

**SPECIAL MEETING  
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN  
(PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED FY2009 BUDGET)**

**April 28, 2008  
Mayor and all Aldermen**

**6:00 PM  
Memorial High School**

Mayor Guinta called the meeting to order.

Mayor Guinta called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Gatsas.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll. There were fourteen Aldermen present.

Present: Alderman Mark Roy, Gatsas, Sullivan, Jim Roy, Osborne, Pinard, O'Neil, Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Ouellette, Domaingue

**Mayor Guinta** advised that the purpose of the special meeting is a public hearing to receive comments on the proposed Fiscal Year 2009 municipal budget, the proposed Community Improvement Program for the Fiscal Year 2009 to 2015 period in accordance with the procedures established in RSA 44:10 and in satisfaction of any other local, state or federal law that may apply. Mayor Guinta noted that the Clerk shall present the resolutions, the subject of which contain all of the appropriations presented proposed, following which a brief presentation may be made and public comments will be heard.

**Matthew Normand, Deputy City Clerk** presented the proposed Resolutions:

“Raising Monies and Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2009.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester School District the sum of \$140,000,000 for the Fiscal Year 2009.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester School Food and Nutrition Services Program the sum of \$5,826,500 from School Food and Nutrition Services Revenues for Fiscal Year 2009.”

“Approving the Community Improvement Program for 2009, Raising and Appropriating Monies Therefore, and Authorizing Implementation of Said Program.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester Transit Authority the sum of \$900,000 for the Fiscal Year 2009.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester Airport Authority the sum of \$58,491,089 from Special Airport Revenue Funds for Fiscal Year 2009.”

“A Resolution appropriating the sum of \$16,575,221 from Sewer User Rental Charges to the Environmental Protection Division for Fiscal Year 2009.”

“A Resolution appropriating the sum of \$3,238,235 from Recreation User Charges to the Recreation Division for Fiscal Year 2009.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Parking Fund the sum of \$5,112,907 from Parking for the Fiscal Year 2009.”

“Appropriating all Incremental Meals and Rooms Tax Revenue Received by the City in Fiscal Year 2009 and held in the Civic Center Fund, for the payment of the City’s Obligations in Said Fiscal Year Under the Financing Agreement.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Central Business Service District the sum of \$244,000 from Central Business Service District Funds for Fiscal Year 2009.”

“Continuation of the Central Business Service District.”

**Mayor Guinta** advised that the meeting shall be open to public comments; that each person when recognized shall come to the nearest microphone, state their name and address in a clear and loud voice for the record; that each person shall be given one opportunity to speak and comments shall be limited to three minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak; residents and taxpayers shall be called upon first followed by all others; that once all present have been allowed to speak should there be a topic not discussed those wishing to speak a second time shall be provided the opportunity to do so.

**Mayor Guinta** stated if we could all adhere to the three minute rule please...we do have a yellow light that will flash when you have 30 seconds remaining and then a red light when your remarks are concluded so that we can allow each and every individual an opportunity to speak.

**Arthur Adamakos**, 1196 Union Street, Manchester stated:

Ladies and Gentleman good evening and welcome to Memorial High School. As the principal I want to welcome all of you this evening. I am sure it is a long evening. I am sure you know why I am here to speak to you this evening. I want to talk about kids. For 29 years I have been employed with the school district and I have spent my entire career...my entire life actually working with someone else's kids, all citizens of either the Manchester area or surrounding towns and communities. I am one of the few people left after being around for such a long time that can speak to this issue from a point of the \$140 million proposal not making it for the school district. 95% of the budget is fixed. You can't move it around so you only have 5% of the budget to play with and what is going to happen is this. That 5% is obviously items that we do not have to provide legally, federally or state-wise, to students. Now what is that going to mean? That is obviously going to mean salaries going away, teachers losing their jobs and class

sizes increasing. I sat in on a press conference and we are going to get to 40 students. I know that is true because we are already at 33 students to the classroom right now and there is nowhere to go but up. I also know that the items that we provide that some people may consider luxury items that we don't have to provide students are sports, clubs and activities, the one thing that keeps people on a level playing field when it comes to applying to colleges and universities. I also know first hand that our accreditation is going to suffer. I will say that within two years at this \$140 million figure all three schools will lose their accreditation. There is no other way around it. That is something we obviously want to prevent. So what the point is right now is this. I know you are in a very difficult position. Revenues are down and you have to increase the budget and increase taxes to get to that spot. The thing is this. For me it has always been about kids. It hasn't been about myself. I have spent my entire career as I said teaching other people's children but I happen to know that they are going to be the ones that are going to be harmed the most as a result of this \$140 million budget. We are going to be able to provide just the bare minimum and not much else. The bottom line...the single question I have to leave you with today is this: Why should it hurt so much to go to school in Manchester when you can just move to another town and get everything that you deserve? Thank you.

**Katherine Morrison**, 35 Andrew Street #1, Manchester stated:

I am both a taxpayer of Manchester and a teacher at McLaughlin Middle School. I saw the signs that are in support of the Mayor's budget that says "Less Spending Equals Lower Taxes." If this is true, what is the lower correlation of lower school budgets to student achievement? I have read many comments that my fellow taxpayers have written that the school district are money sucking humans and do not preserve the budget. I have also heard that many people feel that teachers have a cushy job with school hours of 8 AM until 2 PM with summers off. Most of the public do not understand the school system. They work for companies that

pay them for all of the time they spend working. I, along with many of my colleagues, spend many extra hours arranging activities for my students and helping in any activity going on in the school without compensation. In a school there are many activities that would not be able to be run if it weren't for teacher volunteers. I invite anyone into my classroom to see what it is like to keep control over 30+ students with learning levels and behaviors all over the chart. In the past year, the school district has spent money training new teachers on best practices in teaching and has taken the time to gather a group of teachers from each school to work on improving our standing as a District in Need of Improvement. As a teacher, I was finally starting to see a little glimmer of hope that we would move our district in the right direction. Now we have hit budget season and the glimmer has been burst by the number of pink slips delivered so far in the proposed \$7.25 million cut from last year's budget, which equates to \$11.3 million. How does this work when schools are already working with minimum staff? How is it possible to increase learning by cutting faculty and supplies? I mostly fear for the safety of the students and teachers in the schools. By cutting assistant principals, SRO's and teachers we are taking several steps backward. As a District in Need of Improvement, we have worked to improve our schools but these cuts will prohibit any further advancement. Larger class sizes only make it more difficult for teachers to address learning problems that students are having. We will merely be a daycare and administration will be dealing only with discipline problems. Along with these cuts we also cut sports, extra-curricular activities and buses within two miles. Let's think of what this will do to the students who are already behind in testing according to the NHECAP scores and have us as a District in Need of Improvement. As one parent said to me, if we don't spend the money on schools we will be spending the money elsewhere to keep our kids off the streets and learning sports and music. Whether you have children in the schools or not, you will be paying for the children that are out on the streets causing trouble. For many of our students,

sports are what keeps them behaving and doing well in school. You take away that incentive and they won't care how they do in school. These students are our future caretakers. Not only is there a need for funding of teachers, administration and officers but we also really need to start more alternative programs in the middle schools. We have the STAY Program, which helps to mentor 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with the YMCA models of encouragement. We need a lot more programs like that in order to get out of District in Need of Improvement.

**James Colby**, 3 Leda Avenue, Manchester stated:

Although I can speak on many topics tonight as a parent, taxpayer and a teacher who most probably is going to receive a pink slip, my focus is on the lack of technology in the Manchester School District. When I came to work here at Memorial a couple of years ago, I was so appalled that the equipment was so antiquated that I brought my own computer lab with me. Since then, I have brought close to 100 computer systems into this building and laptops for students to use. I have been able to do this primarily because equipment that other districts are getting rid of is newer than the equipment that Manchester currently has. We have staff using equipment that is 12 years old. We have teachers coming in fresh from college trying to relearn on old computer systems that they may have used back when they were in middle school. We have students furious that the computer that they spent 30 minutes typing a paper on has no USB port to save or to put a thumb drive in to save a file or has a broken floppy drive and they can't retain or save that file and they have no place to save their documents. These are real situations. We have outdated software. The results are frustrated staff and students. Each year technology seems to be the easy cut in the budget process but Manchester has cut technology from the budget so many times that they have now fallen very far behind. The only solution now is to pay an exorbitant amount of money to get us out of this hole. Students from a poor community like Franklin, NH have access to more modern technology than the City of Manchester students

do. A couple of years ago I was in the Mayor's Office and I can tell you firsthand that he has a newer computer on his desk than the majority of students are using in the Manchester School District. We often hear people say that our children are our future. While this phrase can be overused, it is no less true. If we want our children to excel we have to provide them with the tools for a first rate education. I hear through the grapevine that some Aldermen want to pass the Mayor's budget as is just to watch it fail and make him look bad. I am asking as a taxpayer and a parent to do the right thing. Scrap the Mayor's budget and adequately fund the school budget.

**Christine Martin**, 518 Holly Avenue, Manchester stated:

I am an educator here in the Manchester School District and I want to thank the Mayor for allowing us to have this opportunity to speak on behalf of what we believe is right in our community here in the Arthur Mirablie auditorium. Truthfully I can't think of a better place in the entire City of Manchester to talk about what is in the best interest of children than in the Arthur Mirablie because I always feel like he watches over us here so that we make good decisions on behalf of kids. As some of you know, I am the Fine Arts Director here in the City. I began my teaching career here 20 years ago and I have enjoyed the pleasure of teaching some of the children sitting in this room and now I am an administrator here in the school district. I didn't think when I took the job as Director of Fine Arts that all of the sudden my social status would diminish in that I would become a central office administrator and no longer be looked at with the same dignity that I was looked at as a teacher. I am here to tell you a couple of things. One that I promise you that every day when I go to work even though now I am an administrator and not a teacher, that I do good things on behalf of kids and I make sure that the 79 amazing staff that work for me do exactly the same thing. The regretful part of our conversation tonight is the situation that we are in from a revenue standpoint. There is no question about it. We are in a

situation as a city in an economy with revenues that are down. I will say this to you. I live here and I pay taxes here and I expect that every child in this room and all 16,000 children in the Manchester School District will have the same opportunity that I had and better. When we provide adequate public education for children, we level the playing field. We provide art and music instruction in the classroom setting and we enrich children's lives forever. We provide the leadership opportunities of athletics for children and enrich their lives forever. It is a very regretful statement when we have members of the community talking about education in a very negative and disrespectful light. We are doing good things on behalf of kids, ladies and gentlemen, and we are asking you to fund that. I recognize the sacrifices that that may lead to for my own family. We figured it out the other day. If we get our full allocation it might be \$1 a day...an additional \$365 a year. I am willing to pay that and I am willing to pay for adequate services in Highway, Police and Fire as well and I would encourage you to use your good judgment as you have in the past. Thank you.

**Dan Garrity**, 341 Whitney Avenue, Manchester stated:

I am an employee of the Manchester Highway Department. First of all I would like to say that Kevin Sheppard should be commended for the job he is doing with what he has to work with, which hasn't been much lately. One other thing...on his presentation to the full Board of Mayor and Aldermen the other day he mentioned some of the equipment and the repairs on it and what I feel was just the tip of the iceberg. An example I am going to give you is we have five streets sweepers at the Highway Department. Four of them are used daily and one of them is a spare and the spare is not roadworthy. The last time I went on a street sweeper I had to go to the eye doctor for abrasions across my pupils. It is a sad fact that those sweepers are still here today. Sweeper 25 is a 1994. One of those sweepers is used two shifts a day. They are alternated. The winter. We have had a hard winter. I think everybody will agree with that. The men at the Highway

Department have worked long hours. The roads and the streets are in terrible condition basically from the plowing with the snow and all. I have been working here a long time and I have never seen the potholes that we have this year. On an average winter, we used 50 tons of cold patch. This winter we used 500 tons and that is at \$80/ton. No small expense. In the past the Highway Department has done competitive bidding for jobs such as trash pick-up and street sweeping and we have been the best buy for the taxpayer compared to the private sector and that is with the benefit package included. In the past we have outsourced plowing. We have had private contractors plow and that didn't work out. I am not going to go into the reasons why. There are quite a few. A 6% cut to the Highway Department would cripple the department. 25% of the workforce would be laid off. Someone's street is not going to get plowed this winter. When it does snow I usually work a 24 hour shift and go home. If they are going to be adding to my plow run, I am not going to be doing it. I am going to be going home after 24 hours. As far as I am concerned, this budget borders on disbandment of the Highway Department. The Highway Department has been functioning for generations and through this we have gained lots of wisdom, knowledge and technique on the skills we provide. One of the best things that has happened to Manchester is MCTV. If there are taxpayers tuning in tonight, I urge you to call your Mayor and Aldermen and support the Highway Department budget. The site of the Highway Department – 227 Maple Street. Everything about that building and property is obsolete from the windows to the plumbing to the doors to the heating system to the electrical to the ventilation. There is a hallway and to go through it you would want to wear a ventilator and people are working in these conditions. This needs to be addressed for obvious reasons. One other thing. To the 975 people out there with tax liens on their properties, ask yourselves do you drive energy efficient cars? Do you overspend on your charge cards or do you have all of the latest electronics at home? Thanks.

**Leah Wolczko**, 17 Heald Street, Manchester stated:

I teach biology across the hall here at Memorial. I am a first year teacher. I come to teaching as a second career. I worked for 18 years in the court system and decided five years ago that teaching is what I wanted to do so on nights and weekends and in the summer I took my courses and I got my Master's Degree in Education. Last year I did my internship, a full year one from UNH here in one of the City's middle schools. I have now finished my first year of teaching biology and I feel we have had some success in Room 402 across the hall. I stand before you state certified, highly qualified with a Master's Degree in Education in Biology, which the state says is a critical shortage area. I like it here. I came to work in Manchester because I wanted to. I was offered other positions in other districts and I wanted to work here. I like my colleagues here and I love the kids here and I want to stay here. However, I, too, own a house and I have to pay my mortgage and I have property taxes to pay as well and if you give me a pink slip next week, you leave me no choice but to seek employment elsewhere. I know that a couple of years ago when the pink slips came out, Memorial lost a teacher in the science department who was one of twelve people certified in the State of NH to teach physics. He got a pink slip and because he had to worry about his family, he sought employment and now he works somewhere else. He wasn't here when you called him back. If you give me a pink slip, I have to look for another job. Please don't make me go if you don't need me to go, if you can come to some type of a compromise before that fateful day when the pink slips have to come out because I have read and heard it said that losing teachers is the last thing you are going to do. If that is the case, please don't give out all of these pink slips. I would rather lose my job personally than to see them use the arts and athletics, but it is not about me personally and I do realize what higher class sizes mean, especially in a science room. If you are going to have 30 or 35 kids in a room and you want me to have beakers and chemicals and experiments going on, it is not going to happen. It can't happen. You can't keep a lid on it with that

number of kids. So leaving aside that horrible thing of class size, I don't want to see them lose anything either. I don't want to see them lose any of it but if it has been decided that teachers are the last thing to go and higher class sizes are the last thing you are going to do, I ask you to please find a compromise and not give all of these pink slips out that you are going to recall afterwards. Thank you.

