

Student Reflections On Entire Mini-Budget Unit

Mr. Potter asked students to reflect on the following questions from the Civics / Think Tac Toe Project:

1. How did you feel about the issue before you took action and after you took action? To what do you attribute the change?
2. Do you feel good about what you did? Do you wish you did more? Something different?
3. If future students had an opportunity to engage in a similar project, what would you change? What would you keep? Why?
4. Are you likely to contribute your advocacy and organizing on this issue? Others? Why or why not?
5. Think about your own advocacy, writing and actions. How did you bear witness to injustice, how did you hold those with decision-making power accountable? How did you amplify marginalized voices throughout this project?

“To be honest I wasn't really educated about the issue before I took action. I took action by messaging the Chicago Board Of Education. Yes I feel good about what I've done. Although some students may have made a bigger impact by attending in person rallies, I feel like something is better than nothing. I would not change anything because I felt like it was a good project idea. We were given plenty of time and I liked the idea of working in groups. [I would] maybe [contribute my advocacy and organizing on this issue] because although it was interesting there are more important issues to advocate about. We held them accountable by having an opinion and voicing it.”

“I think that before we started this action I believed that we weren't going to be able to do much but after we took action and saw how many other students were passionate and confident about their ideas I became more interested in the assignment. I think this change was due to the desire I saw in people wanting to use the 2 billion dollars to its best use, not only students but also parents and teachers.”

“The issue of mental health has always been near and dear to me since there were many days in the past year where I was frustrated. A part of me grew to oppose adults who imposed their covid fears on kids as I found these adults to be cowardly. I saw my friends lose hope in themselves and yet they continued to try to move forward. In a year I saw riots and violence that I believe was impacted by covid restrictions, along with pain among society. The elected school board bill was more of an afterthought initially but I realized that an elected school board could actually help in

mental health issues. I honestly don't feel too good about my part because I felt like I didn't do much. My part was pretty small however I did enjoy writing. In the future students should work together on one task rather than many since the unity that is needed to tackle issues is more effective that way. I certainly want to advocate for what I believe because realistically only I can use my voice. I might get a lot of pushback on my beliefs but at this point doing nothing will make me weak. The fact that the school board was not elected really blew my mind because I realized why everyone hates the education curriculum. I found it to be a complete injustice that the school board was full of people who most likely only cared about their pockets rather than people. This project gave us the tools to use for advocacy after we realized our voice had been hidden by our own selves."

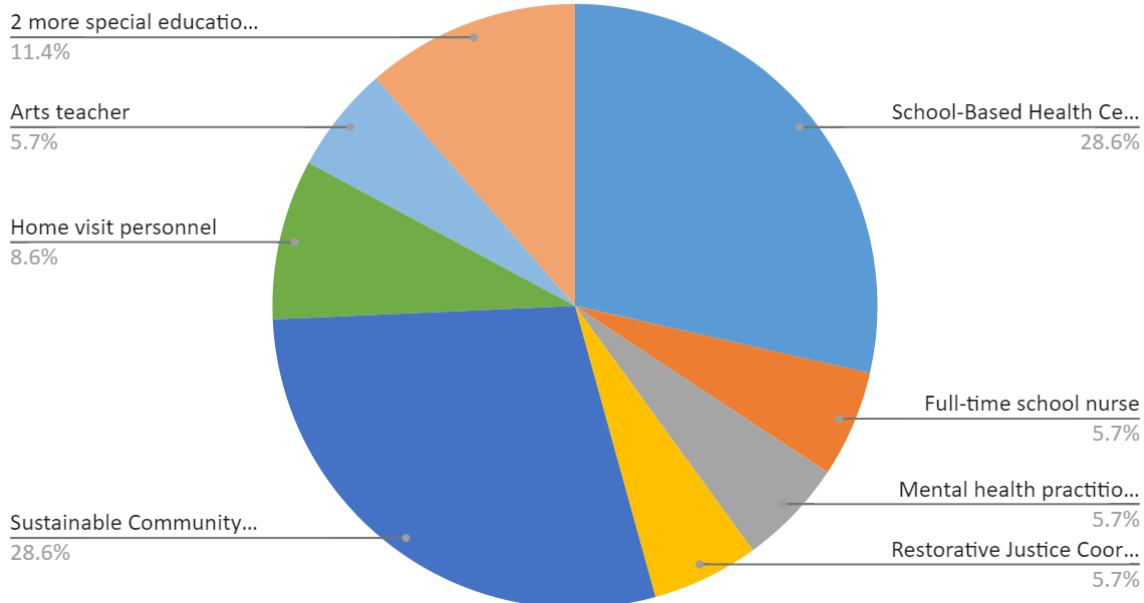
"Before taking action, I felt that my voice was less effective, because I've always heard that there's voice in numbers. But after coming together with other students with similar mindsets, I realized that my voice actually had some form of influence, and I found that it wasn't as impossible as it seemed previously. I believe that I attribute the change to the push of getting out of my comfort zone, given that I have pretty severe social anxiety/fear of public speaking. I have always known that I have the potential to lead and advocate, but I always fear I'll make myself sound like a fool, but after making good research I gained more confidence & felt more well-informed of what's going on around me. My experience so far has inspired me to continue to advocate and put my voice out there. I hope to continue to advocate to ease my fear of public speaking & make genuine changes that my community can benefit with. If future students had an opportunity to engage in a similar project I'd just say it's best everyone gets something assigned by a teacher in a group, so that everyone knows exactly what to get done. It's just tough to have to boss around others and constantly remind them what to do, so even if there's an option to do it individually that would be great. Or if there's a better way to keep track of each student's contribution to the project. I advocated by reaching out to the Illinois governor about a bill & I spoke out at the youth summit & will speak today at the school board meeting to further advocate for resources for mental health. I also learned so much about the inequities and funding that will for sure help me advocate further in the future.

