> with teachers, and we will have another one this evening with our business community members. There are a lot of new faces and some familiar faces as well, but the purpose of this is to talk- for you all to talk about those things that are most important to you. Most especially as we begin to continue the work and frame our strategic plan. So superintendent Postlewait is here to listen to what you have to share with her today. And we do have a parking lot so if there are questions that we could provide answers for, we will gather those questions and we will share them within 48-72 hours and they'll be posted on the website on the microsite, specifically about the listening sessions. So I'm going to stop talking because 60 minutes goes really really fast when we start having fun, and I'm going to give the mic to Debbie.

**Debbie (00:01:38-00:03:30):** Thank you Dr. Postlewait for providing this opportunity again for us. There is a lot to be said, and we appreciate that chance. I'm going to kind of stick to this so I don't wander. The 1<sup>st</sup> thing I'd like to bring up is- I viewed a video about the boards proposal for a pay increase, and I just wanted to address a couple of things about that. Chairwoman Darby stated that 50% of our students in Charleston county are not reading on grade level. And that the state wants this addressed across all school districts. And for instance if a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader does not meet certain bench marks, then retention will need to be considered. So now we can't wait to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade to intervene on that and the primary Briggs academy that we once had, was very successful at my school, Hursey. And I think that was done away with in part because of the budget deficit that we had. And knowing that the state will be mandating that districts monitor the literacy of primary grade students, does it not make sense to use that nearly half a million dollars to reinstate PGA and/or other supports for literacy for our students to be successful. It was at Hursey, and I feel like other schools as well could probably speak to that. So that's the 1<sup>st</sup> thing I want to bring up and I won't go through the other things until later, if someone else wants to piggyback on that or-  
[Erica: Does anyone else want to add to those comments? No? Okay.]

**Female Teacher 1 (00:03:34-00:04:44):** I know I have spoken many times about the EVASS system and teachers want constructive evaluations. We also want to know what that evaluation looks like prior to being evaluated by it. I think all teachers agree that we want students to succeed, that's why we come to work everyday. But we also- the evaluations can't be just one across the board, because success looks different in different areas. I know last week you said something about the Montessori, and how different her evaluation would look vs. a special ed teacher like myself. And when the EVASS is based on SC Pass and SC Ready scores and MAP scores, that's just setting my students and myself up for failure. So that is one of my big concerns.

**Female Teacher 2 (00:04:46-00:06:03):** Well I of course want to piggyback off of that because I teach kindergarten, and 2 of my students came in knowing no English. They were ESL. One was

not interacting with other students at the end of this year, he was getting his needs met, he was speaking more English, those are successes that cannot be measured by a test. And I can tell you that on the MAP test, he just kind of went through and picked- he just click click clicked until he got to the doggy. He wanted to get to the doggy. So I can understand the concern ESL students [muffled microphone] This child as I said, came in, speaking no English whatsoever. And as I also said, there are some successes that just aren't measured. Because I was very very happy he was able to speak to me in English, and those are things that a test just cannot measure.

**Female Teacher 3 (00:06:07-00:10:20):** Thank you. I guess for me, hearing about the evaluations I know there were some issues that people were interested in. I guess for me, coming from a title one school, there were some other issues that I kind of wanted to talk about because when we deal with title 1 schools, there are a lot of other issues that open up. I was really concerned this year because I feel like, there are issues that are not being addressed in terms of being an African American teacher in a title one school. And the students who are 97-98% African American- I kind of felt devalued this year because my voice wasn't heard. And I taught at Sanders-Clyde for 2 years and we had 3 principals Towards the end of the year, we did get a new principal, and he's been wonderful. But my issue is, when we think about the issues that those kids deal with, a lot of them have generational issues that they walk into the classroom with. And for me, I want kids to be able to have an understanding of where they come from. We have to a lot of the time, gain a sense of self identity. If they don't know their culture, where they come from, I think it's hard for them to have a positive sense of who they are. And I've seen a lot of times where there aren't a lot of African American teachers who are recruited to be in these title one schools, and that's my concerns when you walk into the building and it's not diverse. It's a lot of white teachers and I feel like it needs to be more diverse, the students need to see representations of who they are, and then if we are recruiting, are we recruiting in a diversified manner where you're going to different places and trying to get a staff that's more equal where students actually see representation of who they are. And I think a lot of the times, what we felt African American teachers at the school was that we had new teachers that came in and wanted to tell the kids what their issue was. Or wanted to fix the kids, and wanted to be a savior, but didn't understand where those kids came from- the Gullah culture, a lot of them- just understanding where they come from. And I really feel like that's an important piece because a lot of these communities that are dealing with issues that have been impacted by institutionalized racism and we're not having those discussions and those discussions are important. And with the new mentoring program, I think that started this summer, I know preparing to leave for the summer, I peeked in to see who the new teachers were, and it was again a room full of white teachers, and I just don't think that's fair to the students that are downtown, because the issues that they deal with each and everyday, they go home with and come back with, and a lot of times, African American teachers have greater understanding of societal issues that they have to deal with. So, my concern is are we really going to have like a task force to deal with those issues to kind of have those uncomfortable discussions. What are we doing to really deal with issues within the Black community- these title one schools. So that's the concern I kind of wanted to figure out. Are we going to have a task force, are we going to pool community people, are we going to include the community