**Tom Grant**, 10 Jeanine Street, Manchester stated:

I have been a resident of this City of almost 61 years and what I am seeing right now is not enjoyable. I am going to go a little different route here. I am going to try to bring up a few things that I think we could do that maybe are going to help raise money for the City. Maybe it is feasible and maybe it isn't. One is this incinerator that sits over here that is not in use. I know that awhile ago, but I can't remember how long ago, they talked about rebuilding that thing so that it would push out clean air and they could use it to heat Beech Street School and JFK and the Highway Department. I would like to know where that went. Did it go down the drain? We are talking garbage all the way to Auburn, and who knows at what cost with diesel fuel at \$4.30/gallon. There was a company at one time that wanted to put a place to bring trash to but nobody wants it in their neighborhood. As a taxpayer, we can't have everything. You can't not have this in your backyard or not in your backyard and expect that taxes won't go up. It can't happen. The other thing I have is that I read in the paper that the Mayor is looking for a new car. You know what? I don't have a problem with that. I really don't, but let's be an innovator. Let's get him a hybrid so that he saves fuel and whatever. Maybe we are on to something here. Let's be the first to do this. I want to thank you for the improvements to JFK. I am employed there and the improvements you made are absolutely wonderful. I thank you. The building definitely needed it but we need a little more. The other thing I have is I have a proposal to save a little bit of money here. We now have 14 Aldermen. My proposal is that we have a 15<sup>th</sup> Alderman. Fifteen Aldermen vote and they make a

Chairman of the Board and they give him \$5,000 or \$10,000 a year more and we lose the Mayor's salary. If he wants to cut my job so I can lose my house and my family doesn't have a right to live, you know what? I am sorry Mr. Mayor but maybe we should cut your job. That's about all I have to say. I know you people up there are going to do the right thing and I just hope the day will come when 14 Aldermen and a Mayor and department heads can sit around a table and do a budget without everybody trying to outdo the other guy. It is pretty sickening. There is no reason you guys can't do it as a group. Thank you for your time.

**Ellie Murphy**, N. River Road, Manchester stated:

I am a resident of Manchester, a taxpayer and the principal of Beech Street School. I believe this budget lacks moral, political and intellectual integrity for the entire City. At Beech Street School 92% of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch. That means they live below the poverty level established by the federal government. No one needs to explain tough economic times to the families at Beech Street School. At Beech Street School 50% of the students are English language learners (ELL), and 80% of these students are refugees or immigrants. They have come from countries and situations that we have only witnessed on television. They need differentiated instruction, small class sizes, individual attention and specializes teachers. Research talks about if you have ELL students in high poverty schools the most important thing you can offer are highly qualified teachers and small class sizes, not more kids in a classroom. Not any teacher can teach at Beech Street School. Not many teacher wants to teach at Beech Street School but the teachers who teach there are all highly qualified. They all want to be there and they all are dedicated to the students at Beech Street School. Do not remove them. If you need to cut something, cut supplies. Teachers for years have been buying crayons, pencils, notebooks and paper for their students. They will continue to do so but with more students in a class, students will not be getting the individual attention they need to be successful.

These students are our future and the staff at Beech Street School makes a difference. Please support a budget that keeps teachers in the classrooms. In conclusion, I am a Manchester resident, a taxpayer, and a voter. I will vote only for individuals who are invested in Manchester and its future. Thank you.

**Brendan McCafferty**, Blodget Street, Manchester stated:

I am a native of Manchester. I reside in Manchester. I am an Assistant Principal at Beech Street School. I want to thank all of you for being here tonight. I want to thank everyone who has come regardless of your stance. I think everyone here wants a better Manchester. That is why we are here tonight. I don't want to even talk about the dollar amount right now. What I want to talk about is one thing that gets tossed around a lot, that we are a District in Need of Improvement. I think that is tossed around as a buzz word but we all don't really grasp it to an accurate depth. No Child Left Behind has mandated these NECAP exams, which dictate our being a District in Need of Improvement but what they don't tell you and what the public is not aware of, Aldermen and Mr. Mayor...for example at Beech Street School 92% of the kids are under the poverty line and 50% of them are ESL learners and a very high special education load. All of these kids, their scores count against our test scores. These kids are placed in specialized categories to protect them. No Child Left Behind was developed to protect our schools and to advance them, not to be tossed around as a politically expedient buzz word to knock our schools. At Beech Street School as Ms. Murphy mentioned, we have a very high poverty rate. These kids who are coming into our school on a daily basis are facing domestic violence, physical, mental and other abuses. They have no food. There are drugs, guns, knives, gangs. These kids are all mandated to take an exam. They are not even sure whether they are going to get their shoes on to get to school in time. Mr. Mayor, I know it is not an easy thing to run a city like this. At times, you have mentioned that we should look to a business model and you are the CEO of a \$276 million business. What kind of

CEO is not going to be involved in a regular basis on a \$150 million portion of that? You have not been in our schools. You have not been a part of our progress. I don't say these things lightly. I don't come to make inflammatory remarks but for two and a half years when you ran for re-election you said that you expressed regret that you haven't been able to be a part of the education process. That is no excuse. A CEO needs to be held to extremely high standards and as Chairman of the School Board I am appalled as a resident and native of Manchester that you are not more supportive of these folks in our City who are working extremely hard to make our kids the best they are. I got a call the other day from Laura Gardner. She runs a national publication on refugees in D.C. She told me that some of the things happening in Manchester are as good as any in the country. We don't hear those things in our publications or in our newspapers. Our staff in Manchester, our teachers, our Aldermen and everyone are doing a wonderful job. In conclusion two weeks ago I was given a pink slip and tonight I don't come to defend my job or save my job but I am very concerned that in the end are we just pink slipping our students. Let's cut the middleman and start doing it directly to these guys. Again, I applaud everyone who comes out regardless of what side you are on but Mr. Mayor we need you to get involved with our schools. Don't make it an 'us versus them' situation. Anything else is unacceptable and I thank you again for your time.

**Maxine Mosley**, 76 Sherburne Street, Manchester stated:

I am part of a very large special interest group. I am a public school educator and I have been for 27 years. So Arthur Adamakos, no matter where you are, I am not that far behind you. Good evening, Mr. Baines. It is nice to see you, the man who hired me. As a homeowner and a taxpayer I am very realistic, again, like other people who have spoken that the revenues are down but I am extremely concerned. I have been through in my career of Manchester being pink slipped and in 1982 actually being laid off so I know what that feels like and I know what

some of the people that work with me are feeling at this moment. I am not here to tell you people how to spend money within the district. That is the School Board's job and the Superintendent's job. I am asking you to relook at the allocation that the Mayor is asking you for. I sit at home and I honestly don't have the patience to come and sit at meetings but I sit at home on Saturday mornings and watch you all on public access television and I listen to people say well the Federal government is under spending and not funding us fully for special education and they are not giving us the money for the English language learners. Folks that is an old message. We all know that is true. That is not going away. We can all agree that that has caused us problems but here is a reality. We have 16,000+ public school children from pre-school through high school that sit in our chairs in our classrooms in our buildings every single day that school is in session. Those are real people with real needs. Alderman Lopez and I had a conversation. Schools have changed. It is not ten years ago and it is not twenty years ago. The face of our students has changed dramatically. You have heard some people talk about the educational needs that they have. In all reality, these children have life needs. We have talked for almost ten years about alternative school programs in Manchester. It has gone nowhere. The Mayor can talk about how many less students we have this year than last year. That is not a fair representation. If you look at the statistics of clinical disorders and children with Aspergers and autism, we are no different than any place else in the country but what makes us different in NH is that we truly are an urban setting with urban problems and urban families and families at or below the poverty line and children that have trouble coming to school and parents that have trouble engaging with us. I have never worked with a finer group of people than the educators in the Manchester School District. I will stand by this district no matter what your decision is but those 16,000+ students cannot speak. They are not yet taxpayers, but ladies and gentlemen, they will be soon.

**Susan McKeown**, 299 Steinmetz Drive, Manchester stated:

I am here about requesting full funding for the Office of Youth Services. Some people kind of look at the world as the 'thems' and the 'uses', the 'thems' being the people that need the services and are always needing tax increases and the 'uses' being the ones that take care of our own and resent people that talk about increasing taxes. I am a taxpayer and my husband is a taxpayer. We have been married for 37 years. We have lived in our home in the north end for 27 years. My husband has been a special needs teacher at Central High School for 35 years and I have been at Child Health Services as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner for 26 years. We have four children who were educated at Central High School. Some people would think that maybe all of the things would put us in the us's category. We are not. We are the we's. I passed out earlier in front of all of you a graph that I would like you to look at regarding OYS and some of the statistics for 2001. In 2001 you can write our name on the bottom of the CHINS petition. In 2002 you can write our name under the YDC youth requisites. Our youngest child had severe issues with substance abuse that our parenting alone could not manage. My husband is teaching tonight at the Resource Center on Lake Avenue. Otherwise he would be here to tell you that without the Office of Youth Services and in particular Judy Cooper, our son would not be alive today. I think that speaks for other families as well and certainly some of the clients that I deal with a Child Health Services can say that. At that time we needed to employ a CHINS petition, court's JPPO, JOLT team and YDSU. Need I tell you how much taxpayer money that is? It is a lot. The ratio now is about seven to one. That is, one dollar of investment for prevention and intervention and seven dollars saved in the court and legal system. OYS works very hard to collaborate with the school district, Manchester Police Department and the JPPO to avoid the legal routes and court funds. Money spent to fund these services is an investment for our City. Drop the them's and the us's. It is we's that we are talking about. All of us who run a home know that money is always an issue. We want to take a

vacation but the roof needs fixing. What are we going to do? It is a lot more fun to take the vacation but fixing the roof is an investment that is a smart one to make. OYS is the roof for our families and our children and I would ask that it be looked at as the wise investment that it is. Please fully fund it. We are taxpayers.

**Tammy Simmons**, 142 Parker Street, Manchester stated:

I would like to thank Mayor Guinta and all of the Aldermen for enduring this evening's commentary as I am sure you will be here quite late into the evening. I come here tonight as a concerned taxpayer of Manchester in support of Mayor Guinta's budget. I do so not because I want anything less for the residents of Manchester but because I know that we are at a point where taxpayers can just not afford any higher taxes than they are already paying. The only way to prevent an increase in taxes is to control spending. On the school district side alone, we have basically the same number of students that we had in 2000. At that point, the school budget was \$100 million. Today, the school district is asking for over \$153 million. How is it that our school budget has increased by over 50% in eight years with the same amount of students? I am not here to criticize the teachers for the job they do but I am concerned that we have somehow grown our school budget to such an unmanageable level that people today are at a loss as to what to do about it. I challenge those who come here to criticize the Mayor for not wanting to reach into the taxpayer's pocket for more taxes to fund a budget that has so obviously grown way beyond its means to rather look to those in the school district administration. I want to remind those in attendance here and those listening at home that the superintendent, both assistant superintendents and every single principal and vice-principal in the district makes more money than the Mayor of Manchester. Those who are being paid to administer our schools quite honestly seem to be failing at that challenge. I want to reiterate that I have nothing bad to say about any single teacher in the school district because I know you do a very difficult job under very difficult circumstances. I do not think the

problem lies in the schools. I cannot emphasize that enough. It is no surprise that we are without revenue from the Bedford students and it should be no surprise that some sort of plan should have been put in place years ago to address the decline in students. Instead, we the taxpayers are being asked to just give more money and more money and more money seemingly with total disregard for how we are supposed to manage things. Governor Mel Thompson once said "Low taxes are the result of low spending." It really is just as simple as that. That is why I have opted to join with other Manchester citizens in a spending cap petition that will allow the residents of Manchester to vote to amend the City's charter to require the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to limit increasing the amount raised by property taxes each year for the City budget to be no more than the rate of the change in the consumer price index. I want the Police and Fire departments to have the funding they need to protect our City's residents. I want our parks and streets to be maintained and I want the best education we can possibly afford for our children, but in a day and age when people are having to cut back on everyday expenses in order to manage, at a time when so many people cannot even afford health insurance any longer. I want to ask our School Board to find ways to bring our City spending in line. The residents of Manchester deserve nothing less than that.

**Daniel Kramer**, 225 Whitford Street, Manchester stated:

I am a senior at West High School and the commanding officer of the NJROTC unit. I come here tonight in support of NJROTC, which is one of the many groups in the school district that would be affected by the budget cuts. The West NJROTC is probably the only true high school organization that takes everyone regardless of special needs, academic ability, or athletic ability. In this program everyone is on the same playing field. After 36 years of NJROTC, the last six years have really exemplified what the unit brings to West High School and the community. Not only have we been a distinguished unit with academic honors

the last six years but we also have not had a senior drop out of school who was enrolled in NJROTC in the last ten years. This is proof that not only do NJROTC cadets graduate but the great majority of them go on to college. Last year 19 out of 21 seniors went to four year schools. This year we may have a few less but we also have a female cadet going to the U.S. Naval Academy and I have earned myself a full ride NJROTC scholarship with a Marine Corps option. We feel that NJROTC makes not only West unique but also the whole school district. We have cadets from all parts of the City in the unit and if the busing situation was ever worked out, the unit would probably double in a year. Also the NJROTC is a mini academy in itself. It takes ownership over all of the cadets in all facets of school. Academics is our number one unit goal, however, in addition to that involvement on drill teams, various competitions and community service helps cadets become more successful students. When you talk about the whole person, NJROTC ensures that students are pushed to increase their options when they graduate. We don't always make the honor roll but the importance of doing your best is never far from a cadet's thoughts. I know a lot of people are here to speak tonight but I truly hope that the people dealing with the budget look long and hard at what NJROTC offers and accomplishes with a wide variety of students who probably would not make it without the program.

**Robert Tarr**, 318 Spruce Street, Manchester stated:

For the last ten years I have been a resident here in Manchester. I am not a taxpayer. I do rent, however, I have been in the school system as a parent volunteer for the same amount of time. I have also worked two and a half years in the DENI project and professional element team and put over thousands of hours of my own time without compensation to ensure that the students get a full and evaluated education here in the school district. Tonight the Mayor's budget of \$140 million I feel in a perfect world would be fine but in the world that we are in today it is too severe of a cut. When we look back at last year, the Aldermen did

create a budget for the School Department and the City and gave a tax refund. I urge the Aldermen tonight to do the same this year and look at all necessary and non-discretionary spending and give a tax refund to the taxpayers of Manchester but at the same time completely and fully fund the education of the Manchester school district. The students that you see before you and behind me tonight are the future of Manchester and America and we must not let them down. So again tonight the Aldermen...you have shown us last year that you could give the school district a budget they could work with and you can do it again this year. I hope that you can and I put that challenge to you tonight.

**Kathy Staub**, 374 Laurel Street, Manchester stated:

I am the President of the Manchester Coalition for Quality Education. We are a grass roots organization of parents and community members advocating for better schools. I am here to express my concern over the Mayor's proposed \$140 million budget for the schools. It is not sufficient and it will lead our community farther away from the goal of getting off the District in Need of Improvement list. We are on the verge of making a breakthrough there. We have worked very hard to build the capacity of the people who are working in the school district. We now know what needs to be done but we need to be able to do it. It is a very important investment for us as well. Five years ago, 25.8% of our students were eligible for free and reduced lunch. That percentage has grown to 38.1% this year. What does that mean? Does it mean that we are not bringing enough good paying jobs into our City or that middle income families are choosing to locate outside of Manchester or send their children to non-public schools? We need to look seriously at the impact that our struggling school system is having on the economic development of our City. Manchester is a great city for families. A gallon of milk is never more than three or five minutes away and that is important, especially in my household. The Mayor has suggested that the answer to all of our problems is to reduce spending on administrative costs to no more than 35%.

First of all, we already do that. In 2007, 67% of our expenses went to direct instruction and yet we remain a District in Need of Improvement. However, whether or not the Mayor has accurate information is irrelevant. The important thing here is that this is not an effective strategy for turning school systems around. In a 2005 report, the issues and implications of the 65% solution, Standard & Poore's found that no significant positive correlation between percentage of funds that district's spend on instruction and the percentage of students who score proficient or higher on state reading and math tests. Standard & Poore's also suggests that we ask policy makers what their intentions are: to improve student achievement or to reduce costs? There are only a handful of towns in the entire state that spend less per pupil than Manchester. Are we in a race to the bottom? And when we succeed in becoming the lowest spending school district in the entire state of New Hampshire, what next? Do we take on Alabama? We have a serious situation here and if we are ever going to turn our school system around we need to involve all of our stakeholders, including parents, in working toward a solution, which brings me to my next point. In order for parents to take our place at the table, we need information. Lately it has become evident that there are policies and practices in place that are designed to prevent people from sharing information with parents and to limit discourse on this important topic. Parents have more at stake than anyone when it comes to the success of our schools. As a taxpayer, I pay Dr. Aliberti's salary just as I pay the Mayor's salary and naturally as a parent I want to hear what our chief educator has to say about this budget. As a parent and taxpayer I would also like to hear what the Mayor's perspective on this budget would be and how he would make it work. Last week on a local radio show you said that you would be happy to meet with parents and talk about the budget. Please pick a time and a place and I would be happy to get the word out to parents. I will call your office tomorrow. Thank you.