"I would say that before and after I kind of felt the same mostly because this project was a little out of my comfort zone so making the posts made me a little nervous, but I knew it was something I wanted to voice my opinion on. I think overall I was just glad to get it over with. Honestly, for future students, I'm not sure that I would change anything besides maybe adding more options to pick from but I'm not sure what they would look like. I think if I was given that chance I would [advocate for change on this issue]. Through this project I was able to say how I felt about how the new budget for CPS should be used to benefit the students."

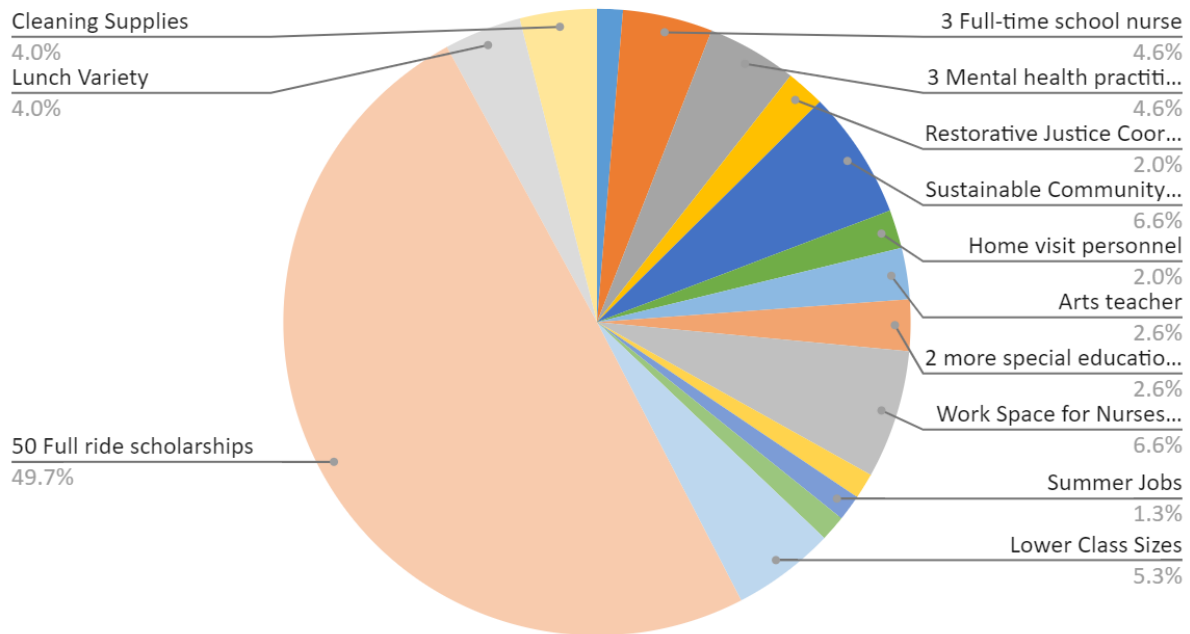
Student Budget Samples

Find your school's estimated budget			Source:
Add your school enrollment	1069		Find your school using the search at https://www.cps.edu/schools/find-a-school/
Add your school's low income percentage	89%		Scroll down to the section titled Statistics, and find the percentage shown under "Low Income"