more? And I know there are a lot of times where people say, well if you have the means, parents and the community don't come, but you have to go into the community, you have to be apart of the community to get these parents to come out. My parents were very involved. I could text, I could call anytime and I had their support, so that's my concern.

**Female Teachers 4 (00:10:22-00:11:52):** I'm Ms. Brown. My concern because I'm a 1<sup>st</sup> year teacher is the support. Now I was fortunate enough to...[]. But my mentor on site, he's a great teacher, he wasn't able to support me because he didn't again, understand the kids himself. And like she said, the whole diversity thing, he's been teaching for a while, he wasn't able to help me in a way that could reach out to the students. And I felt that was a gray area because now, I'm lost. And I didn't really have anyone to reach out to because he was my mentor and if it wasn't for her being there saying hey I'm going to help you. Who would I have had? So I think for us being 1<sup>st</sup> year teachers, we need more support, especially in title one schools. And I talked to other teaches and they question as a school district, why would they put the teachers who have no type of classroom management skills with the type of kids like that, and the students who you're not able to handle in the sense that you're going to the classroom to learn. I can't- it was hard to manage those students because I was a first year teacher. And didn't know what I was walking into. It was like being thrown into a pack of wolves. And I didn't have any support besides the people who actually reached out to support me. So for me, that was an issue, a lack of support system.

**Female Teacher 5 (00:11:58-00:13:58):** I guess kind of listening to what everyone is saying, the biggest not issue I see, because I'm more solution oriented, so I would like to just offer some ideas and brainstorm- it seems like we need some type of task force, we have quite a few issues represented in this short line that we're gone around and shared. And I would just like to offer- I know bridge is like a curse word now at CCSD, and it was gotten rid of years ago, but during that process, I really appreciate the process of being invited to speak and be apart of the planning team. I think an open ended email went out and said hey this is what we're doing and if you're interested in having your voice hear, come down to the county office on these days at these times and say your piece. And it really evolved into a core group of planning teams and we had very different opinions about how things should be done. And there were heated debates in all those meetings because everybody had a different agenda, and different background knowledge and a different mindset about how teachers should be evaluated and I think with EVASS going on, and we have these new standards coming up for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, and diversity issues- these are not new issues, none of them. These have been going on- I've only been here 6 years- and they've always been an issue at CCSD. So, I feel like if I could offer a suggestion, just getting the teachers involved more, planning teams, task force. Obviously we're we're all here on our own time today. So, there are teachers out there willing to participate and put themselves out there and be vulnerable to make suggestions and be apart of that change if an invitation is extended. That would be my only 2 cents.

**Female Teacher 6 (00:14:00-00:17:43):** Well that segways perfectly to what I wanted to say, thank you Samantha. So I was also at a bridge pilot school, and so I came- I was on a work group and we came every month and had these meetings. It was interesting to talk to teacher from