**Paul Crawford**, 383 Beech Street, Manchester stated:

I am not an employee of the City or the School District or a taxpayer so I am not giving you any advice on how to take care of the taxpayer's money but I would like to share with you some stories. For the past 18 years I have worked here in Manchester with kids at risk. In the south end with summer basketball (CYO) and at YDC and YDSU as the Catholic chaplain and I am here tonight to speak highly of the Office of Youth Services here in the City and the service it does and the prevention it provides and bringing together the school district, juvenile justice and the police department to save our City money and make sure that kids at risk get that tough love and the support not to go to court and save close to \$5,000 per kid who doesn't do that. The WIRE Program, which has been a tremendous success in the junior high and high school level is an example that the state is looking at to implement to help at risk youth. I really encourage the Aldermanic Board and his Honor to look at the Office of Youth Services and to encourage support fully of it if possible. I am not here to offer any miracles or to preach to you but I also volunteer for five hours a week at Beech Street School with the Bring It Program and then once a month with the Fun Program and I would just like to share some observations about the dedication of the school district employees. I arrive there at 5 PM. School ends at 3 PM. There are about 20-25 teachers who leave after 5 PM who have been working in the school and before I leave at 9 PM there are three or four teachers who come back to do work on their own time for the next day. I think we have very dedicated people from the administrators on down to the support people in the school district and I ask the Aldermanic Board and the Mayor to please consider fully funding the budget for the school district because every dollar you spend today saves several in the next budget. Thank you.

**Maura LaPointe**, 367 Millstone Avenue, Manchester stated:

I am a taxpayer and teacher in the City of Manchester. I grew up in a small town and I always thought I would teach in a small town. By chance, I was offered a job to teach in Manchester six years ago and have decided to stay. Many people have asked me why and my answer is simple. These kids need me and they need the love and care that the teachers of Manchester provide every day in addition to their academics. These students also need a district that believes in them and supports them. Over the past few weeks, an analogy has been made comparing the school district to a business and that in times of economic crisis the district should behave like that of a business. While I agree that we are in the midst of an economic crisis, I disagree with the simplicity of that analogy. In business, the outcome is some inanimate product where quantity and/or quality can be reduced in order to survive the economic crisis. Our outcome is the foundation and enrichment of our children's lives. This outcome cannot be made equivalent to that of an inanimate product. In times of economic gains and of economic crisis, our investment to the children and young adults of Manchester should remain constant. These children and young adults are the future of our communities, our City and our world. Our greatest investment should be in them. I thank you for your time and consideration and your support.

**Paul Becker**, 1234 Union Street, Manchester stated:

I am a taxpayer. I moved to Manchester because of the school system. I moved here so that my children could attend Central High School. I have three children. One of them is going to enter Central in the next year. I have two children who graduated. One went to the University of Texas and one went to Arizona State University. While at the University of Texas, our daughter won accolades as the best writer that her professor has ever had. So I can honestly say that Central prepared her and prepared her well for her future but she didn't only learn about mathematics, science, history and writing. She also learned about moral courage

and ethics and I am here because of her. She asked me to come and speak. She said "Dad you can't let this happen to this school. Don't let this happen to future." While she was at Texas she helped people who were involved with Hurricane Katrina. She helped form a library at Kelly Air Force Base and then she also helped children with AIDS. Presently she is in her second year of law school at Tulane University, and she has been told to take off her resume helping children with AIDS because it doesn't look good. I think that what she learned from Central is she said no, I can't take that off. It is me. It is what is right and she is standing firm. She is doing the right thing and being courageous. Tonight each of you must make up your mind on a budget that tears down the progress that our City has made. This budget doesn't have a foundation in realism or responsibility for the future of our City. This is a budget that does not have support from any department head. It is a budget that unilaterally results in layoffs, unsafe conditions in our City and an unsafe future for our City. The budget has been termed to be non-political but clearly it is set-up for at least one individual to look good for the next office that they want to hold. This is a budget that leaves the City under funded in public safety as well as education. A budget that will put our children at a disadvantage in the most competitive time the world has ever known. This is a budget that each of you Aldermen is being asked to demonstrate your ethics and your morale courage. Don't tear down the progress the City has made. Don't look to do politically the right thing. Do what a 24 year old graduate of Central High School has done and stand up and do morally and ethically the right thing.

**Katherine Neveux**, 320 Mammoth Road, Manchester stated:

I am here tonight like many of the people in this audience as a concerned parent. My husband Kevin and I have four children together. We have a third grader at Beech Street, and a fifth grader at Beech Street who fall into that 92% that qualify for the free lunch program. We have an eighth grader at McLaughlin and we have

a son who graduated from Central last year. In the raising of our children, the focus on education is strong. To highlight this focus to our children, we volunteer our own time at school and in this way our children see first hand how significant this focus is to maintain. My husband and I were unable to pursue our education to its fullest so we know how hard you struggle in life without a good education. We are very passionate about them succeeding at life and we know it all begins with a solid academic background. Brendan McCafferty, the Vice Principal of Beech Street School, was recently handed his pink slip. Beech Street School is an amazingly diverse school with outstanding dedicated individuals like Brendan who give so much of themselves to the students. They go above and beyond their job descriptions, which is one of the many reasons my husband and I requested permission for our children to stay there when we moved out of the Beech Street School district. I want my children to be taught and guided by caring and dedicated people who go above and beyond because that is how I do things and that is how I want them to be. I see pockets of excellence in our schools but we still have a long way to go to provide a quality public education for the children of Manchester. Having the budget now doesn't make any sense to me or my children. My son was actually going to speak tonight but it is a bit intimidating. I fear that the proposed budget cuts of this magnitude will cost our children more in the future and in order for us to compete in a global economy we must continue to invest in the education of our children. For many years the schools have been under funded and you need to recognize that with educational responsibility comes fiscal responsibility. We will fall behind in job creation, as well as economic growth and we will fail a generation of children, including mine. I am asking you as a parent, as a taxpayer, and as someone who is employed by the City of Manchester through the Health Department who works at Beech Street School and sees the dedication that these individuals do everyday who don't deserve to get pink slipped, that you say no to the cuts in education. Thank you.

**Kevin Neveux**, 320 Mammoth Road, Manchester stated:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I am honored by the fact that I will have your full attention while I am up here for a few minutes. Everyone here tonight has talked about caring, hope, giving of themselves and I kind of want to take about a little more based subject – the bottom line, cash, money. A concept called ROI, return on investment, which is used by a lot of businesses. You know they love to make up acronyms. I am going to speak specifically about my experience at Beech Street School because my wife and I volunteer there. As she said, there are many dedicated individuals working there. There are some weak spots.

Nobody is perfect. I will be the first to admit that but what outshines any of those rough patches are the spectacular individuals who work there. Among those you have heard from tonight are Ellie Murphy, the principal, Danielle Long, who is the social worker there, Janet Bross who is the school nurse, and Brendan McCafferty. I specifically am going to use him in some of my examples because he perfectly illustrates my points. Here is a man who works for the school department not because he has to but because he wants to because he can make a difference. Sometimes he works many additional hours – many more than his contract calls for. Sometimes as many as double more. Wherever he is if something comes up where he can assist the Beech Street School be it running errands or rubbing elbows to generate interest or garner support, Brendan is there. He is always on deck. He creates and organized after school programs that actually bring in money to help pay for those programs, as well as other school activities and needs. More importantly, he stands as a glaring example of what can be achieved when someone dedicates themselves to a cause. That dedication shines through to call others to the cause. His efforts actually inspire others to give of themselves creating a chain reaction of additional support. I kind of think of Tom Sawyer without all of the conniving and trickery getting to paint the fence. His example shows a tremendous return on investment. He is slated to be lost if these cuts go through. All that he gives freely to the Manchester school

system would be lost and all of the additional support will atrophy when his example is lost. Basically these cuts harm your return on investment. Don't make them. You have the choice. You can make the cuts and have them as well as yourselves remembered forever as the point in time when Manchester started to fall into decline or you can do the right thing and perhaps have it mentioned in passing or a side note how close we came to messing things up. For anyone else who still has questions whether or not this budget is skewed, I will provide a copy of Sim City IV for your personal use. Even something as simple as a video game simulation knows that if you mess with education funding, the City suffers. Make the right choice. The time for political posturing ended when you involved my family. Thank you.

**Zac Carr**, 144 So. Ridge Drive, Manchester stated:

I am a senior at Memorial High School. I just want to tell you about a program that I am involved in. It is MCTV. What do I do there? Not only have I learned to use the camera and be on television and run all sorts of stuff like that, but I have met a lot of important people politically. I have met Senator John McCain. I met Bill Richardson. Pretty much every major political candidate that is running for office or was in this past election cycle I met, interviewed and shook their hand. That is an opportunity that not a lot of people are going to get and if we cut the budget that is the kind of opportunity that you guys are going to be depriving the students of. I just applied to college. I am going to the University of Miami. If I didn't have this on my application who knows if I would have gotten in. The same things goes for soccer and student council, which I am involved in. If I didn't have those things on my application, I maybe wouldn't have been going to college. Right now it is not a concern for me because I am going to college but what about my little brother? What if he doesn't have band to go to or soccer? What about Christian Rodrigues and John DiStefano and Gavin Madden? What if they don't have the soccer team to put on their college application? These are

things you have to think about. You are not just denying people the programs to participate in but you are denying them opportunities. Thank you.

**John Rist**, 192 So. Mammoth Road, Manchester stated:

Thank you for holding this public hearing tonight. I have the distinct honor of being employed at Central High School as the principal. I have to paraphrase the opening line from A Nation At Risk, a report that was issued about 25 years ago almost to the day. If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on Manchester the mediocre educational performance that the Mayor's budget would create, it might well be viewed as an act of war. The destruction of the current educational system in Manchester cannot be allowed. Therefore, I ask the Board to reject such drastic cuts to education. One of the inscriptions on the wall of the National Archives building in Washington goes something like this: "The quality of a society is measured by the education provided for our children." The negative impact of the Mayor's budget on that quality is immeasurable. I have always thought that every parent wants a better future and a better life for their children. Is that now changing when we can't afford to even maintain the status quo? Everything costs more money now. A gallon of gas is 100% more than it was in 2000. It is \$3.53 a gallon and milk is \$4 a gallon. Wheat and rice - basic commodities - cost more. Everything costs more. Some things you can't do without. A quality education costs money and everyone who has ever been a parent should support the budget that was presented by the Superintendent of Schools. In my 22 years here in Manchester as a school principal, I have never been more concerned about the financial support offered to the school. Another saying I use quite a bit is the rising tide lifts all the ships. Therefore, an outgoing tide lowers those ships, sometimes to be grounded. Let's not ground the future of our students and their opportunities in an outgoing tide. In these hard times I would even settle for a slack tide. I am appalled at the comments that were made in the paper by the city treasurer of the Republican party that this was just a feel

good hearing. I am not feeling real well myself right now. I am very worried about the future of our children and for the quality of life style that will occur if the Mayor's budget is accepted. Mr. Mayor and honorable Aldermen, show some courage and do the right thing.

**Kathleen Howard**, 191 Old Wellington Road, Manchester NH stated:

I am a native of Manchester. I had been an English teacher for ten years at Central High School. I now teach at Memorial High School. I have worked during the past year for Senator DeVries from January through June. I took a year off and I met her. She is a wonderful person and I also met Senator Gatsas. It was a pleasure. I wish to also go on and thank my mentor, Dr. Grace Sullivan, for her guidance and assistance while I taught at Central High School. She educated me about the best digital equipment, the best digital design and motivated me to send all of my tapes of Central High School students, Central scholarship nights, athletic awards, music events, Christmas events, and plays to MCTV which were played for the citizens of Manchester, the parents, and the grandparents. All events were videotaped by students for students. Dr. Grace Sullivan and the MCTV staff broadcast these educational programs to the parents and grandparents of our students. Tonight is a historical event for Manchester at Memorial High School. Tonight Manchester citizens are watching a live broadcast from Memorial High School. This was and is a vision of Dr. Grace Sullivan. She alone has brought this live broadcast to the citizens of Manchester. I want to thank Dr. Grace Sullivan for her dedication, diligence and perseverance for the last 17 years. Tonight is truly a historical night for us. Please thank her and MCTV staff for their excellent community work. In 2005 the Mayor and Board of Mayor and Aldermen separated MCTV, an educational government program, from MCAM. This was a wise decision. Thank you. MCTV gives students the opportunity to learn media literacy. This year you voted for MCTV to move downtown so that public schools, parochial schools, community colleges and the

school for lifelong learning will have access to this valuable medium. MCTV is a nationally award winning station. Channels 16 and 22 are informative and a pleasure to watch. I watch it all of the time; I don't know about you guys. We are also being watched right now. Now the Mayor would like to form a committee to reunite MCTV and MCAM as MCAM would like money that MCTV will realize from funding from Comcast fees. I ask that you honorable men and women continue to follow your original vote for the separate of MCTV and MCAM. This was your decision in 2005. Please keep your commitment to MCTV. Dr. Grace Sullivan and MCTV are a priceless and valuable asset to the City of Manchester. Please honor your commitment to the citizens of Manchester. Thank you.

**Dianne Bryant**, 222 Blucher Street, Manchester stated:

I am a student at West High. I am here for the ROTC program. There are a lot of students here who are helped by the program. It helps their grades and they do well in school because of it because they get a lot of support from people who are there. There is the first in charge commander who I love to be around and they are great teachers and it is not fair for them to lose their job. They have always been there for us and now I am here for them. The second reason I am here is for sports because I keep hearing that people don't want kids to become obese and if you get rid of sports it will be more likely for that to happen. I am here to help kids with that and a lot of kids keep their grades up because of sports. If you get rid of the sports a lot of kids are going to have their grades go down and they are not going to care as much. Also I am here for my sister. She is in gymnastics and I believe West High has a sport for that. If you get rid of that, she is not going to have a scholarship for that and she might not go to college. I am also here for my friends who are in a lot of these programs that might be gone. I am here to support them and I thank you for your time.

**Edward Doyle**, 396 Laurel Street, Manchester stated:

I am honored to be a music teacher at Hillside Middle School. Before that I was a student in this auditorium as a music student as well. I wish I was eloquent enough to use my own words but I am going to steal a little bit. I have a quote from Mark Twain and it says, "My life has been filled with many tragedies, most of which never occurred." It is the Superintendent's job to put forth a very scary scenario to many people. Even though I don't like obsessing too much about the opposite side of you because it really stresses me out, there is this myth going on that these are just scare tactics. I am sorry. This is reality and this is not a good thing that we had to come here today. Now I want to thank everybody who has come out in support of the schools today because it is very clear that the overwhelming majority of citizens in this City support the public schools and will do whatever they can. So not only am I stressed out by the opposite side of you I also have real comfort knowing that the majority has come out and I thank you so much. I come to school and I look at the students that I teach when they come in the first day and I just see enormous potential. I don't see budget numbers or burdens on our tax base. I see the best that we can offer them and I try to do that myself, and I know I speak for countless other teachers not only at Hillside but throughout the City. I ask you please do what is right for the City. Support the schools. I know you are going to hear many more people speak on that tonight so I yield the rest of my time. Thank you.