Your school's low income enrollment	952,479		
Your school's budget:	\$7,551,254		
Services	Budget		
School-Based Health Center	\$500,000		
Full-time school nurse	\$100,000		
Mental health practitioner or social worker	\$100,000		
Restorative Justice Coordinator	\$100,000		
Sustainable Community Schools	\$500,000		
Home visit personnel	\$150,000		
Arts teacher	\$100,000		
2 more special education teachers	\$200,000		
Computers	\$800,000		
Cta/Transit	\$200,000		
Extra Curriculars	\$800,000		
Improved Food service	\$250,000		
New weight room	\$400,000		
Turf Baseball field	\$700,000		
Total	\$4,900,000		
Left to Allocate	\$2,651,254		

My CPS Stimulus Budget



My CPS Stimulus Budget

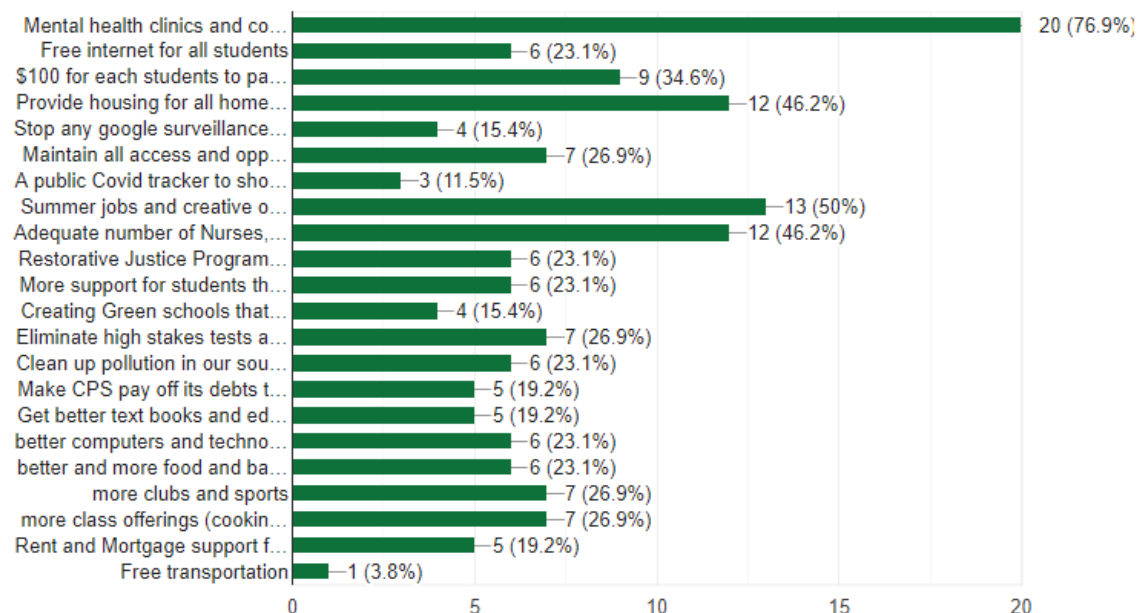


Survey Data

Students helped organize a citywide youth summit. The summit was held over two sessions with over 50 student attendees from 15 different schools. Below are some of the compiled survey data from the group.