other schools, and I was elementary and there were middle school, high school, special ed, I mean they had a good representation of teachers there and it got a little frustrating in the end because we had come and given our time and been to these meetings every month and then it sort of all fell apart, and went away. And it felt as a teacher who was very involved in the process, it felt like all of that work was for nothing, and our voices weren't really heard because a lot of the issues we were talking about with bridge with just these 14 pilot schools it's like a little mini version of what happened this year when EVASS came out, it was the same sort of issues and concerns and as teachers we spent 2-3 years in these work groups saying look you're going to have an issue using test scores you're going to have an issue with value added measures you're going to have an issue using MAP tests for this type of data for this for that, and we talked about all this stuff and then it just stopped and now it's to watch it happen again with EVASS is frustrating from my point of view because we tried to help and we gave our time and we gave our voice and we weren't really listened to. So, I would just like to encourage that you know, you're having these listening sessions and there's lots of ideas being thrown around about task forces and a teacher senate or teacher cabinet, and I think all these are great ideas, and I know there's teachers out there, where we want to be involved we want to be solution oriented, we're not interested in just kicking up a fuss, and having a protest and a fight and saying no. We want to be evaluated effectively because as teachers we know when we're evaluated effectively, we become better teachers, that's better for our students. So we're open to that but it's going to be hard to get the teachers involved when we feel like it's just falling on deaf ears, because at least for me, I know not everyone was involved in the bridge program so they might not know that that had happened before but it was really discouraging to feel like we talked about all this stuff, and it blew up with EVASS again and I'm like I spent 2 years in meetings saying some of these exact same things. Why was no one listening to me? So I would just like to encourage that ya know ask teachers and really mean it like don't just be like oh yeah we're going to listen to you and then brush it under the carpet, because that sort of from a teacher's point of view what has happened in the past. So, I know you weren't here for Bridge, so for you it's a new opportunity to really- don't just listen and take notes, but it would be great to see some actual production happening some positive things happening so we're not just recycling these issues over and over and over again, because then the teachers are going to get frustrated- like you say you want our opinion but then you don't actually take what we have to say seriously so that's why I wanted to come to the meeting and say hey we've been here before, and let's not repeat our same mistakes because teachers have a lot of great perspectives that I think 75 Calhoun St doesn't have so you have to take those things into account.

**Female Teacher 7 (00:17:52-00:22:49):** Hi. Thanks for listening, Dr. Postlewait. I really appreciate that; I know a lot of us do. I have some concerns, but I also have some compliments and I wanted to start off by saying I think as a couple of you have already said teachers are in favor of being held accountable and assessed as long as it's fair as long as it's accurate and I think that's where a lot of the discrepancy comes in. A suggestion I would have would be a myriad of components in that evaluation whether it be COTS or test scores but professional development should come into play, volunteerism, community involvement, lesson plans a myriad of things that almost like a portfolio, something like that where you can earn points- it

just to me can't be 1 or 2 points, it has to be a myriad of things. I did have a concern about a comment that was made at a March 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting and you were talking about, and I can appreciate the situation you're in with having to face the board, year after year and ask for funding and things haven't really changed and you feel like some things got to change to make some improvements, and I appreciate that position that you're in. So I did want to say that I did think something is working and working well is the digital department of innovation and digital learning. What that team is doing for teachers and our students is really starting to make a difference and we're still young in the process and there are course that are being offered and iPad cohorts- some schools have gone one to one. These iPad cohorts provide excellent coaching, and there are classes that come along with that and coaches that come out to the school and works with teachers. The implementation- they don't just hand us our iPad and say good luck with that. I think you are getting a big bang for your buck with that program. Unfortunately, my school is not one to one we just we're just sharing, I think we have 3 iPad carts in the whole school, and two carts with chrome books on them. So, we would love to see more of that and I know that there's going to be classroom monitorization funding to be released in August and I really hope that we're going to get some of that technology. So, I think that is something that is working and that's something you can take back to your board and look at some data with those students specifically and I think you'll be quite pleased at something that is something that is really working. I just hope that as you make- you know you made the comment that we really need to make some changes, it's going to be tough as far as meeting growth targets throughout the possibility you said will it make sense if we take the cost of living increase and look across the school and if it made us 30% growth and the school could get 30% of the cost of living raise. You said we don't have to give COLR we have to to give step increases. But I'm just here to say that hopefully these test scores, this one-time test that they take once a year, is not going to affect my COLR. I am working 2 jobs to just be able to pay bills, not go on vacations, not have a nice car, all my co-teachers, right on my hall, 4 people next to me, all have a second job. If I was making 6 figures a year and had a beautiful home, a nice car, and went on vacations, I might be able to swallow that pill, but I can't survive on not having a COLR and we were hit with that in the past, it really hurt my husband and I. We were working 2 and 3 jobs each, and I've been with the district a long time and unfortunately, as you know, our pay scale does not pass the national average, or is even to the national average. So, I hope you will reconsider using those target growths as a way that we would earn or not earn our COLR.

Dr. Postlewait (00:22:50-00:23:34): And I know this is a listening session, but I just wanted to clarify that has to do with administration, not teachers, that has to do with those who are in the highest salary brackets. And so the idea is to see what it would look like if administrators get 1% COL and the other 1% we look at the growth across the district, not just school by school, but across the whole district. And if we think about treating ourselves to the percentage of the other 1% that represents the amount we were as a leadership team able to figure out how to organize and support. So it had to do with-

**Female Teacher 7/Postlewait (00:22:34-00:28:15):** Yeah I did hear you make the distinction between the two you know you started off with if the school met 30% of it's growth target and 30%, then the school gets 30% of the COL and then you talked about across the district all

schools as far as people at 75 Calhoun and principals. So I guess I misunderstood, I thought you were saying teachers across the school, but you're clarifying saying that it would just be the principals.