**Winn Hutchinson**, 386 Orange Street, Manchester stated:

I came here tonight to speak neither in support of or opposed to any budget. I think probably there is an answer somewhere between what the Mayor is calling for and what the department heads want. As a semi-retired taxpayer, I do believe we are paying a great deal of money out in taxes and I certainly applaud the efforts of the Mayor to control budget growth and avoid another increase. I also understand the defending of funds for the department heads, including the school

department. No administration wants to lose ground that they have already made and that is what a budget cut always seems to bring into our minds. I can tell you as a taxpayer that I really don't want to afford a 15% tax increase. It just doesn't make sense. With all of the other added expenses that we all have now, and we don't have to look very far to see them – gas prices, food prices, the price of anything to do with energy - all you have to do is read the newspaper or watch television and you know what is going on. Nearly everyone has to adjust their lifestyle to continue to make ends meet and the City department heads should be no exception. Certainly there is room for movement and I would expect that the posturing and the scare tactics will end and meaningful deliberations will begin. Nothing will be accomplished if we adopt a stonewall attitude. Sacrifices need to be made and the citizens of the City have always been willing to bear their fair share of the load and maybe more than their fair share. The City is a big tent. We are all protected by it. I think the Mayor, department heads and the Aldermen all need to come back under the tent with the rest of us and stop tearing holes in the fabric or we are all going to lose in the long run. Perhaps small increases could be tolerated. However, we should not put forth a progressive budget during hard times. Now is the time for must-haves not like-to-haves. We can move forward when the light at the end of the tunnel isn't the train coming the other way. Thank you for your attention and I look forward to a decision that is fair to all of the City employees and to the taxpayers.

**Rachel Hedge**, 484 Medford Street, Manchester stated:

I am a junior here at Memorial High School. I am a member of the varsity softball, field hockey and winter track teams. I am also on the student council and the Latin Honor Society and I am the junior treasurer of the National Honor Society. I have been involved in all of these activities at Memorial since my freshman year. I think it is devastating to think that all of these accomplishments that I have made and my peers have made will go out the window just because we

don't want to raise taxes. You know the legacy that has been left behind from those that have come before me, my class and the future of those who are going to come after us. We all work really hard and it is unfortunate to think that everything will just fade away. On Collegeboard.com they administer the SAT's and PSAT's and they guide students on how to get into college. They tell us that extracurricular activities can give students an edge. They tell you to find something that you truly enjoy and stick with it through your high school years. It is not even possible for us to stick with it if we don't have the opportunity to be in those extracurricular activities. The Princeton Review also is similar to the College Board and they tell you that college admissions officers tend to look favorably on students who are involved in any of the following activities: student newspaper, student government, choir or orchestra, varsity sports, all state anything and leadership positions. All of this will be taken away by the new proposed budget. By not even giving us the opportunity to become involved in school activities, you are limiting and even taking away our chance to be competitive in college and scholarship processes. The admissions officers won't know that all of these opportunities were taken away by the City. All that they will see is that we suddenly stopped being involved in our school. In conclusion, I just ask you to listen to me and to us. I have nearly 300 signatures of concerned students in the City of Manchester who feel the same way that I do. Sports, art, music and extracurricular activities are our lives. I can only speak for myself but what keeps me going most of the day at school is knowing that at the end of it I can put on my uniform and go represent my school with pride on the field. We would all be heartbroken if you took it all away from us. Most of us will be voting in the next few years and this is our future, which is your future and the future of this City so please don't let us down. Thank you.

**Amy Colby**, 3 Leda Avenue, Manchester stated:

First of all I want to thank you for the opportunity to talk tonight. I am here today for a few reasons. One, I am an educator at Smyth Road School. I am a taxpayer and also a mother of three little boys. Mr. Mayor, I am here to simply state that I am not in support of your budget and this is not about teachers losing their jobs. It is about how children will be affected for years to come. Again, I am a mother of three little boys and education is number one. Ten years ago my husband and I bought a house in Manchester and this is a place where both of our families were born and raised and the City was known for its qualities. Without making education a priority, we will not be considered the place where people want to raise their children. I exercise with a bunch of ladies and some of them are here tonight and we have noticed that there are a lot of houses for sale all over Manchester. The message is out and it is loud and clear. Manchester is not a place you want to live. The schools are not important and the streets are not safe. I believe that there are only four districts in the state that currently spend less on education than Manchester. We already know how to stretch a dollar but in these difficult times we still need to continue to make children a priority. Currently everyone is dealing with higher prices. It is not something we like but it is reality. The school system also needs to continue to operate and stay current. People may not like to pay more in taxes but it is reality and everything costs money. Who really wants to live in a community where education is not a priority? As a mother of three little boys, an educator, and a taxpayer, I want education and I want safety as priorities. Mr. Mayor I do believe in one of your inaugural speeches you quoted Daniel Webster, the New Hampshire statesman and you quoted, "Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also in our day and generation may not perform something worthy to be remembered." Cutting education is not worthy of being remembered, yet if we do cut education it will be

remembered and will affect the next generation of our children, including yours.  
Thank you.

**Ken Sevigny**, 211 Salem Street, Manchester stated:

It wasn't that long ago, about 15 years ago, that I was in this very location in the hot gym one night when the new sheriff had just ridden into town. Mayor Wieczorek came into town and was facing the same crisis we are now. He was trying to get lower spending and lower taxes and tried to have that affect the City in a positive way. Well, there was a lot of hemming and hawing, a lot of political posturing and a lot of gloom and doom, but we all got through it. At that time I had three kids in the Manchester school system - one at Parker-Varney, one at Parkside and one at West. They were everywhere and I was very, very involved in this and very concerned about the budget, but I was also concerned about what the Mayor at that time had in mind and that was to try to bring under control the spending. Unfortunately, the same thing happens time and time again. Here we are again. This situation is eerily similar and the people are painting this doom and gloom picture about massive staffing cuts and program eliminations. I am here to say that it may not have to be that bad. While sacrifices are going to have to be made, at the same time let's talk about the consequences of ever escalating property taxes. Let's start with the property owners themselves. Back then I had only owned my house for about three years and I was very concerned about the taxes and that is why I backed the Mayor and everything seemed to work out. I am hoping the same thing happens this time. Now my kids are out of school but I still have the same concerns about my taxes though and so do senior citizens who have owned their homes for decades who are now faced with making a very tough choice of abandoning their homes because they are on a fixed income and can't afford the property taxes anymore. I think that the schools can do well with...you know try to do more with less. Mayor Guinta said it a few months ago. That is kind of what I am trying to project here. It is not all that bad. There are going to

be some compromises and some consequences but I think what I would like to do in the final few minutes that I have here is to address the department heads and the City officials. I am getting the impression that they are just throwing up their hands and saying we can't do this. We can't make this work. I think you can. We have a lot of bright people working for this City and if you identify small areas where you can realize some savings then you are not talking about just painting the whole thing with one brush and saying we have to have all of these lay-offs and we are going to lose all of these people. I am hoping that we can get away from that. We have to live within our means. I as an individual have to do that. I have been faced with revenue shortfall many times and I prioritized and spent my money wisely. I am hoping that the City can accomplish the same thing and still have the same bright future for our children. Thank you very much.

**Joe Briggs**, 105 Burnsen Avenue, Manchester stated:

One reason that the neighboring Bedford got to need its own high school is that professionals living and working in Manchester refused to send their own children to our schools and found it cheaper to move to a suburb with better schools and higher property taxes than it was to pay for private schools plus high property taxes. The only way to halt this professional flight is to determine here and now that Manchester schools will be second to none in the entire country. They have to be the first. We recognize that in order to attract quality, high paying, high tech companies we must be able to bribe them with their single most important asset – skilled professionals. Our only hope for doing this is to dramatically increase and maintain our level of commitment to our public schools. We must also attract a first-rate engineering university to Manchester. The ultimate pay off will be when our own kids will be able to live and work in the city that they grew up in. We need more revenue flexibility. It is time to look for a return on our investments. The Manchester-Boston Regional Airport serves over four million passengers a year. A \$2 arrival and departure fee similar to what the city of Chicago levies on

passengers at O'Hare Airport would solve our immediate problem. A \$1 per ticket surcharge on events at the Verizon Wireless Arena and Fisher Cats Stadium would raise over \$1 million annually. While our high schools have lost students, our primary schools are at capacity. The city of Milwaukee recently celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of giving parents the choice to send their children to the public school of their choice or any qualified private school that is willing to accept the public rate and abide by all state and federal guidelines. This model would reinvigorate struggling private schools, reduce busing costs, retain skeptical parents and give our School District the breathing room that it needs to achieve what we expect of it. People in Manchester don't mind paying for something they can see, something they can touch, and something that improves the prospects for their kids or themselves as long as they know it is being managed wisely. We must not allow ourselves to slide further down the slope of self-defeat that got us here in the first place. Our survival as an economy and for our quality of life depends on our commitment to achieve the highest performance possible for our public schools and universities. I, too, thank MCTV for covering this live event tonight.

**Conor McGrath**, 22 Crawford Street, Manchester stated:

I am not a voter. I am not a taxpayer. I am just a sophomore at Memorial High School. For my entire high school career, I have been part of the music program – chorus, band and orchestra. Well, chorus is next year, but you get my point. I read the report about the budget cuts and I was told that there was a possibility that there was going to be a reduction in all of the music programs. When I looked deeper into it, I found out there was a chance that there wasn't going to be a marching band. Not only me but a whole bunch of other band members out there find that to be the most fun part of the entire year in band. Also, I looked into the concert band, concert orchestra and concert choirs. We wouldn't be able to have concerts after school. We would have to have them during the day. I

have a single mother at home and she cannot afford to miss work to come to my school to watch me play the violin and tuba. I also found out that you would be cutting elementary school programs for kids who want to learn music. Also, I have a younger brother named Duncan and he wants to play the cello and the trombone so badly but he won't be able to because of this budget cutting. My brother, Max McGrath, who is out in the crowd back there, graduated from Memorial already and he is the perfect example of what the music department has done for people. He has put forth so much work. He was in band and choir and is going to college and wants to be an opera singer. Not that many people do that. It is intense. Max can you stand up? I am just going to leave you all with this, and this is something that my brother actually told me to say because it was great. Save music and arts in our schools and thousands of children, happy and intelligent across the City, will be your reward and your legacy. Thank you very much.

**Curt Shultz**, 175 Holt Street, Manchester stated:

I am a resident of Manchester and a teacher at Southside Middle School. I have coached at Southside Middle School and I coach at Memorial High School and I have coached at Central High School in the past. I moved here 23 years ago. I moved my family here when my daughter was born and my son was a few years old and they walked to Jewett Street School and then they walked to Southside and to Memorial High School and they got a great education. My son now is a sous chef at the Willard Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue next to the White House. My daughter graduated with third honors from Memorial High six years ago. She was number one weighted when they had that dual system. She is now a teacher at Memorial High School. She became a bio-chemist. She went to Vassar College and they went at the same time. My son waited a few years. So for the last few years I have been paying in total about \$120,000 out of pocket for my children to further their education. Obviously, I value education and my family

values education. My wife is a teacher and a coach at West High School. I guess what we need to do is decide as a community whether we value education and whether we think it is important. If kids come and they are engaged in learning, if the teacher you put in front of them is dedicated and a quality teacher and you make sure that the class size is small enough so they can actually engage every student every single day, then what you will give is every student a chance to get a great education. Every student has that chance in the Manchester School District. It depends on whether their family and the community behind them supports them through that. That is how they stay engaged in learning. If we do not change our outlook on education as something that we adequately fund either at the state level or the local level and actually put some teeth into it and try to be the best School District we can possibly be instead of what we can afford. Now I know I couldn't afford that. Every morning when I do my paper route before school and I put my paper in Senator DeVries' box on Old Orchard Way, I am doing that to pay off the loans for education. So it depends on what you value. Do you value education? Do you value the work ethic? Do you value that you get out of education what you put into it with our time, with our money, with our values? You people up here in front of us are going to tell us that this year. Do you value education or is it just what we can afford? Thank you.

**E. Nicholl Marshall**, 26 N. Reading Street, Manchester stated:

I would like to speak in favor of the Mayor's budget. I am sure it was a very difficult budget to create and I am sure there is a lot of disagreement by many departments on what the spending priorities should be. I am sure there are a lot of tough choices and we all acknowledge that these are more difficult economic times than they were a couple of years ago. I believe these choices were made fairly and made as best and justly as they could be. I also recognize that more money to any given department doesn't necessarily mean better results. I also recognize that every employee of the City and practically every professional

spends a lot of time outside of the office bettering themselves, and not just at the workplace. Whether it be continuing education or passing exams to get professional credentials or conferences on weekends or holidays and not necessarily in exotic locales. I also would ask that all of you, our elected officials, to just make your deliberations rationally, soundly and don't get over excited or exaggerate. Just be calm and collected and make any amendments that you have to. I do think civility is lacking in more and more of our political officials today and I do think that is a priority for all of you. I also acknowledge that most of the speeches tonight, the best ones in my opinion, have been short, so I will end it here.

**Caroline Herold**, 29 Independence Lane, Manchester stated:

I am a voter, a taxpayer and a parent of children in the Manchester School District. To be quite honest with you I came to this forum in earnest and disgusted at the way this City's leadership continues to handle the fiscal budget issues. That it comes to pitting Board against Board or Superintendent against Mayor is shameful. What it should come to is the demand of the voters to see the elected officials behave as the leaders they campaigned to be. My expectation is that Mayor Guinta does what he can to keep his promise to not raise taxes as long as it is fiscally responsible. My expectation is that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen will exhaust all of the possibilities to refrain from making unnecessarily deep cuts to the functionality of our City's agencies and schools and protect the interests therein. My expectation is that working cooperatively our City can manage itself without waste and without the drastic actions being called for by shortsighted measures in the proposed budget. I agree that everyone involved has to make informed, difficult decisions regarding the way our money is to be spent. Contrary to how I first came to be interested in speaking here tonight, I am not strictly here on behalf of the children. It is obvious to me that there are enough educators and parents and students here on their behalf. I am

here on behalf of those of us who wish to have a city that is a great place to live, to work, to visit and to raise a family. I want to live in a city that draws the attention in the media for its functionality and forward thinking leadership instead of its dysfunction and floundering schools. Why does there continue to be this game of political maneuvering? If you are looking for the public's involvement, try asking instead of posturing. The posturing and contention is only moving us backward. Now with regard to the school district budget, I agree that we need to spend our school's money more efficiently and that Dr. Aliberti has put forward many bearable cuts, although I would be interested in hearing more about his priorities. However, I can substantiate with countless research articles and professional writings that early childhood programs like readiness and kindergarten and teacher-student ratio are among the most cost effective uses of that funding. Not only are these factors at risk, but the funding for the District in Need of Improvement Plan will be jeopardized as well. Federal and state monies do not cover the entire plan. Our teachers need contemporary resources and professional development to support their instruction of the extreme diversity of student languages and abilities. Our teachers are the key to getting rid of the DINI label. It behooves you as a group of representatives to work together to solve this problem. If you can do no better than to use the children in this community as the pawns in a political game, then you will not attract or retain the type of citizens that will make this community thrive.

**Mark Warden**, 138 Campbell Street, Manchester stated:

I am here today to speak on behalf of the poor beleaguered taxpayer. Somebody has to pay the bills for all of this and it hasn't been said yet this evening but the school budget I believe is 4.5% less than what the School Board had asked for. So yes there are some cuts but I don't think they are insurmountable. I am sure the Mayor and Board of Mayor and Aldermen will work through it. Taxes are already quite high. In fact on my home they are over \$6,000 a year. That is over

\$500 every single month for property taxes. As everybody knows, household expenses like fuel and food are going up so they have increased dramatically and we have to deal with that as well. All we are asking is that the City do what every family in Manchester must do, which is to live within its means. In lean economic times like these, we need to cut out the luxuries. In a family budget that might mean putting off a new car for a couple more years or taking a vacation in Florida instead of Hawaii or Jamaica. Like any family here whose income is not going up, we need to not spend more than we can afford. It is that simple. We are asking you to practice fiscal responsibility. It is your duty. Also, there is nothing wrong with asking people to pay for services they use, whether it is summer school programs, bus fares, subsidized housing, or food. When you start giving away things for free, recipients tend to value them less and you breed dependency. So let's all let clear heads prevail and do the right thing. Thank you.