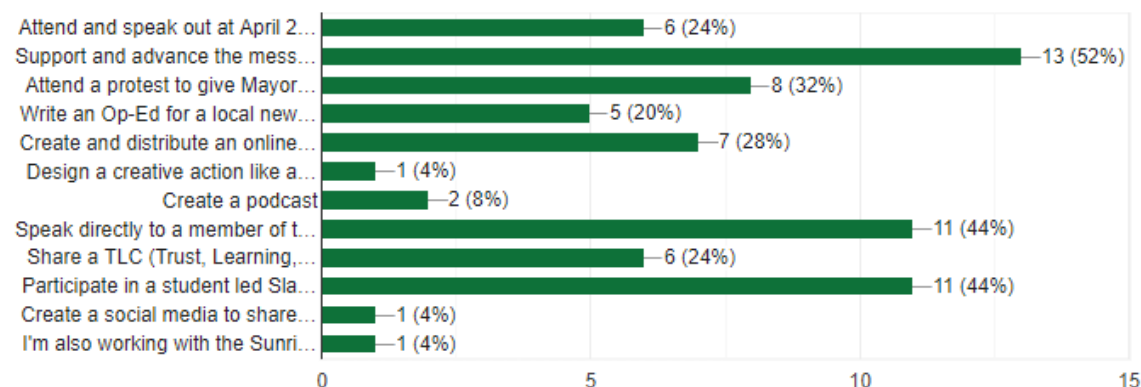
Of the demands being made by students, educators, community groups and parents below, which do you agree with the most? Choose your top three!

26 responses



What are you willing to do in order to move student demands forward and put pressure on decision makers to take our voices and ideas seriously?

25 responses



Student work for final Think Tac Toe assessment
Advocacy Documentation

Directions: Use your rubric and Think Tac Toe descriptors to complete and paste evidence of your work, eg. social media posts, correspondence with decision makers, emails

5 point task : (you can either 1) respond to the quote



giselio
@herobrine7869

Hey @ChiPubSchools, instead of wasting the stimulus check on useless things how about being more considerate of providing housing for the homeless, having a mental health practitioner or social worker, and a full-time school nurse:) #EducationStimmy @janicejackson @chicagosmayor

After you wasted your stimulus check on pointless things



2:24 PM · Apr 8, 2021 · Twitter Web App

3 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 4 Likes

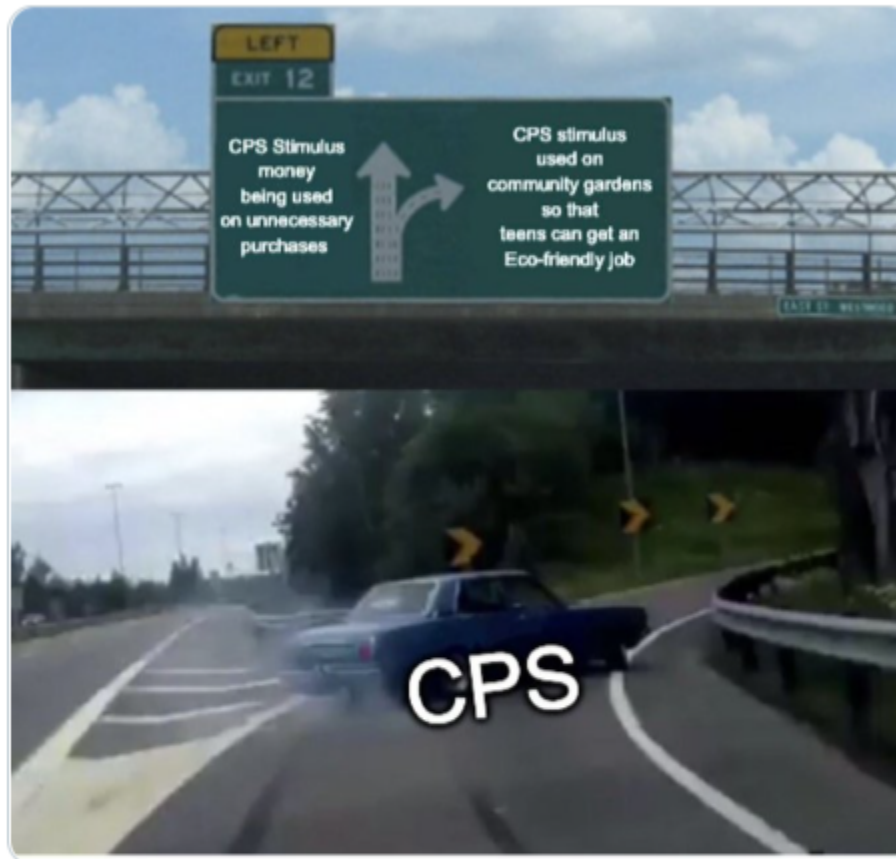




Humberto Castaneda
@Humbert81518588

...