[Postlewait: So it's hard to tell at any given moment, and we've spent hours and hours and hours talking about those things, but to my knowledge there was never a discussion issue about getting teachers anything except a pay raise and the COL and moving forward on the step, those who are eligible for step increase. Our teacher salaries are not remaining to pace, so] Okay because I did hear you say we don't have to give those COLRs-

[Postlewait: The point was; I think that was probably wrapped up in the budget. The important point is if the past 2 years, the board has raised taxes in order to make sure that teachers, all teachers get the step increase and the COLR and we also might- if you read in last weeks paper when we were showing that we had taken out a page in a national publication, and you open up the 1<sup>st</sup> page, and right here is recruiting teachers to Charleston county, it's a magazine that is particularly aimed at African American teachers and we advertise nationally trying to recruit more African American teachers to our area, but on the opposite page, there was an ad to teach in Texas with a starting salary of \$51,000 dollars, so consistently we have represented races with teachers. So there has not ever been a time- and the question, the debates for the teachers who sat on the budget committees, and given input, the debate is how do we prioritize, do we lower people-teacher ratio, which requires more teachers and these few with less money to adjust teacher salaries or do we put more money into teachers salaries but that almost automatically makes the people teacher ratio- because you know you can adjust a lot of little things but by far the biggest chunk of our budget goes to the salaries of the workforce, so we realize it's a problem when the last market study that was done before I came to the district, our employees are paying at 90 some percent of what the market where they studies other districts that are like ours, and primarily the SE region and I think the administrators pay something like 91% of the market that teachers sit at the highest percentage of the market, and they're not yet where they need to be, but our board needs to prioritize teachers saying that one time teachers were paying 96% in this market, and administrators were 91%, meaning that you'd make 91% of what you'd likely make in a district in the SE. So I've talked more than I want to, but I definitely want to clarify that our board even in this climate, had been courageous in making sure teachers were well taken care of, and not required to do it, means the state isn't required, and yet our board put the [] on, even though our state didn't require it this year. In order to do that []. So, those were the points that we would want to make. At any given moment sitting around that table, I think we all say things we like to rephrase, I don't think I've said anything that represents a position, there are certain things I've said that I would rephrase. Now I wouldn't want to-I wouldn't want that. But I do want to clarify that our board, our people there's an understanding that teachers who serve on the budget committees have always prioritized taking care of teachers with STEP and COL.]

**Erica Taylor (00:28:24-00:28:49):** Up on the screen you'll see 6 Priority Goals that we have listed and just listening to the first round, we think we may have covered three or 4 of them, but I'd be interested in hearing a little more about ideas as it relates to teaching and learning and ideas that you have to enhance or ways that we could help you enhance what you're doing in the classroom.

**Female Teacher 8 (00:28:50-00:32:26):** Thank you. One thing about teaching and learning is that all students- I'm in a title one school as well- and all students deserve a clean, prepared, safe environment in which to learn, and our school is over 50 years old and I don't know the year that it was built, but we have a primary wing that floods consistently so badly at one time that it destroyed furniture and materials, and took a while to obviously get the water out. We have rats in our ceilings people see tails dangling down and hear scurrying, and a teacher chased one with a broom and had to kill it, and our principal had to help him do that. I mean I'm telling the truth here folks, and we- and our children and our staff should not have to work in those conditions and we are transitioning into being a full Montessori school we were the first public Montessori school in CHS county. The 3 other ones have already been completely renovated or brand new buildings. And year after year we ask and we ask our principal why do they overlook us? And again with the pay raise that they want to do- students. Students and buildings. And I noticed the wonderful notes that you all send out after board meetings to us, email the highlights and- section under it's the building and operations, I'm not calling it the right thing, in letter F, there was a reallocation of maintenance, building and maintenance of about \$500,000. But it wasn't clear where that \$500,000 was reallocated, or still within that budget or put in another budget. Again, my school needs attention, and other schools too not just Hursey. But, I'm advocating for my school right now. So, I guess our questions is, what about Hursey and what about that \$500,000. And real quick, Evaluations, I agree with everyone about that. We need to be accountable so I was wondering to, or would like to suggest that for the board members if the pay raise is passed, before it's passed there is a system put in place for their evaluation, and I feel maybe something like they could keep a log which would provide data that could be looked at, just like with teachers there's different things that are looked at. For instance, how often they visit the schools because I feel like we don't see- except or maybe a quick walk through on a random year, someone will come by, but we really don't see any board members at Hursey. Perhaps they could have a plan before they visit the sight saying what are they going to look for, what does that school need, and have a teacher and or and administrator sign off on that and that could be what is looked at when they are evaluated for their \$15,000. Concrete things like that. I feel like that's fair. Their asking for 40% of base teacher's salary, then they need to follow some of the same evaluation guidelines that we do. [Erica Taylor: Anyone else?]