**Amy Woods**, 215 Circle Road, Manchester stated:

I teach in the Manchester night school program and I think we have heard a lot about what goes on during the day and those kind of things, which is all very important but when you talk about why it is that students leave and they do leave, and I believe that Governor Lynch has mandated that we try to keep people in school until they are 18 years old but if you start to take away some of the reasons that they enjoy school and wish to remain there, you are going to see an incredible increase in students looking for alternatives in terms of how to make it such that they do wind up complying with Governor Lynch's request until they are 18. The reasons why students leave are either they don't feel as though they have a place to fit in, which would include your extra and co-curricular activities, or they feel as though nobody cares about them. When you have class sizes of 35 and 40 as the nightmare scenarios may be, it is difficult. I also teach public school in a neighboring district and I will tell you that the smaller class sizes are certainly the way to engage your students and have the most effective education possible. In

night school, you are talking about the kids who feel disenfranchised and left out of the system and if you deep cut public schools you are going to see an increase there and not everybody returns to night school. The second thing that I think is really important when you are talking about talented teachers and having a group of people who are dedicated to their jobs, if you want to recruit the best and brightest and continue a rate of recidivism where people will stay, you have got to make the City of Manchester an attractive district to work in and an attractive place to be and I can tell you with what we are seeing right now you are not going to get that base even if you do need to rehire after these people have left. I appreciate your time. Thank you very much.

**Samantha McCaig**, 101 Seawall Street, Manchester stated:

I am here as a 17 year old junior at Memorial. I have been blessed with a well-rounded education my whole life. I have lived here basically my whole life and I value the education that I have received here. I can only hope that my younger siblings will receive the same education and have the same teachers who care and the same programs that provide outside experience and real world experience. The Mayor's budget cut will limit any experience that they could have that could help them get into college. I am out of here in two years...I am in college in two years and it won't affect me very much but it will affect them. I love my school, I love my community, I love my family and I love my peers. I know funding is a controversial subject. It is a hard problem to fix. I can't give you any proposals. I am just a student. I don't know the workings of government but cutting our honors programs, our sports, our art and our music, all of the clubs and all of the things that make kids want to try to learn and be here...if you cut those they are not going to want to be here. They will leave school and more federal funding will get cut and ultimately Manchester will suffer as a community. That is all I have to say. I just hope you make the right decision and save the community as a whole. Thank you.

**JoAnn Morey**, 329 Laurel Street, Manchester stated:

I am here as a mother, a retail worker who works 40-50 hours and a parent. All of these children are our future and taking away their learning staff may help your budget but it will hurt our children past and present. Children will be a class with huge numbers where attention in areas needed will no longer be there. Children that are falling behind will fall even further. Children who are achieving will not get the encouragement and nourishment to keep going. Our sports and after school activities not only help keep them off the street and safe, but they also teach sportsmanship, teamwork, dependability and reliability. By cutting all of these things, we are hurting our children. As it is now, some of our children are falling through the cracks. They can't even read and write and they are out in our society. We are going to see a lot more coming in the future if this budget proposal goes forward. The salaries have been increasing in the higher ups yet we are going to get rid of our teachers. My son goes to Wilson Elementary. He has already been told that his assistant principal was fired. He asked me what did Mr. Q do wrong and who else is going. There are 13 teachers in that one school. His first grade teacher...there are three of them who have only been there two years. Where are our first graders going that are coming from kindergarten this year? What is this going to mean to our kids? I ask the Mayor to look around. He has all of these kids here. They are his future. These are his voters and yours too. Thank you.

**Pat Hurley**, 606 Ray Street, Manchester stated:

I have four children in the Manchester public school system. My oldest is in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. I expect to be a parent in the Manchester school system for another 15 years. That is the level of commitment that I have to the Manchester School District. I would like the conversation here to start to change. We started with the money and the budget cuts and the scare tactics and all of that stuff. You can

have that discussion but we need to focus on the children and the quality of education. I think the Mayor who I don't see right now, the Aldermen and the School Board need to start working together not on how little can we spend and what can we cut but what is the vision for the quality of education in Manchester. I have heard a lot of really creative ideas throughout the night of different things people said and I think that creativity can happen in that discussion. So ultimately what are we doing to insure the quality of education in Manchester? We need to make sure that we foster enthusiasm in the kids that are in our schools and make them excited that they are involved in a really great thing that is going to take them places and bring them to college or whatever their future brings. What are we going to do for Manchester's children?

**Jennie Angell**, 94 Everett Street, Manchester stated:

I am the Information Technology Director for the City but I am not here to talk about my budget except for the fact that as far as my budget is concerned the Mayor's proposal is 73% of 2006 and I am asking for 77% of 2006. I am really here because I have an eight year old in the school system. I am committed to public schools. An earlier gentleman spoke about technology, and for the past several years the School District and the Technology Director have submitted a project to get a student information system program in the City. The School District does not have one. Before you can start curbing administrative costs, and I don't consider an assistant principal an administrative cost, but before you can start reducing those costs, you need to automate. If you reduce the staffing before you automate, what you are going to end up with is either pushing the administrative stuff that must still be done out to the educators, which reduces the amount of time they can educate or the tasks that must be done don't get done so you don't get your grant applications and you don't do your bill auditing, etc. Another thing a student information system will really do is help the 16,000 potential volunteers...the parents of these 16,000 students participate in their

students' education more, which is what I really think is needed that will significantly help the school that is in need of improvement. We are a technically connected society. The districts that are successful have systems in place so the parents can get online and see what their children are supposed to be doing and catch problems before they become issues. What has happened in the past is my son's friend's mother calls me and says, "Do you know what Braden has for spelling words this week because he did not bring them home." There is a \$286,000 proposal that has been on the table for several years. It keeps getting cut. We are talking about something that is about \$17 per student. It is what the districts that are successful are doing. As the City and the School Department look at their budget and what they may need to cut and what they really need to try to keep, if you are going to be able to curb costs without cutting services, if you are going to be able to improve the level of the quality of education in the district, you need to provide your teachers and professionals with the tools that all of the other successful communities are using. So when you look at the budget please consider trying to leave this in. Thank you.

**Jason Coombs**, 35 Old Orchard Way, Manchester stated:

I was a student here at Memorial. I was also a student of Green Acres and McLaughlin. At Green Acres I was on the basketball team. At McLaughlin I was on the track team, cross-country team and the basketball team. Here at Memorial I was on the football, soccer, winter track and spring track teams. I am an athlete. It is something I took to pretty well because I had the opportunity to do so. Through athletics I also became a leader. These days I am a college student at the Manchester Community Technical College learning how to weld, which is amazing. At Manchester Community Technical College I also sit as the vice president on the Student Senate so I am applying the leadership skills that I got through athletics in leading the track team and through teaching my fellow students how to high jump, which was probably one of the most memorable

experiences I have ever had. It is interesting to show someone how to high jump and try to jump over the bar and land on top of it. It is a little painful. As far as a solution to the problem that you all face and the community of Manchester faces, the one solution is not to cut education. It is probably one of the reasons anyone chooses to live among a community. There is a future for their children and if you take away the potential for them to earn that benefit. I mean, education is the way to a better life. Something I learned when I took a year off from high school. Is that without a college education you are stuck in some very difficult times. The adversity that you face to find a job that you deserve is very difficult and it was something that I found just wasn't worth it. I needed an education to go where I wanted to in life and I had the backbone from the education I received at Green Acres, McLaughlin and Memorial. Without that, I would probably be mowing your lawn for the rest of my life and that is not really where I want to be. Next spring I will be going to Penn State to become a welding engineer, which is pretty fantastic. My decision for college was made because I was well advised by my coaches on the track team. They were counselors at this school and without them and their guidance and advice I would be pretty lost today. The amount of work they do...I graduated two years ago and I still come in and ask them questions. Is this school decent? Does this sound okay? They are more than happy to answer my questions and I am more than happy to help them with the track team whenever I can. That is just part of being a community is helping each other out and doing something to help someone else maybe not to get something in return. I don't think any one of you up there would steal candy from a baby yet you are stripping them of the opportunity to become a well rounded individual. Athletics will teach you leadership. It will teach you hard work. It will teach you that your goals are indeed possible. Nothing is impossible. You can get ten seconds off of your time. I also played the saxophone while I was at McLaughlin. I have a great interest in playing the piano today and I am probably going to be able to do that because of everything I learned as a band student at McLaughlin. Everything

extra...everything that you want to cut is what makes an individual stand out from the crowd. These differences would set you apart from the rest and make us decide to vote for you. It is essential. Why would anyone want to come to Manchester if we have one of the worst educations available? My brother has a daughter now and I certainly wouldn't want my niece to have an education where she can't have the benefits that I have received. One of my greatest regrets when I graduated from Memorial was that all of the new things that were coming in...I was graduating and leaving when they were arriving. It made me feel good that the school was better after I had left. In this case, it seems the school is getting worse, which is something I wouldn't be very proud of. Thank you.

**Michael Porter**, 390 Seames Drive, Manchester stated:

Thank you all for coming tonight and listening to the public. I think it is an important task as elected officials. There is no doubt you have a daunting task ahead of you – all of you. You have been elected at a time when we are all faced with a budget crunch in our households. I am here tonight in support of the schools however. There was something that really bothered me today when I read the Union Leader online, modern technology. This was from Ward 3 Alderman Peter Sullivan and his remarks were, “A school district that has a press flack, multi assistant principals at numerous schools and a battalion of guidance counselors at each high school has no business instigating hysteria.” Alderman Sullivan, there is no battalion of guidance counselors. When you look at these high schools...my daughter is going to be graduating from Manchester Memorial this year, and without Mr. LeBlanc's help as a guidance counselor I am not convinced that we would have had the financial resources or the ability to look for scholarships and look for the perfect school in the right location. My daughter is graduating in the top 15 here. As much as I would love to take all of the credit and so would her mother, we really can't. There are a list of teachers I want to talk about. I had a whole speech prepared but I don't want to rehash everything

so I figured I would just tell a story. It starts off at Weston School with Todd Menswar, a fifth grade elementary teacher who took her under his wing and then she went on to McLaughlin Middle School where she met Ms. Morrison who spoke earlier tonight. She really had an impact on her life. She met David Hedge who is a guidance counselor there and also the basketball coach. Brendan McCafferty and Ms. Mosely...I could just go on. Mr. Albert. When my daughter graduated from middle school she received the Principal's Award. She came to Memorial and I can't even rattle off all of the teachers but people like Brett Larkin, Mr. LeBlanc, her physics teacher and chemistry teachers...all of these teachers have had an impact on our lives. I can't say enough about how teachers impact everybody's lives in a unique way. I guarantee all of you sitting here tonight can remember back to your second, third or fourth grade teacher at any point during a day or a week and remember a lesson you were taught and that is what education is. That is what these kids here who have eloquently spoken tonight...I mean, I am so impressed with the kids who have spoken. That shows the dedication of the teachers in the City when you have kids like Zach Carr and all of the other ones who came here to speak. That shows the dedication. My daughter will be pursuing her education to become a teacher because after what I have seen in the newspaper with the budget battles it is a tough decision but she is persevering and she is going to do it and I implore all of you to take a look at this budget. If you agree with the Mayor, vote it in. If you want to stick it to the Mayor, vote it in but remember you are not sticking it to Mayor Guinta, you are sticking it to the children and to the citizens of this City. Thank you.

**Robert Barry**, 51 West Elmwood Avenue, Manchester stated:

With 2,000 few students in Manchester schools this year and likely next year as well, I believe the taxpayers in Manchester can get on very well with the budget proposed by the Mayor regardless of what the Manchester Education Association says. With the lowest grade assistant principal salary presently set at \$69,317 a

year plus a benefit package costing an average of one-third of the salary equal to \$23,106, for a total compensation package of \$92,423 a year the lowest grade principal's total compensation package costing taxpayers \$122,876 a year, I believe we can do without at least one principal and one assistant principal. With the lowest paid teacher being compensated including benefits at \$42,408 and with the class size these days averaging around 17 according to the teacher-student ratio with 2,000 fewer students we can do without at least 39 teachers. Just adding up these figures it comes to a savings of \$600,000 a year. If we could then lose at least one assistant superintendent and their support staff there is another \$200,000 for a total of at least \$800,000 in savings right there. Again, with 2,000 fewer students consolidation can take place and at least one building can be mothballed for future use or all portable classrooms can be returned to the owners and students can be housed in them. I have lived in Manchester for 49 years. During that period, the school budget has increased exponentially and the schools have fallen to below par to a District in Need of Improvement. More money does not equal better education no matter what they say. Stick with the Mayor's budget. Thank you.

**Billy Dodd**, 181 Mammoth Road, Manchester stated:

I think everything has to be about common sense. It seems from listening to everybody in the room here everybody seems to be totally against one teacher being laid off anywhere in the City. I have been a union guy for over 30 years and in any of the big unions, guys get laid off. It is a fact of life and you just have to roll with the punches from there. There was a letter in the paper a week or so ago from a person who wrote about the dirty schools of 10 years ago and they really weren't concerned about where the schools were then but where they are going to be 10 years from now. Just in rough numbers, about 10 years ago the school superintendent's salary was around \$80,000 or so and the school budget was around \$80 million. Now 10 years later we are looking at a school budget of

\$150 plus million and they want to pay the brand new school superintendent \$155,000. Things are kind of correlated there. It has grown astronomically and the taxpayers are broke when you add in all of the other departments but what really gets me is the audacity of the new school superintendent who is coming on board that when he comes down to interview with the School Department he is not going to accept the job unless the Assistant Superintendent's job is filled at about \$150,000. He is putting stipulations to the School Board before he is even hired. Send him home. Everything just keeps going and going. Basically my kid graduated from West 15 years ago and I have been supporting the schools ever since. About five or six years ago and it is nice to see everybody here, Bob Smith came up from Washington to the old school administration offices and he was going to talk about special education and there was a thing in the paper a couple of weeks ahead of time inviting the public to come down and talk to him. The public showed up – one, me. Where were you when we were trying to get more money for special education? Bad news sells newspapers and that is what the papers have done. Every department head has come out and given you the gloom and doom. Chicken Little, the sky is going to fall. Some teachers may get laid off. You have the Mayor's budget and you have what the department heads and what every department is asking for. It is not different than union negotiations for contracts. There is a middle ground and they are going to come in. Some teachers will get laid off. Is that a bad thing? No. The guy that was just up here talking about being a welder and an athlete, that is self-determination, integrity. The kids over here who are going to school on full scholarships, that is integrity. Now I may get some raspberries on this one but they had an experiment here the last couple of weeks at Memorial to get the kids to class on time and what did you get? Candy kisses if you got to class on time. Forget the discipline. You got candy kisses. That is not the way to raise kids. Twenty years ago Manchester Police Department got rid of all of their auxiliary police officers so they could more easily go through the national accreditation process. Those guys were

making some decent money but they weren't getting all of the benefits so the Police Department could do something like that. The Fire Department. Why don't we have any volunteers who are trained that can come in and ride weekends or night shifts with the department? Sometimes unions are afraid that a part-time job is going to take a job away from them. Manchester Transit Authority is talking about cutting their budget. You guys need to get with the MTA because there is a lot more that is going to get cut than just what the Mayor is going to cut with all of the matching money and that will affect the people at the lowest rung of the transportation scale who depend on it. The Welfare Department. The biggest thing he wanted to do that was in the paper was cut \$3,000 from the soup kitchen. That draws the most people and gets people stirred up. The last thing was a little thing that was in the paper a few weeks ago because you have to look at all of the tax structure. The Mayor's budget, and I don't agree on this part, a \$250,000 study for the Highway Department to study run-off, storm water run-off. If some of you people were around maybe eight years ago or so there was an impervious surface tax that the City was going to apply to everyone's driveway for the amount of rain water that ran out of your driveway into the street and down the gutter. So there are more taxes that are coming out and I think this \$250,000 study is going to lead back to that impervious surface tax coming out again. So there is middle ground between the Mayor's budget and what the department heads want but these guys up here there is the school department and the department heads and nobody is in the same room at the same time. They fight one another and that is the big problem.