In support of the Illinois [#CleanEnergyJobsAct](#), this is a subtle promotion of an idea that [@ChiPubSchools](#) could do with their [#Schoolstimmy!!](#)



2:21 PM · Apr 8, 2021 · Twitter Web App

2 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 3 Likes



Humberto Castaneda @Humbert81518588 · Apr 8
Replying to [@Humbert81518588](#)
Links to info about the bill - ilga.gov/legislation/bi...

...

ilga.gov/legislation/10...





Lift The Ban Coalition
@LTBcoalition

Matthew, a local high school student represents the youth of Chicago and talks about how eviction caused a classmate to abruptly miss school while they were unhoused

#lifttheban



1:40 PM · Apr 10, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

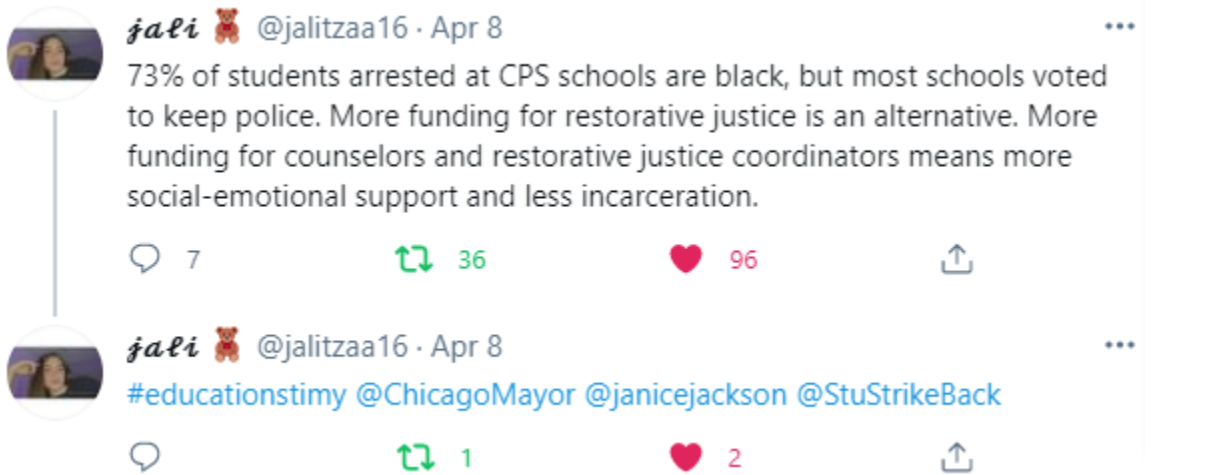
17 Retweets 2 Quote Tweets 39 Likes

This unit was created



M @housingnowIL · Apr 10
Replying to @LTBcoalition
@RepChrisWelch @ChrisWelch JD @HouseDemsIL @ILSenDems

Teacher Fellowship



 You Retweeted



Illinois Clean Jobs @ILCleanJobs · Apr 7

We love this! And we love CEJA Champ @ChicagoTM! #CEJACantWait



Jackson Potter @jacksonpCTU · Apr 7

My student from @boycphs called her rep @theresamah4rep in class today and requested a commitment to help win @ILCleanJobs and get solar panels for our school by involving @ChiPubSchools students in the #educationstimy!



Jackson Potter @jacksonpCTU · Apr 7

My student from @boycphs called her rep @theresamah4rep in class today and requested a commitment to help win @ILCleanJobs and get solar panels for our school by involving @ChiPubSchools students in the #educationstimy!



Jackson Potter @jacksonpCTU · Apr 7

Today one of my @boycphs students called state senator @SenTonyMunoz to ask why he's not a co-sponsor for SB2184, to defend undocumented families and make sure they aren't left out of the #educationstimy



10 point task: (this is really a 15 pointer ... but feel free to do a 5, 15, 15, 20 combo if you like)

[This Student did a Tik Tok to drive her advocacy!](#)

10 point Musical Creation:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f72uQpCorAh4XzduNmbthPXABCNK2qd3/view?usp=sharing>

@lzamora7@cps.edu



Jackson Potter
7:35 AM Today

really creative work @lzamora7@cps.edu ; did you ever post this on youtube or social media? i definitely would ... tag the Mayor or School Board for greater impact

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f72uQpCorAh4XzduNmbthPXABCNK2qd3/view?usp=sharing>

15 point task:Aguirre, Jaqueline

Apr 14, 2021,
5:21 PM (17
hours ago)

Good Evening!