**Female Teacher 9 (00:32:30-00:34:19):** I guess with regard to teaching and learning like I was mentioning, I was a special education teacher in the middle school, and I think out of all my kids, I had 2 girls and the rest were African American males. So with regard, I know you mention there was a magazine the you recruited with African American teachers maybe I didn't even no about that but in terms of recruiting maybe we can work on maybe getting some voices from teachers to get ideas on how to recruit the schools they went to. Maybe they can reach out to those schools, may go to the recruitment fairs to get more opportunities to maybe see African American males in these schools, I think that would be a really good thing that we kind of need to see. And then the new teachers that are coming in to the title one school information on the community that they're going in to. I know not being from here, going into Sanders-Clyde I wanted to know about the kids, and the kids are so willing to include you in who they are and

explain like, the teachers don't have no idea who that is, but that's a part of their community. And then the language is so important and I think a lot of times when you're able to allow them to incorporate who they are and where they come from it's easy to teach them. So, I think that's really important when we have new teachers who are coming in, they have to understand what they're walking into. They have to know the Gullah cultures they have to know the community that they're coming into. What's the history of the community? So, I think those would be some things, having that, maybe do tours of the neighborhoods before the school year starts. I think would be-

**Female Teacher 10 (00:34:19-00:38:21):** And I would like to add something as a regard to teaching and learning as well. I teach kindergarten down at Charleston Progressive Academy. And I mentioned this a little last week when I was here, but definitely want it to be a big push on mental health stability and mental awareness, and not only of the students but also the adults that are in the building. And I know that something that I have been learning about over the summer is pretty much like different breathing exercises, different stress tests that you can take, because a lot of the times in working in title one schools with the population that we work with, a lot of the times if you come in already in a bad mood or frustrated or aggravated, sometimes the behavior of the student- like you can manage it on Monday, but maybe Monday night, something happened with your family or your children or your husband or whatever, and you come in on Tuesday morning, and that same behavior is escalated and sometimes it's the teacher that will send that student out of the class, or send the student to another classroom and because of where we are mentally, that gets pushed onto the student and that turns into a referral which turns into review 360, that turns into a label, but it starts with how we're feeling and not so much of the behavior of the student. I also feel like there needs to be some programs in place for our students so that we can teach them how to respond to a crisis, how to respond to a situation how to respond when someone does something or says something to them and not so much of a I'm going to retaliate and I'm going to fight, or curse them out or however they will naturally respond. Something that I said last week too was that we have to constantly teach behavior, teach teach and reteach behaviors and I know that's something that the PBIS model is pushing into the schools and into the classrooms, but I also feel like some teachers feel like it's just another thing, like oh we have a PBIS, oh we have a Matrix, oh we have these things but I think if it comes from administration, our leaders, like you said and then from our district that mental health- and what I say mental health it's not a negative like everybody has mental issues, but mental health is a positive, and it's a negative, but I feel like it's something that we have to understand is really evident and even in 4 and 5 year old, there are issues that these students face that they go through that myself at 28 years old, I never had to experience those things before and where she's coming from with the African American standpoint I don't necessarily feel that only African American teachers can reach African American students, because I've had a lot of Caucasian teachers that have made tremendous impact on students, but there's a certain empathy that Caucasian teachers have whereas African American teachers have the sympathy because of something that culturally we have gone through the same thing and we understand the same things. Like she was saying, as someone comes in sort of as a savior, instead of a relationship builder our students automatically put up a guard, because it's like I don't need saving, I need you to understand me.

I need you to teach me and walk me through how to manage myself in this world that we're living in because they're living in a totally different world that we were living in, they're kind of living in public. They're living on Facebook, they're living on Snapchat, they're living on these social media and they don't get to actually have their own private lives, and I feel like that affects our teaching and our learning because they come in with baggage, they come in with a lot of things that we don't necessarily understand or we're not trying to understand in our profession.