**Debbie Villiard**, 50 Delia Drive, Manchester stated:

I am a homeowner in Manchester. I have lived in Manchester for 24 years. I have three children who have gone through or are going through the school system here in Manchester. I have also been a teacher at Northwest Elementary School for the past ten years. I teach fourth grade. I am proud to be working

collaboratively with concerned and dedicated teachers who strive to help all students make academic progress every year. We have worked diligently and have moved forward towards getting out of the District in Need of Improvement status. I believe our initial success stems from the analysis we have done to identify and address the specific needs of our students. Such intervention needs to start as early as possible and be consistent and ongoing every year. If not, our efforts will be lost. If there is one area which must not be affected by the current budget crisis, it is in the education of our youngest learners. All day kindergarten and reasonable class sizes are essential to the future of our success in education, especially with our current status as a District in Need of Improvement. I also plea to the future of our student's music programs. I have seen personally as a parent, a chaperone and a teacher the confidence, pride and camaraderie instilled in students of music from third grade through twelfth grade. The self-esteem and work ethic these students develop spills over into their academic and personal lives making them valued adults and citizens. In an economy with rising costs, we must certainly be vigilant as to where our tax dollars are spent in all City departments. As a teacher, I am accountable for the progress of my students. As a taxpayer I expect my dollars to be accounted for and spent wisely. However, I do realize that as a taxpayer I get what I pay for. Thank you.

**Jim O'Connell**, 265 Prospect Street, Manchester stated:

Mr. Mayor and Board of Mayor and Aldermen I will be brief because we have been here a long time. I don't have anybody in the educational system or anybody working in the educational system. My wife is not a teacher and I don't have a brother or sister that is a teacher. I am here as a taxpayer in the City of Manchester. I do have four children. Currently those four children...those of you who know me might wonder why I am here because I have four kids who are in schools in Manchester but they are actually at St. Catherine's School. I expect my four children to attend public high school in Manchester. The oldest is in fifth

grade. My wife and I will be deciding on these topics in the next 12 to 24 months. I think we represent a whole category of people who make determinations, which are like business decision about what is the right thing to do for education for our children. My view in the past...I have been in Manchester for 11 years and my wife has been a resident of the state her whole life. I have not been as you might recognize from my accent. Viewing the education system in Manchester from the outside and from our friends, it has seemed to be over the last ten years while I have been here that Manchester has had an excellent educational system...the kids that I know. Like when you invest, people say invest in those things in which you know. I look at the results of the education system in Manchester so I look at the graduated students of Central and Memorial and West High School. All of those young people who now are in their 20's and some of them still in their teens seem to me to have benefited from the educational system here. I have watched the discourse in the public arena over the past number of weeks on this topic and I am very disturbed by it. As a taxpayer in Manchester I pay a significant amount of taxes. I don't take the benefit for education today but I do expect to take it in the future. I moved a business to Manchester in the last two years based on the quality of life in Manchester. I made an argument to a board of directors and said no we should not establish the company in Burlington, Massachusetts where we do have an office. I said we should move this company to Manchester, New Hampshire because Manchester is a place that will support the business both from a technological point of view and communication point of view and for its quality of life. I want to continue to be able to do that. I identify strongly with the comments made by Joe Briggs and other people like Mr. Hurley who talked about the quality of life in Manchester and how that was an essential and important thing. I would like to believe that everybody here and all of those people who stayed here this late have got the best interest of the young people in the City in mind. I have no reason to doubt anybody's good intentions. I recognize Mayor Guinta's desire to spend our money wisely and I respect that and

I expect the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to make the right business decision. My personal view is education is essential and important and I would urge you to spend enough money to give Manchester an education system that it can be proud of that will support the fine work of the teachers we have in the City. Thank you.

**Michael Doyle**, 315 Laxson Avenue, Manchester stated:

I would like to talk about education solely. One thing I would like to mention is when you all ran for politics and we see it in every election, you all mention the exact same thing. Quality education. That is paramount. Now hopefully it is not fluff when you are telling us that. We don't think it is. We appreciate the Mayor trying to do the right thing money-wise, but we hope you stick to that quality education theme because that is paramount. Teachers and administrators...in this day and age it is so much different than it was back when. If you need to know the difference in that, it is a simple fix. You take a hall of fame principal in Mr. Shea from yesteryear and you take the Beech Street principal from now and you sit them together and let them tell the differences of what happened then with kids and what is happening now. Now is so dramatically different. Teachers need to be not only teachers, mentors and in some cases parents and in some cases put shoes on and socks and take money out of their pocket to buy stuff for kids. The climate of a teacher now with the lack of parental guidance that is happening more and more at home has really changed things. Drugs, alcohol, all of that stuff has come into play more now than it was in the past. Let me do some role playing. Say somebody wanted to move into the district from another place. A guy who gets a job in this area and says to his wife, 'Hey, I found Manchester, New Hampshire and got a job there,' and the wife says, 'Well honey, what about the school system?' and the husband says, 'Well, it is doing pretty good. They are in the bottom third of spending for kids, they have larger classes and they are laying off teachers and administration.' 'Hey that sounds great, let's go there.' That's not what we want. We want to be leaders. We want to be paramount.

You guys are all good working people. It is not the money you are up there for. It has to be because you all have good hearts and good intentions and it must move you when you hear some of these stories. My wife and daughter and I were sitting last night discussing the Union Leader story and the theory came up of losing sports. My daughter plays for Mr. Hedge on the Memorial softball team and she said if they take away all sports, which I don't think is going to happen and hopefully it doesn't, but if they take away all sports can I go to Bishop Guertin. They have everything. I said well how does that happen? Don't we want other people saying hey can I go to Manchester because they have everything? That is what we are after. Two more things. Do we want to create a roadblock for students like Rachel Hedge and Max? I certainly don't and I don't think you do because they are our future. Finally, underfunding education is just not an option. I pay my taxes like everybody else but I am paying extra taxes now because I go twice a year to have my front end aligned because of the horrible potholes in the City but you know what? Leave the potholes and let them get bigger. I will pay for more front end alignments. Don't underfund education.

**Roger Wilkins**, 336 Kennard Road, Manchester stated:

I just want to speak for my family. That is all I want to do. I want to thank you guys for keeping a budget and not letting taxes get out of control. I don't have all of the money in the world and I really appreciate a budget that reaches their budget 95%. I mean five cents out of the dollar is what the Mayor is asking and all I can say is I have a fixed income too. It is what I make. I just ask you guys to keep it level and think about all of the families who may or may not have children in sports or may or may not have kids in school yet. We can afford 95% so I think we should just be very grateful that people are working very hard for very little. Thank you very much.

**Victoria Griffiths**, 20 Orange Street, Manchester stated:

I have only one thought about the schools. If you make the cuts then what will it be like ten years from now when it is too late? My second thought is the Manchester Transit Authority. There are a lot of people who take the buses. A lot of people are not here because they could get here but they couldn't get home. I am here because I can get home. You know, if the prices go up that might have to be, but if you make cuts who is going to want to take a bus? Pay more money to what, walk three blocks? With the price of gas going up, more people may take the bus but if they have to get off the bus and walk two miles to work, why would they bother? Thank you.

**Diane Watkins**, 396 East High Street, Manchester stated:

I brought the Union Leader because I was shocked. Imagine a front page with competing stories. One saying that we are going to cut the education funding for our children and the other one celebrating a pedestrian bridge to nowhere. We have the Verizon Center, Fisher Cat Stadium, a walkway system. These projects only serve to make wealthy land owners and property developers in the center city more money fronted by the coffers of City taxpayers. They got the benefits. We did not. We give superintendents and administrators hefty raises. We give administration new digs and make deals with wealthy developer groups that never live up to the taxpayer's promised gains. I ask you, if these endeavors were so profitable and good for our City, how is that we can't pay for our schools? These mismanagements and poor decisions come home to roost with our children's futures. Such deep cuts in the school budget should not be made. Art, music and athletics are key to our children's education. The Federal No Child Left Behind Act considers art and music core disciplines. Consistently, studies prove that art and music endeavors have positive effects on the developing synapses of young brains increasing overall IQ. This increase in brain power fuels all of their learning. In a time with increasing concerns about adolescent obesity we are

going to cut athletics? It is so short sighted, archaic and ridiculous to target music, art and athletics as extras we don't need. Taking these programs out of the public schools will only serve to increase the divide between "haves" and have nots". Parents with means will continue to provide their children with benefits of art and music and athletic education. The children of working class families will go without and they will lose out on the positive impact on intelligence and life skills. They will be left behind. We will continue to be a District in Need of Improvement. Our children shouldn't be forced to mortgage their future because the adults in this City fail to manage finances wisely. My household has paid taxes in this City for 30 years so that other people's children could receive a balanced education including art, music, and athletics and now that it is my child's opportunity, you have spent my money on a ballpark, a walking bridge, new administrative offices and raises and an entertainment facility. Your response is to cut the school budget so that her experience will be drastically different than that of the students that received an education before her. City officials seem to be able to think big and out of the box in developing the downtown but when the Mayor finally gets time to think about education the solutions are small and shrinking. This is unacceptable. The taxpaying families of this City deserve a better solution.

**Charles Fitzmaurice**, 1 Highland Court, Manchester stated:

I have got the luxury...I moved here from New Jersey a year ago. I have sat through these same battles in New Jersey. I think people need to realize that since No Child Left Behind came from the federal government, there is a higher percentage of schools that are at need than there are that are actually passing. So that term is at this point really rhetoric that is thrown out. I disagree with pitting administration against town council and leveraging our students. I came here because my daughter asked me to come. My daughter is involved in music and athletics at Central High. My son goes to McDonough School and he will be

when he goes there. Music and athletics are something that when I went to school and when my wife went to school was very important to us. I had the luxury of being an international athlete because of high school athletics. I give you credit for taking a stand and controlling the budget. I come from an area in New Jersey where our school budget last year was \$242 million. It is the same size school district, with three high schools, three middle schools, 15 elementary schools and 15,500 students. So it is almost identical. The School Board budget at \$153 million, that is pocket change. It really is. I think when we talk about cutting athletics and when we look at cutting extracurricular activities, that is an impact that can't be made. I challenge the School Board more than I challenge the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to check themselves at the door. I came from a school district in New Jersey almost identical to the one we have here. There was one athletic director district wide. Not one for the district and one for each school. Fine arts. Your Fine Arts Department is taken care of in the high school. We didn't need a district administrator to run the whole fine arts program and this is a school district where one of the three high school bands has taken the middle states Tournament of Champions every year for marching band drum line. I think we are administratively heavy. In New Jersey, you have a principal and two vice principals at every school. You don't need multiple vice principals. What do they do? It is additional administration. It is the same decision we make in business. The more administration you have, the less that is going to flow to your bottom line. The more administration you have, the less money you have to spend in each classroom for each kid that sits at a desk. So Mayor I challenge you and the Board of Education to find a middle. Let's not cut the things that are important but at the same time I challenge the community of Manchester. Realizing that you are not paying a significant amount of money for the education you are getting.

**Debbie Rapson**, 901 Chestnut Street, Manchester stated:

Mayor I would like to thank you first for coming back and thank the Aldermen for staying to listen to everybody. Everybody in this room knows that every aspect of our lives is affected by this budget, not just the School Board. The police and the firemen who protect and save us from disasters, the Highway Department who fixes our roads and picks up our trash, the Health Department, even the Office of Youth Services that has been talked about tonight. You were voted into the office of Mayor of the City of Manchester to be its leader. You accepted the responsibility of being the person who would take accountability for our City and its people, which ultimately means its policymaking and fiscal responsibility, which is also know as the budget. In the absence of a superintendent, you are also the defacto leader of the School Board. I have been to many School Board meetings where neither you or a superintendent was present. Make no mistake. I do not believe that being accountable is an easy task. I don't envy any of you but it is also not about pointing fingers, sound bytes or media clips. It is about leadership. Being accountable is about rolling up your sleeves and being someone who is active and involved in the daily life of the community you serve. As a member of this community with a child in a public school, I did just that. Imagine my surprise when I asked why my child didn't come home with school books at the beginning of the year and I was told there weren't enough textbooks to go around. Instead, somebody at the school makes hundreds of copies of homework sheets for our children to bring home each day and parents pay for the paper that the homework is copied on. This is because the children do not even get composition books because there is no budget for that luxury. Twenty-five cents per book by the way at Staples. We recently asked middle school teachers at one school to wish for the moon and starts in terms of what they needed for their classrooms. They had already asked for enough textbooks for students and for curriculum help and for paper and tissues. In these starts they asked for mundane things like globes, U.S. atlases, bookcases, a few comprehensive

dictionaries, a stapler...these are what is real. You have stated that the fiscal responsible thing is to have our educational budget cut by the full amount that went away with the Bedford students. If you want to enlist the support of the taxpaying public that hasn't already gone to someplace that isn't a District in Need of Improvement, or doesn't have budget issues, then give us something to work with. We need your leadership. We need to feel that you appreciate how important it is to provide every public school student with a quality education. We need to know that you will not just throw out numbers that sound good or that are drastic or that are scary but you will offer us leadership and guide us out of this fiscal nightmare and instead lead our community to a place that has proudly dealt with adversity. As a leader, you all need to think outside of the box to involve the parents and the community at large and stop hiding behind the taxes as though it were a shield. I would be willing to bet and I know my time is up but that there are very few parents left here or the ones that were here before that would welcome higher taxes. I know I don't. I pay almost \$10,000 a year in taxes on my house but there are fewer who want their children to struggle through school only to find out that that school has lost their accreditation and they can't go to a good college. You have it within your power to advocate for realistic change and as parents we have it within our right to do the same. So why can't we work together for the sake of our children and their future and ours instead of finding ways to deflect conversation, deflect accountability and duck leadership? Thank you.

**Diane Solesky**, 215 Thornton Street, Manchester stated:

I have heard a lot today about the schools but I want to talk about something that nobody wants to talk about and nobody wants to think about and nobody wants to see and that is the Highway budget. We have about 100 men right now working for the Highway Department and they want to cut 33 jobs. These are the men that pick up our trash. I have seen everybody here with a water bottle. Where do you

think those end up? Do you want them on your front steps? The men that they want to cut are the young, virile ones and they want to put men who are in their 50's and 60's on the back of a garbage truck. Plowing these streets they are overworked and underpaid and they do it happily. They march around our City every day, seven days a week looking like highlighters picking up our trash. Does anyone on this Board want to sit around on the back of a dumpster for eight hours in the scorching heat or freezing cold picking up everyone else's trash? That is what we are going to be led to. I hear all of this talk about the kids. Do they want their fathers and grandfathers on the back of a garbage truck or how about working 36 to 48 hours straight plowing and then picking up the trash because that is what they are doing right now and they are already understaffed and overworked and now we want to cut 33 more? I guess these kids aren't going to be able to go to school because they will be stepping over garbage bags just to get there. Maybe we should give them all shovels so they can all shovel their way to school because that is what it is coming down to. 100 men take away 33. Who is going to pick up the trash? Who is going to plow our streets? Who is going to fix the potholes? Nobody. We are going to end up living in the City dump. Thank you.

**Richard Dichard**, 162 Valley West Way, Manchester stated:

I thank you for putting in the time that you are putting in there tonight. I have heard a lot about all of the things we are talking about in terms of cuts and I want to let you know that I am the assistant principal at West High School. I am also very proud to say that I live on the west side as well with my people. In times like this I agree with you, Mr. Mayor, that we need to get the most out of what we have. There is no doubt about it. I just want to let you know that West High recently lost a principal. We have one now but we lost it over the summer, which required us to go from four administrators to three administrators. Somebody had to pick up the slack for that loss. I just want to let you know for those of you who

don't think administrators work, I spent 46 of the 48 hours the two days prior to school at West High School making sure that we were ready to go. I just want to let you know that over the course of the next 20 days I will be done my contractual obligation to this district. Done. My 224 days will be served as of 20 school days from now. I think we are getting our money's worth. I am a concerned taxpayer. The Mayor has proposed a district budget of \$140 million and I find that to be an abnormally large decrease from the budget a year ago. Now I know we are losing a lot of students from Bedford and I think the school district has made the appropriate cuts in order to overcome or make up for that loss. I schedule the entire building at West High School. Last year we lost 15 teachers. We only lost 350 students. I have given to my principal a proposal that allocates another four positions that we could lose. That would be 19 teachers we would have lost in the past two years. Those are facts guys. This is what I do. Class sizes are too big right now as they are. I don't care about my job. I really don't. I am qualified and capable and will find something else but I care about my kids and I am about to become a husband and hopefully raise a family here in Manchester. I am hoping to do that and I would like to send my kids to schools that are adequately funded. Now I agree with the Mayor in the sense that we do have to make certain cuts in order to make ends meet and not raise taxes so high that we can't afford it, however, a \$10 million decrease when we are already making cuts and certainly the kids at West High have felt that maybe more than any other kids in the district, we have an obligation to really listen to their needs. We really do. I have lost my train of thought but I have six points that I want to make. Manchester is a city in which the schools have been deemed in need of improvement. If we do not improve, we are subject to federal mandates that cost more money. Costs are rising. While we need to be responsible, costs to run things are not going down. We must be reasonable when we make decisions to cut things. An old business practice that I learned in high school, preventative costs are cheaper than repair costs. Our schools in our district should be the best.