I hope this email finds you well, I just wanted to share some good news with you.

The Deputy chief of staff contacted me today in the morning to let me know that he would be happy to speak with me about my ideas for the budget. I have been scheduled to speak with board member Dwayne Truss this Monday regarding my proposal for the budget plan. I am super excited but also very anxious and worried. I was wondering if you guys would help me prepare for this Monday regarding what I have to say. I have written in the document attached about the ideas that I would like to speak about. Would it be too much to ask for your help and ideas about this?

Thank you in advance!

Respectfully,

Jackie



Theresa Mah <rep.theresamah@gmail.com>

to me ▾

Tue, Mar 23, 9:41 AM



Dear Jackson Potter,

Thank you for your email. I have received your message and your support of the Clean Energy Jobs Act will be recorded by my district office staff. Currently, I am a co-sponsor of HB804. I appreciate your viewpoint and invite your continued interest and comments on various matters that will come before the legislature.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (872) 281-5775.

You can also sign up to our newsletter for updates by filling out the form [here](#) or by following us on Facebook [here](#).

Sincerely,

State Representative **Theresa Mah**, Ph.D.
Illinois 2nd District

On Tue, Mar 23, 2021 at 7:22 AM jackson potter <jpottery@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear State Representative **Theresa Mah**,

As your constituent, I am reaching out to ask you to pass the Clean Energy Jobs Act (CEJA, HB804, SB1718) now.

The COVID-19 pandemic has thrust Illinois families and businesses into a public health and economic crisis. As we emerge from this crisis, CEJA is a part of a bold recovery effort to build a strong, equitable economy and healthier, more resilient communities.

CEJA will boost one of our fastest growing industries, clean energy, by creating new, well-paying jobs in communities where they're needed most and reducing utility bills for families and businesses struggling to make ends meet.

For many students, their school is like a second home for them. Certainly, teachers and staff have the ability to provide a strong support system for students, whether they struggle in school or outside of school. One should never feel scared or discriminated against in their own school building, but this is, unfortunately, still the case within the Chicago Public Schools district.

Despite the fact that arrests on CPS campuses have declined in the past decade, the distribution of these arrests is still extremely skewed against African Americans. According to data from the Chicago Police Department for last school year, 73.4% of youths 21-years-old or younger who were arrested on CPS school property from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. were African American despite the fact that the same demographic makes up only 36% of the district's student population. This means that African Americans are disproportionately arrested at a rate of over 200%. Certainly, this demonstrates a school district with a misplaced focus on correcting or disciplining students - a focus that places minority students at a disadvantage.

How is a safe school environment maintained in a healthy manner without any discrimination? Efforts to answer this question were undertaken last summer when 17 CPS schools decided to remove their School Resource Officers (SROs). But, this change is simply not enough. Underfunded schools need additional counselors and restorative justice coordinators so that student voices are heard and systemic racism is not reinforced by disciplinary actions. Uniformed officers cannot be relied upon to create a welcoming school environment — on the contrary, students throughout the district have voiced their discomfort or anxiety in being in the same building as an SRO. Students who are understood by staff members and feel welcome at school will inevitably fare better than their peers without these support systems. Counselors are crucial in providing academic, mental, and emotional support to students. Restorative justice and peer juries allow students involved in behavioral incidents to be heard by their peers and classmates — people who naturally understand them better.

CPS received nearly \$2 billion in funding after the American Rescue Plan was passed by Congress and signed by President Biden. Existing inequalities within the district have been made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is essential that the district dedicate enough money to counselors, restorative justice coordinators, and other resources that students deserve.

[Link to Resolved Article](#)

- Submitted to *The Maroon*.
- Reached out to *South Side Weekly*, have not heard back yet.
- Screenshot is visible below

20 point task:

Check out Jackie Speaking with Chicago Board of Education member, Dwayne Truss, about her budget priorities.