**Marla Mashack (00:38:22-00:42:16):** Hi, I'm Marla Mashack. I just wanted to listen a few minutes before I came up here and joined in. When you were asking about some ideas- I was a coach and then I had the opportunity to go back into the classroom and to put in effect what all the coaches have been putting in the classroom toward you guys is- coaches are not looked at as a value, they're like here she comes again. But I'd like to say, as a teacher in the classroom, and now teaching 5<sup>th</sup> grade, coaches- I was there to say I can help and one to say to my coach can you come in here because I realize I know that you're here to help me. So, I think that the coaches in the classroom, not for a minute, but for a longer period of time, to help that struggling teacher. I also think coaches to help the teachers because the ones who are not struggling get ignored and they miss out on a lot of valuable information. And I was lucky to teach in title one school, and a non title one school, and coach in a title one school, so I am seeing the other side, because again, you step out and you come back again, you see things totally different- like you really do have to receive money don't you [laughter] while you're teaching. So, communication between the coaches and the teachers and the coaches in there a little bit longer I think would be very helpful. Professional development not PD to death, but professional development that is meaningful and just like we do personalized leaning, the professional development needs to be personalized. So, and it would carry over to the students as well. So I think that would be an added help. And there was one more thing I wanted to ask about- I wanted to talk about the normal equivalent score that from what I understand with the EVASS is not just an evaluation of one year it's over 3 years, so because I've been doing a lot of reading about it myself because I'm the one in the hot water now, it's over 3 years, and you look at the trend and the achievement vs. progress, meaning the achievement that they meet the goal but the progress is seen at how well the student or that group meets the goal in that teachers class room. And I was surprised to find out, well not surprised if a student has a teacher who's not achieving what she needs to, in 2 years, that child doesn't come back. The study has shown that the child is lost. So, when I looked at EVASS I was thinking okay if I'm not doing what I need to do in 2 years, I need you, so we want to be evaluated. So my question to you is what percentage will that evaluation hold because I'm sure there are other things that we will be evaluated on besides the test scores. I had the feeling that most teachers think it's just going to be the test scores and I'm not sure that it's just that.

**Gerrita Postlewait (00:41:18-00:45:05):** I do think this is a huge- and I understand why it's a miss perception because if there's a vacuum of information, people fill in the vacuum the best they can. So I acknowledge that. Every district has to follow the state evaluation plan and that is the adept plan. There are 4 elements to the adept plan and []. So I think we've had a lot of suggestions about involving teachers in just backing up, saying what is adept call for? And then

by the time school starts this year have a [ ] every teacher that says this is how the teacher evaluation process works. It involves teachers in developing that. Because it can get complicated when you have so many different [ ]. We follow the state adept model, and there are 4 components for teachers, student achievement per say doesn't sit as one of those 4 components. It's a sub set, an indicator of whether or not we're having impact on students. And we want to get that right. Also, coming into effect in a year or two is a new requirement under the state accountability that somehow we look at growth. But I haven't seen that- anything from the state that would indicate that's necessarily on a teacher level. I've seen it at the school level. So growth moves into the principal's evaluation system this coming year. But we have a lot to learn, and most of the tools that we have to use are flawed. So the new state law that was just passed says that when it comes to measuring growth, the state will approve a tool to use and districts can choose if they approve more than one- we can choose the one we want if they approve only one- the decisions made. Clearly, once the parameters are established, it's teacher voice that should drive how we do this. And then we need to communicate to every single teacher in the system so we don't have misunderstandings about that this year. That's clear and done.

**Female Teacher 11 (00:45:09-00:45:49):** I just had a quick thing under teaching and learning, and we've heard that the digital learning is moving in the right direction, and getting those tools into the hands of our students. I do want to throw in there that the progressive discipline plan that is not working and it does interfere with instruction in a lot of places. I know the principals' hands are tied, so that I think is something that needs to be addressed. Because if students are not behaving then they cannot learn. The behavior needs to come first.

**Female Teacher 12 (00:45:50-00:48:46):** I think something I know I experience is the same as what a lot of you are saying is that as teaches one of our biggest concerns is the whole child. So, what's happening in that child's home life that they bring to the classroom and how that affects learning. And one of the focuses from the administrative point of view is of course always the academics and I think there's a sort of misconnection where you look at- okay we need to just look at this reading score so let's throw resources into reading and into more minutes of instruction and into one to one iPads and anything else, but all of that resources is not what's necessarily going to bring up reading scores and it might be a little counter intuitive to say let's zoom out a little bit and if we put some resources into the whole child and into mental health and into community action, and into all these other things that that's when your reading scores are going to go up. So it's not just about throwing resources to one academic area, because I think that's what the county has been doing for a long time, saying let's find a new reading program, let's find a new math program, let's increase the number of instructional minutes, let's whatever it is, and our scores aren't going anywhere. And I think what we're missing is the other piece, and so it'd be great, I know as a teacher you have this feeling like, that there were times where there was something going on in your classroom or with a particular child or with a group of students and you felt like you couldn't stop and do what you needed to do to help those children with that issue because I better be teaching 90 minutes of reading or I better be this or that or I got to give this test next week because whatever data needs to be input-ed or looked for whatever. And so those were the most frustrating moments and it connects to