Don't we want our kids to live here someday and contribute to our economy? We need conditions so that we can make our schools the best. Manchester is in the bottom of cost per pupil. Some publications have us last. This means we are already doing more with less. We didn't plan for the future guys. We knew there would be a revenue loss and this I think is my most important point. Five years ago and maybe as early as seven years ago we knew Bedford students were leaving. We knew this yet we didn't...this Board and the Mayor's Office didn't plan for this. Now I am not here to point any fingers but what I am asking you is to take this on the chin and say look we have to raise taxes a little bit because we didn't plan for the future and then front this point on let's make amends and plan for the future and do this right. I appreciate your time.

**Michelle Matteau**, 324 N. Main Street, Manchester stated:

I am here to talk specifically about West High School. Football, basketball, baseball, lacrosse, art, music and ROTC – all of these programs and so many more have two things in common. They help us stay in school and they help us get into college. Mr. Mayor, voters, taxpayers, look around you. What do you see? I will tell you what I see. I see cadets of the Navy Jr. ROTC. I see jerseys for sports of all kinds. I see art students and music students everywhere. I see teachers who fully deserve their jobs. Now you may look at me and take my words as those of a naïve 16 year old but I feel you should look at me as someone who lives now and who goes to West High School now. Do you really think destroying our public education is worth a few dollars off taxes? Can you imagine the world without music, without arts, without sports? Black and white and silent. If this is the way you want your future generations to be, then go ahead and support this budget, but if you believe we deserve a proper education, if you believe that we deserve to keep our sports and music and art, then tell them no. We deserve better than that. We are your future and remember that and remember this – we are West High and we plan to keep it that way.

**Nicole Sanborn**, 335 Dubuque Street, Manchester stated:

I am 13 years old and I am in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. I go to Parkside Middle School. I play the viola and I love art, sports and after school activities. I am in Kids Voting and have the option to be inducted into the National Junior Honor Society this year. I am currently one of the best violists in my orchestra class with the help of Mr. Ganic, my instructor. I have been playing the viola for four years and enjoy it very much. I also play a little guitar and I learned how to play guitar through an after school program. Without these activities, I would despise school and probably end up failing the whole year. My opinion on Mayor Guinta's choice to cut school funds is that he is about to make the biggest mistake of his term. Parkside Middle School is on a paper shortage and just imagine what would happen if we cut the funds even more. There are a lot of things that we need in our school. We wouldn't be able to actually have a normal school day if you cut the funds. Do you understand what I am trying to tell you? If you don't then just think back in your life to when you were a student or young children and maybe then you will understand. As for cutting school funds, I highly suggest you not cut them but raise them a little. I am not saying go for \$160 million, that is insane but go for a reasonable amount; something that will be enough for all of the schools, students, teachers and working staff. Is this asking too much? Please take my opinion into consideration. Like I told my grandmother this afternoon, you can't discard someone just because you don't like them. You need a better reason. Thanks.

**Laverne MacInnis**, 27 Derryfield Court, Manchester stated:

I am a school district employee. I am a guidance counselor, one of the vast many at Weston Elementary. First of all, I want to thank the citizens of Manchester for giving the teachers a livable raise last fall. We appreciated it and we appreciated your respect and your concern for us. People who know me also know I self

describe as a born again cynic. I would like to think that we got the raise and Mayor Guinta gave it to us because he thought we were worth it. Unfortunately, it was just before an election. What I suggest is I think we need another City election right now because if we had a City election we could probably all go home because we would get the funding we need for the schools. I came here tonight really wanting to listen to people that I don't agree with because it is very easy for me to listen to people I agree with. It is more of a task to listen to people that I don't agree with but I really wanted to hear what people had to say and the simplistic thinking is really frightening. I would love to have every teacher stand up who has 17 or fewer students in your classroom or every kid who gets to be in a classroom with 17 or fewer students. The gentleman who talked about belonging to a union, yes they have lay-offs. My brother belongs to a union. He was a carpenter. They laid off when they didn't have the work. However, we are being asked to content with lay-offs when there are no fewer students. We still have to do all the same work with a lot less people. I think the most important thing that I want to express and it really was just done so eloquently by the previous speaker...when I was a kid my parents immigrated to this country from Prince Edward Island and that was at a time when its nickname was "Poverty Every Inch". My parents asked for only two things from the United States. They asked for the opportunity to work and they asked for a good education for their kids. I am the recipient of that good public education. I got to have band. I got to play sports. I got to be in the Glee Club. I got to be on the school newspaper because the adults in my life wanted to make sure that I was well prepared for my adult life ahead. You just had a kid stand here and she is basically asking for the same chance the adults gave me when I was her age and I am asking you for that same chance for kids and furthermore, and I might get in trouble with my principal for this, but I would like to personally invite every single one of you to come to Weston Elementary, look in every nook and cranny, sit in every classroom, and tell us how we can make more cuts in the expenditures that are

being made. As a guidance counselor, I never ask for anything in terms of equipment to work with kids. Whatever I need, I buy because every time I think about going to ask if the school will pay for it I think that is probably another textbook that won't get bought and there are a whole bunch of us that are doing that. I am not any kind of a martyr. I am one of many who buy lunches for kids, buy snacks, I bought my own wastebasket. I would like to ask how many of you in your business life have to buy your own wastebasket, your own stapler, your own tape dispense, your own desk chair? I have bought all that and I don't mind because these kids are our future. These are the kids who are going to be taking care of me in the nursing home and I want to make sure that they are prepared well enough to do that. I am just going to close with this thought. This is the state that produced one of the most famous teachers in the United States and that was Christa McAuliffe and she coined a phrase that I think is germane right here and what she said was "I touch the future; I teach". Here is the future down front and very concerned. What are we going to say to them about their education? Thank you.

**Lisa Frisselle**, 322 Huse Road, Manchester stated:

Mr. Shea probably knows me as Lisa McBride because I was one of his students at Hallsville 40 years ago. His daughter was one of my best friends and I used to sleep at his house. I am a Manchester native who attended local schools graduating from Manchester Central High School in 1981. I love Manchester. I went to New Hampshire College and I decided to stay in this City and I have owned a home on the south end for the last 20 years. I love Manchester because she offers an environment of cultural and economic diversity that I love. I work in a manufacturing plant. I am a cost accountant. Many of my co-workers live outside of Manchester. I love Manchester. My daughter right now goes to St. Anthony's. Next year she will be going to McLaughlin. I wouldn't live anywhere else. Believe me; I defend Manchester all the time. Many of my co-

workers live outside of Manchester and they say to me...they brag about what their schools offer and say things like they would never live here because of the school system. So I am always defending it. It is real. They are my co-workers and again they will work in Manchester but I am defending the school system as it exists today. Just imagine if you put these cuts forward. The point I want to make is during Mayor Guinta's campaign for Mayor in 2005 he published an opinion letter in the Union Leader titled "After Six Years it is Time for Action in the Mayor's Office." He accused Mayor Baines of not living up to his campaign promises for public safety, education and making a plan for Manchester's future. Frank Guinta made a pledge to reduce taxes, increase public safety and improve our education. He said, "Our schools are overcrowded, our textbooks are outdated, our schools are lined with portable classrooms and for the second year in a row our schools have been red-flagged as in need of improvement by the federal government." In the last paragraph of his opinion letter published in October 2005 he promises to develop comprehensive plans and to work to implement the plans that he has already developed. Mayor Guinta, you said that you had developed plans to improve our schools two years ago. Please tell us what these plans are. He promised to improve our education standing, increase public safety and reduce the Manchester tax rate. The last words of the paragraph are, "I will keep my word." Frank Guinta has been Manchester's mayor for over two years. As Mayor, he is Chairman of the School Board. He has more control than any other person regarding the direction Manchester is heading in. Before Mayor Guinta became mayor, three Manchester schools were in need of improvement. Two years later, every school in our district is now listed in need of improvement. Now Mayor Guinta is proposing a school budget that is \$7 million less than last year's budget and \$13 million less than what was requested by the School Department. Mayor Guinta, it is now time to explain to us what these comprehensive plans are that you developed over two years to improve education. Remember, you said you would keep your word. To find this letter

from Mayor Guinta, all you have to do is go to [www.unionleader.com](http://www.unionleader.com) and in the search archives you type in "Frank Guinta I will keep my word" and you will find that letter. We have a choice to invest in our schools and to create an environment where families want to live or we can neglect the needs of our children and create an environment where families will pack up and leave as soon as they can afford to get out of town because that will happen.

**Jonathan Melle**, 30 Hanover Street, Manchester stated:

Inflation averages over 5% over the long term since World War II. The 5% long term average is nominally compounded on a yearly basis. Some years, inflation is below 5% and other years inflation is above 5%. A responsible budget increases with yearly inflation. To cut costs, management takes fixed costs and especially variable costs, and finds rational ways to reduce them in an equitable and efficient manner. I find Mayor Guinta's proposed budget to be none of the above. The Mayor's proposed budget is only political. Frank Guinta's long-term outlook is not for the people of Manchester but rather it is for him to be a big government elected official such as a future Governor or Congressman. Sadly, power broker politicians like Frank Guinta serve elitist special interests by marginalizing average citizens. In return, these types of Congressmen receive millions in campaign contributions to be re-elected in mostly non-competitive elections. I mean who is going to run against a Congressman with \$10 million from corporate interests? The average person doesn't have nearly that. In big government do we have a democracy? Not really because you have big government officials who don't serve us, therefore, we have poorly performing schools, drugs, and violence in our communities and things that we could solve if politicians actually cared. We do not need another elitist politician to do another disservice to the common person family and their community. Mayor Guinta is figuratively waving a magic wand by cutting spending much lower than the rate of inflation without a comprehensive plan to rationally, equitably and efficiently provide municipal

services. The only bottom line that matters to Mayor Guinta is his misguided sights on higher political office. That is something Manchester doesn't need. We need good schools not for you to become Governor or Congressman. In the words of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, our late president, Mayor Guinta should ask not what Manchester can do for his political ambitions but what he can do for the people he swore to represent. In closing, I ask that we all please support public education and other critical municipal services, not Frank Guinta's political ambition.

**Melissa Cote**, 827 Somerville Street, Manchester stated:

I am here to support my music department and its fellow members. I stand here with the behavior that we all pursue and we know that people may say that there is no discipline in choir or band or orchestra and actually there is. There is a lot of discipline. We need to learn how to stand up straight. We need to learn proper body positions for us to sing or when we are playing our violin or viola or cello for example for orchestra and in band some people have to sit and some people have to stand. I give credit to Mr. Beroskus, Mr. Brian and Mr. Bresnahan because they have all taught us very, very well on our discipline. I believe that this discipline here for our music department is very, very well taught because I have learned that I do behave a lot better than I would if I was not in the choir like I am now. I behave as a well brought up child. I may not get the best grades but I do try. I try as hard as I can because I do want to be a good example for my fellow choir members and for the young students who are coming next year and in the following years if our music department is not cut. I greatly wish that this music department is not cut because this is my life, this is my dream and this is the career I would like to pursue when I am older. I would love to be on Broadway because I love to sing and I love to act and Mr. Beroskus and my past choir teachers have taught me that courage and discipline can get you very far and I believe that. That has brought me very far in my choir career and in my life. I

do believe that if you keep this program, the music department, the students will be well disciplined and will try harder and want to learn more and want to be here and not say oh I am here for just an education. There are no electives that I can choose from. I believe that the music department isn't just an elective. It should be an academic class because people do learn things there and I do know that I have learned a lot. It is not just singing. It is not just learning how to play an instrument. It does have a lot of history to it and bringing that history back and keeping it in a choir or a band or an orchestra does show that there is a lot more to learn about this program and not just that it is there. It is not just there. It is here for everyone to learn and to appreciate and to grow up. If there was no music here we wouldn't have radio or CD's or tapes or records or anything. Music is pretty much life. It is all around you. It is the birds in the sky. It is when the trees whistle in the wind. It is life. It is all around you. It is not just a human playing an instrument or singing with their voice and their diaphragm. It is human nature. It is human nature. Thank you.

**Amalia Swensky**, 121 Dunbarton Road, Manchester stated:

I depend on the Manchester Transit Authority to go to work every day. I cannot drive due to my disabilities of deafness and I have epilepsy, which is the main reason for not being able to drive. The bus is my way to get back and forth to work. I have a job that I have been able to keep for the last 15 years. The MTA has been my way of getting back and forth Monday through Friday and I must say Saturdays as well. I work every Saturday. Now my whole family uses the bus service for work and we need the public bus. If I do lose the bus service on Front Street the impact will be that I will lose my job. The bus drivers help us handicapped people. I do not wish to lose my job because that will mean I will have to get Social Security payments to live on. I do not wish that to happen to me. Please do not take away my bus services. I do need the bus to get to and from work. Thank you very much.

**William Dugan**, 111 Wheelock Street, Manchester stated:

I will be succinct because the hour is getting late. If we want services in this community, we have to expect to pay for them. It is as simple as that. We have heard from people talking about public transportation and refuse collection. If we want those services, we need to pay for them. I read in the paper where former Mayor Wieczorek suggested that we come to this meeting with solutions. Well, you can lower the tax rate at the Highway Department simply by charging user fees. That would lower the tax rate. Those aren't taxes, those are user fees. You could increase the cost of public transportation as a user fee. Of course, these user fees impact most negatively those who need the services most and I wouldn't want to be waiting in line if we went with a system such as Bedford has when you take your own trash to the dump. I wouldn't want to be waiting in line on a Saturday to go to the transfer station for five or six hours. If we want these services, we need to pay for them. What I have been most impressed with this evening, however, are the young people who have spoken here. They have talked about the opportunities they have had in our educational system. We need to fund those continuing programs in music, the performing arts, sports and extra-curricular activities. If we want a quality education in Manchester, we need to fund those services. Thank you.

**Paul Calhoun**, 290 Prospect Street, Manchester stated:

I am a student at Central High School. On this matter I can only speak for my school but I have to point out that my school has over 2,000 students enrolled. I can honestly call Central High my second home. I know every hall and every room and I think about the patience and respect that I am shown by my teachers and principals and everyone who makes a day at Central happen and I cannot in good conscience let you to so nonchalantly cut into the blood line of this school that has given me so much. I know exactly what the ramifications of your

proposed cuts will be and I know the suffering they are going to cause. You are not just signing a budget cut; you are laying off teachers and educators who have done a great deal for me and my peers. You are directly cutting programs that keep thousands of children active and healthy and you are tearing away a part of my beloved school. I know that to simply continue with the cuts is something well within your power but I must make sure that you know precisely what the consequences of your actions are going to be. The damage that it will cause our after school programs and sports and the people that will find themselves without jobs, many of whom I know personally and respect a great deal. I am not asking that you work miracles. I am asking that you think before you jeopardize the education of so many young people. Thank you.