needing resources to 1<sup>st</sup> year teachers because that's the hardest part as a 1<sup>st</sup> year teacher. Or as an 8<sup>th</sup> year teacher, I still feel like I don't have it all figured out, so I would love to see the district look at the whole child and say how can we put resources into all the different areas of a child's life and how that will impact test scores. Because ultimately those are the test scores- they're academic achievement is what we want so they can be college and career and citizenship ready. But, if they don't know how to handle disappointment without having a temper tantrum, if they don't know how to handle conflict without punching someone in the face if they can't do those things, then they can't be college, career, and citizenship ready. I would love to see the district move into that focus, a whole child focus.

**Female Teacher 13 (00:48:49-00:51:45):** And I'll piggyback off of that, I think it's been mentioned a couple of times, about the PDIS schools and the PDP and a lot of this is new to me in the sense that it happened this year, but I think it happened without me because I wasn't aware of what was actually going on. There wasn't a lot of professional development on it and I would venture to say that, and I'm one of the 3 people sitting up here that is involved in the summer residency, and you mentioned PL for PD so to speak as well. And one of the things we've learned is as we've paired with novice teachers this summer, the so called master teachers are learning just as much if not more in some cases than the novice teachers that we're working with. And I think it's because of the way professional development was set up. It's applicable it's happening in the moment it's happening with real kids in a real school setting with real teachers teaching real lessons. And I think when we're sitting down- and I know we've done away with the 2 or 3 PD days in the beginning of the year, but I think those days where we're pulled out of the classroom and we're being talked at for hours about how to do things, and it's maybe something I already know how to do so I'm not paying attention or maybe it's something I don't know I'm supposed to know how to do because I haven't had that situation happen in my classroom yet. I think if we can move forward with PD in a situation where it's more hands on and more real world setting whether it's I know this teacher over here is really good at handling such and so and I get to go watch her do that for a day or two. Or I'm reliant on my colleagues and my colleague's expertise in order to learn myself and it doesn't have to come from a program or a salesman who is trying to sell us something. It's differentiated. And I would also venture to say that principals needs to be involved in that. Because I think a lot of times, and I'm not saying principals don't have a lot to do, and god bless my principal who is the only administrator in the building who has 400 kids and a feisty group of teachers. She has got her hands full. But at the same time when they're not understanding PDIS themselves, and what their role in the PDP is. How are we as teachers supposed to understand, ya know we're all kind of fighting against each other and spinning our wheels, because nobody is really clear on what we're supposed to be doing. If we're all not doing it together as a team of faculty, our kids are going to see that there's end fighting. That we're all kind of clueless. I can go to this teacher and she's going to let me do this, but that teacher is going to- You know it's like parents. They know who to ask for what they want. And so I think a lot of these issues could be solved if we are all participating in PD together it's more hands on, more real world, more authentic kind of learning just as we would expect with our students.

**Female Teacher 14 (00:52:00-00:52:47):** To piggyback off of what she said, please consider your small schools. When I taught at Ellington I was the only person in the building teaching 5<sup>th</sup> grade math and science. We were a team and that was it. Team of 2 fifth grade teachers. So, I was the only person in the building teaching 5<sup>th</sup> grade math. So for PD or any other type of support, she was a wonderful team mate but she doesn't teach my subject. And the 4<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher is a wonderful resource for me but she is teaching 4<sup>th</sup> grade and in 5<sup>th</sup> grade things are a little different. And so if there's a way to consider your smaller schools, where maybe there's only 2 teachers per team, those people need a bigger community to be apart of, in their neighborhood schools. Something like that. Just consider that as you're planning this stuff, because sometimes teachers are literally all on their own. And that's really hard.

[Erica Taylor: Any questions that we had we took notes for and will have responses for. Is there anyone in the audience who has a comment or would like to share anything with Dr. Postlewait?]

**Audience Member (00:53:33-00:54:46):** [...] How important it is for them to get their learning while they're there. I know they've been pushed out of the classroom after several times, or what I heard was once and the child has to be removed. Well, my interest in making sure that the child stays long enough to know that there's got to be an adjustment. After that period, then push the child out. But to aggressively remove them on the onset of behavior doesn't leave room for change in the setting. The observation of a child among working students is very important. And to just usher them out so quickly they miss the track, especially if they're sitting in ISS. And they're not getting the proper directive because they're missing what is being taught at the session. To have somebody in place in the classroom, I think would be very effective. So we're not so used to just ushering them out. They need to know and [] for the classroom setting. [Erica: I've hear that you all would be interesting in participating in a teacher cabinet/round table task force if you will, and so specifically those who made those comments, if you are interested, if you'd send me an email, and I'll give you my information before you leave today. We'll make sure those leaders who are developing those cabinets do that you are contacted. And we will publicize/communicate that we are forming those groups, knowing that you've already expressed interest, we'll make sure those leaders are well aware of who you are, and your level of interest.]

**Gerrita Postlewait (00:55:47-1:04:03):** Well thanks to everyone for coming. Again, there are probably 4 or 5 things that I want to make sure we say today. The first is that the listening session that is on Wednesday, two weeks from today, will involve some other key district leaders sitting around the table, because they need to listen as well. It's a big district, and the superintendent's job can get really disconnected from chiefs or department heads or the executive directors who work with elementary, middle, or secondary because it is hard to believe this, but our jobs are just as hectic as yours are. And we come to work with kind of a lesson plan of things we have to get done during the day, but we serve 5,000 employees, 50,000 kids and the parents of those kids and other members of the public who have lots of questions and issues that we- we don't have special people set aside to do those things. So, we can get disconnected. Two weeks from today, the teachers listening session will include the person in charge of facilities will be sitting here who can explain that there are 2 entirely

different streams of money- one is for facilities and can't be used for COL increases and so it's important to understand those things and to understand how the public votes on which projects go 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup>, and what it takes to get that sequence changed. So, facilities, HR, the executive directors who work with secondary middle and elementary, the new deputy superintendent who is going to work with instructional programs will be at that meeting if she's arrived and settled it. So, I just wanted to explain that. Secondly, I wanted to tell you that it's really hard not to talk back it feels very rude to me because you ask questions and you give some excellent suggestions and I just sit here and passively write notes but I do want to tell you that we are listening and if we had had this kind of system in place last year, we would be in a better place now, in terms of relationships and trust. You've mentioned relationships with kids several times and it's just the same way with teachers. Our job is to support teachers. So you can serve kids. And it's very painful to know that we didn't handle that as well as we could and should have. The next thing I want to say is that at some schools, some of the programs that aren't working well at your school are working really well. So, for this coming year, I think our focus ought to be on identifying those places where things are working really well and celebrating them and inviting others to learn from them. I think our emphasis has to be on what's working, how we can do this. Not on what's not working, or where we didn't get it right. And that's for all of us it's for the system as a whole, for schools, for teachers, for kids. And then the final thing I want to mention is, any place in America when you work, I'm going to make a stereotypical statement, and it's not always true, but there is a correlation between kids who grow up in poverty and the amount of experiences they're exposed to before they start school. And the fact that they often, by the kinds of measures we use, are not as quite as ready to learn as other kids who have had the benefits of some experiences that kids from multi-generational poverty particularly haven't been exposed to. So, I don't mean that to be offensive to anyone, I'm just trying to make this point. All of those children need to have an opportunity to get the jobs that are available. That are at a living wage that will break cycles of poverty. If you start the race 10 paces behind the start line, somehow we have to make sure that there's a way to catch up. So, our system has to think differently about how we see where kids are and how we look across our system, and others in America to say who is doing what that really accelerates the growth of kids? That's why it becomes important. It becomes important so we can get more kids in to places where they can access opportunities. The measures that we have to use are so doggone flawed. The federal government requires that we test every child who's in a certain grade level on the same test at the same time at the end of each year and then we've been putting up an evaluative judgment on a school based on that single criterion. And it has caused the system to do some crazy things. There not rational, they don't make sense. We wouldn't round up all of our 5 year olds and take them to a mall and force them to wear size 5 jeans, but we are rounding them all up and giving them a size 5 test and then holding the adults and the whole system accountable because they didn't all fit at that time. So the system that we came through and we inherited is based on time so in addition to all these little pieces of things that we're talking about that are so important to us, we have to start having conversations about how we rethink the system. So inside your school, if there are some teachers- when we look at the results, there are some teachers who really get how to teach kids, how to multiply and divide add and subtract, unlike fractions. It might make sense to make sure that that piece of learning, when kids are ready, they get exposure to that kind of talent. That's very different

from the way we do things right now. So, that's the kind of exciting professional conversations we can have together as soon as we get passed the accidents that have occurred this year. My hope is that they are fender benders, and that we can mend and move on. So, that's my great hope. I am always humbled when I'm part of these conversations. So, thank you so much for caring enough to come and I hope you know that we care enough not just to listen but to do things differently. So, thank you.