**Gary Larba**, 97 So. Willow Street, Manchester stated:

I apologize because I made some quick notes because I came in with very little when I first got here. I tried to throw together some notes to better present what I wanted to say. I am a homeowner. I own properties on both sides of the river and I certainly do pay taxes. Last year there was a very dynamic increase in taxes. I have lived in this City all of my life. I have been all around the world but Manchester, NH has always been my permanent address. I love this City. I guess I am thinking about why I want to change. As I said I have properties both in Manchester and out. I don't really want to move but I have seen some changes here that bother me. Something caught my attention just very recently. In fact it was just yesterday in the Sunday Union Leader. If I might take this opportunity to read three paragraphs to let you people know what I am thinking of. It starts with, "In Londonderry for instance, the School Board and the Town Council are asking if they, the Town Manager and the School Superintendent, could pool some resources and consolidate their operations. I have been posting this around for the last several weeks and unfortunately School Board member Steve Young said many of you do not know but we are separate forms of government and do not do

the same choice skills. They are original to each of us. They expect leadership amongst each of us and solutions from each of us and they expect us to serve them. What we are doing is getting together and we are going to listen to one another and formulate an idea as to how we can save taxes in Londonderry?" This caught my attention. I see here a very intelligent Board of Mayor and Aldermen. I see Alderman Shea. He was my Alderman at one time. I see a tremendous amount of intelligence. You, Mayor Guinta, I don't know you well but I think you are a very intelligent man also so I guess I am asking why can't we as a Board and Mayor put together our thoughts, each one of you, and get all of the Chairman together from the different committees and say what do we really have to do? Then we just formulate an idea of what has to be done. I know when I was about this tall I learned how to talk. I can't remember when it was that I learned how to listen. It probably wasn't on the same day but I learned later in my life that oh my gosh, the best part of the conversation comes from the person who is doing the listening. To me that is the best kind of talking you can do is to listen. So Board of Mayor and Aldermen and Mr. Mayor I am asking us as a team to start to put together maybe that effort and listen to one of us speak and then we as listeners can speak so the others can listen and put together a program for this City. I love this City. I don't want to change my address. I am hoping to be able to say that if we ever meet again that I am proud to be a resident of the City of Manchester. Board of Mayor and Aldermen and Mayor Guinta, I thank you for your time.

**Keith Murphy**, 2 Blackberry Way, Manchester stated:

We are right about at the four hour mark so I am going to adjust my comments and do us all a favor. I stand before you as a citizen and as a small business owner. On behalf of the people of this City, I ask that you reduce spending rather than raise our taxes. In these tough times I have been forced to make due with less both in my business and in my household. By carefully analyzing my costs, I have been able to reduce my overhead and keep my prices from rising. That is

my responsibility to my customers and I believe that you, the Board members, have the same responsibility to your constituents. Raising our taxes would frankly be a cop out with very real consequences to our families. With our energy prices soaring, health care costs rising and food and housing prices showing tremendous inflation, the worst thing you can do is raise our taxes. Every penny you take from our families is money we can't spend on food and medicine and utilities. Make no mistake; we don't have it to give. For the record, my car is eight years old. It is going on 200,000 miles. There are weeks that I don't cash my paychecks. I hold them. I don't have more money to spend on property taxes. We simply cannot afford a tax increase and raising property taxes will only make it hard for struggling families to keep their home or buy their first residence, which I hope to do next year. It will also mean higher rents as landlords pass on their costs to their tenants. I wish you all a lot of luck because you are going to need it. This is a very tough budget cycle coming up and I understand that but whatever you do in transferring money from department to department and making your way through these department requests, please do not look at the taxpayers for help on this because we don't have it to give. I hear it over and over again from my customers and my suppliers and you heard it from me. Thank you for your time.

**Robert "Benji" Ambrogio**, 544 N. Adams Street, Manchester stated:

Thank you for your time. This is tough. Some day I hope to walk in your shoes and serve as you guys do even though it is a pretty thankless job. There has been a lot of discussion about taxes and are they going up or are they going down. I would like to talk more about value. I don't like paying federal taxes because quite frankly I don't think they give me very good value. They do things like subsidize Ethanol, which we don't need and bridges in Alaska that go nowhere but local taxes are different. They can have good value. They fund the streets we drive on every day and the schools we send our kids to every day. Local taxes

can really have an impact so go up or go down I am somewhat agnostic on that but I want them to have good value. I think a lot of the focus tonight has been around the schools and I ask, do the schools provide a good value? Sometimes they do. I look at some of the great things my kids do in the Manchester schools and sometimes they don't so I think it is important that whatever we do we work with our schools to provide a good value to our kids. I think the most interesting thing I learned tonight is people are talking about cutting this program or cutting that program. You guys aren't cutting anything. This is a lump sum budget for the school district. They decide what gets cut. I think all of the folks, particularly the ones that were hear earlier tonight, are at the wrong meeting. They ought to be at the School Board meeting talking to them about how this money that gets appropriated gets distributed. There are some things in the schools that have very good value. We ought to encourage and continue those. There are some things that don't.

**Barbara Hagan**, 154 Winter Street, Manchester stated:

I am here this evening to ask for perspective. I come to you as a mother of seven children. My husband and I both work to pay our taxes, buy our groceries, provide for the medical needs and other needs of a family. I recently took quite a pay cut in the job that I have because it was better than losing the job. I have nothing but the greatest admiration for the teachers in the City of Manchester. I have two sons that go to West High School and they are my heroes. However, times are tough for families in New Hampshire and for families in Manchester. I have lots in common with the woman who is very frustrated by the expenses on the bridge to nowhere and the baseball park and I think we need some perspective. I, like many taxpayers, cannot afford to give you any more money right now because of the economic times. Now maybe two years from now things will be different but many of the families that I associate with in my neighborhood are experiencing what all of us are experiencing and I think that

government can't put itself in a bubble and say we can operate differently than families and just expect that the money is going to come from...I don't know. We all know that government doesn't have any money. It only has the money it takes from us, the taxpayers, to pay for the services. I am very grateful that you sat here this evening to listen to all of us. I am very impressed with the young people and I would suggest that maybe Mayor Guinta would want to form some sort of a coalition of these students to see if they could come up with some ideas to fund and keep the programs that are important to them. They are very bright young ladies and gentlemen. I would ask for perspective. Thank you very much.

**Dave Scannell**, 838 Maple Street, Manchester stated:

If I didn't think what I was saying hadn't been said, I really wouldn't be here but I did want to say this. For the past four and a half years I have been very happy to work as an administrator in the Manchester public schools and I have been fortunate to work among a corps of dedicated professionals who support the critical classroom efforts of our teachers. I can cite numerous instances when these administrators, including some who have been pink slipped, have cut bureaucratic red tape to insure that students received necessary services. One pink slipped bureaucrat helped structure payments for a scholarship fund that will reward deserving fifth graders when they are ready to go to college. Another paper pusher really pushed a mountain of paperwork created by a private company I might add, to insure that a student who could not come to school because of illness was getting the credit she deserved for an online course. About 13 years ago to this day, President Clinton made an extraordinary statement in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombings that killed a number of administrators and bureaucrats in their federal building. He bemoaned the number of times that he as a governor and president had railed against government administrators and bureaucrats because it was the popular thing to do and because a line bemoaning bureaucracy and administrator was sure to draw applause or a laugh. In the

Manchester school district, an entity that spends fewer dollars per pupil than all but four school districts in the state, administrators, bureaucrats, paper pushers work hand-in-hand with teachers and principals to insure that our students succeed. Recent attempts on the part of some to denigrate their work, demonstrates not only a contempt for their work specifically, but also contempt for the well-established notion that any work is valuable. This is especially true in a City where the motto is Labor Vinci. The ritual denigration of school administrators by those out to score political points will never diminish the pride I feel in having worked as an administrator in the Manchester School District.

Thank you.

**Rachel Schechtman**, 20 Marstan Street, Manchester stated:

I am here as a former student of Parker-Varney, Parkside and I am currently the Senior Class President at West High School. I am here on behalf of the music and art program. I have been a Manchester resident since birth. I have been in the school system my entire life. I have seen how these programs have been developed and to what end students are able to participate in them. I learned how to play the clarinet in the school system. I have been doing this since the fifth grade and learned how to play clarinet in a trailer in the parking lot at Parker-Varney. When this amenity became too expensive, we were moved to the locker room next to the gym. I learned how to play clarinet among volleyballs. Now I understand that music and arts are an amenity that is offered to us but I have marched down Elm Street in the parades for seven years wearing a uniform that is frayed and held together by safety pins standing next to a boy playing a saxophone with duct tape on it. That is the reality we live in and we do well with it and go off to college living with these situations. Mayor Guinta, I was at your inauguration, not as a citizen in the audience or even as a student, but as a clarinet player sitting underneath the stage that you stood on talking about how you were going to fix education. I mean this with all due respect but next year I do propose

that you buy a boom box because there will be no music students to play as you are ushered in and out. I am an art student as well. I am heading off to George Washington University in the fall with a scholarship amounting to \$60,000 based on my artwork. I create this artwork in a wing of the school that doesn't even have a restroom. I buy my own supplies most of the time when they are not offered to us...things the school can't afford; things that my teachers can't provide for us. Now my parents are taxpayers and I am a voter and I do feel, along with my parents and many other parents, that we are willing to pay a bit more for these opportunities and I beg you to please allow other students the same opportunities that I was given. Thank you.

**Chris Langella**, 373 S. Mammoth Road, Manchester stated:

You guys have a tough job ahead of you and you better get used to it because it is going to continue year after year. You hear a lot of these stories tonight and the emotion and the anecdotes. No one has talked about increasing the retirement age in Fire and Police. The growth in just those programs alone are not sustainable and I think you guys know that and at some point you are going to have to face that and you are going to have to face that when you negotiate the union contracts. Health insurance co-pays. Nobody has talked about that. We talked about wages. One gentleman said that some of the benefit packages were 25% to 30% in addition to wages. You don't get those kind of numbers in the private sector anymore. When are you guys going to address increased co-pays for City workers? They don't want to hear it but everybody else is facing it and you guys have to stand up and hold them accountable to at least pay 25%, 30% or 40% of their health insurance premiums like everybody else. Also I think we need to ask more not just from the schools but from the parents out there and from the students. You hear a lot of students asking what are they going to do for me. I think in the final analysis, the student's success will come from themselves and it will come after high school, after college and it will come from their families and

their parents. You have to talk about that because the current spending is unsustainable. I think you guys are aware that it is unsustainable just as Social Security is unsustainable and Medicare is unsustainable. They are all put in place with the best of intentions but as things change we need to change with them. I think Mayor Guinta's budget I would support because it puts a stop at least this year to baseline budgeting and baseline budgeting every two years you will see what kind of mess it gets you into. You grow during the good times – 6%, 8%, 10% and then you have a tight year and everybody says oh we are going to cut everything and it is going to be the end of the world. You really should budget based on need and not just on percentages. Also, as a property owner...I own a home at 373 Mammoth Road and I have owned it since 1989. Now property values are decreasing. Right now, the assessed value of the house is going to determine my contribution to City services. That assessed value is going to go down. Are you guys thinking about the next assessment and what this mortgage crisis so to speak is going to do to assessed values? How is that going to affect the tax base? I would encourage you guys to think about making some tough decisions now because it is not going to get any better and you can't be swayed necessarily by the anecdotes and the public opinions particularly from the special interest groups like the NEA and other City unions. I would encourage you guys to make the hard decisions this year because in two years you are going to be facing an even worse situation and two years after that it will be even worse. You have to put a stop to this baseline budgeting now and get control over the taxpayer's money. Thank you.

**Bryan SanSouci, Jr.**, 40 Skyline Drive, Manchester stated:

I am nine years old. I am not a taxpayer yet but my parents are. I only have one question. How will you keep me safe if I have to walk to school next year on Bodwell and Corning Roads, both of which have no sidewalks? I live 1.7 miles from school. Thank you for your time.

**Richard Longden**, 519 Somerville Street, Manchester stated:

Last time I checked there were 12 wards, not 14. There are too many Aldermen up there. Sorry no offense but we need to cutback some spending here. Guess what? The buck stops somewhere else. Not in the homes of these children. Not in the homes of these adults who have to pay taxes. You want to continue spending? Well there is a lot of other spending that needs to be looked at too. Guess what? Potholes get filled by overworked, underappreciated employees who have to fill potholes with tools that are not even there. Again, if you cutback spending on public transportation then how are these people going to get to and from their jobs? Well, let's see. Welfare is going to go up definitely. Unemployment is going to skyrocket. It is going to be a ripple effect. It starts with the budget. Everything comes down to the mighty dollar it appears. Let's look also at a line item that was motorized vehicles. It started out at \$100,000 plus almost four years ago. Now it is a \$1.1 million. We have children here worried. This young man has to worry about walking to school. He is going to have to worry about his bus. That is ridiculous. We have two parents working hard to support their children. They have to worry about food, shelter and now they are going to have to worry about their kids being picked up by a pedophile or rapist? Come on people. Wake up. There is some money to be laid down here and it is not coming out of my pocket, it is our pockets. We have to look towards the future. Manchester has a bright future and one that is going to strive if we continue to put into education and public services like transportation. Making sure our children are the golden globes. Manchester was rated the #1 Small City in the U.S. Number one. That is a lot to be proud of. If we push forward we will see great economic growth. The time is not for shrinking back. People are parking their cars, riding buses, we see great potential in our children but we are not willing to put the best effort forward for them. If we continue down this road...high schools are looking at not being accredited in three years. No

diplomas. It is going to be as good as the paper it is printed on. That's it. You might as well continue to say sorry we are not interested in your employment anymore because you don't have a diploma. That is a little ridiculous too. We need to understand what is going on in the City. There are a lot of line items that we can look at and try to fix. There is also a bloat in administration in some departments. It is not just feasible to continue down the road where some spending is good and some is bad. I have seen my property being assessed by a contracted company that I have never heard of and they gave me a market value according to someone else's house that is down the block. My house needs a new roof, windows and doors. I am trying to do that the best I can with the funds I have. Everything is called a table budget I notice. First I would allow transportation to go to and from work. Well that would be public transportation for some people. Also, food and shelter. I definitely have to get to and from work to put food and shelter on the table as well. Gentlemen, it is time to do a little number counting here. Don't take it at the expense of the future. Thank you.

**Donna Carette**, 170 Beech Street, Manchester stated:

I am not a taxpayer but have been a long time resident of Manchester. My daughter graduated last year from here. She was a musician. She played the violin in the orchestra, which she had played since she was in fifth grade. If it wasn't for that and giving her the encouragement to be able to strive and be challenged...she also has the same disability as I do. I was thrilled with the music department and how they encouraged her even beyond her disability to be able to play. She graduated from Memorial and enjoyed the orchestra all the way through high school. To see things like that get cut...how is it going to help like a lot of the students said to keep them wanting to come to school and work on their class work? I am also here as a passenger of the MTA. I am unable to drive because of my vision. I rely on the MTA to do my shopping. I am going back to

school after raising my daughter. I am planning on getting involved in the education field because I have seen the need in this area, especially in the elementary level for special education. Cutting the services to any of the colleges will hinder myself and many others who are trying to make themselves better. I have lived most of my life below the poverty level. I know myself that getting off government assistance is going to be something I look forward but cutting public transportation...a lot of people rely on it on Saturdays to get back and forth to work. Like some other people already said, if you cut our transportation we won't have a job and if we don't have a job the state budget is going to go up because you will have more people who need assistance. As we know, the state budget itself is tight as it is. Do you really want to take jobs away from people who are trying to make a life for themselves and their families in Manchester? As many have said, us little people, there haven't been many of us here tonight because we think our voices aren't worth it because we haven't really put much into the community but help us. Don't take our transportation away from us.

**Ernest Kilman**, 108 Lovering Avenue, Loudon stated:

I do work at SAU #39 and the proposal I am suggesting is my own. I don't represent SAU #39. You have a tough job to minimize the property tax increase for the citizens of Manchester and at the same time keep the schools adequately sound. While it is true that a budget of \$153 million is too much of a burden for the taxpayer, it is also true that \$140 million budget would cripple the school department as we know it today. Therefore, I submit a two part solution to address these issues. The first part is to keep our current staffing as is but with no step or salary increases in FY09. Of course, you would have to negotiate that with the union. That one cut would save \$2.5 million. Let's remove newly budgeted positions amounting to \$800,000. Remove new initiatives of \$1.1 million and use \$1 million from the expendable trust to pay for health insurance and special education. Lastly, remove newly added building maintenance of

\$400,000, extra-curricular activities of \$328,000 and reduce supplies and textbooks district-wide by \$600,000. This would bring the \$153 million budget down to \$146.4. To fund this approach we first take the Mayor's budget of \$140 million and add the same 4% budget increase accepted from 2006 to 2007. Add to that the mandated \$500,000 fund balance left at the end of this fiscal year. That brings us to my suggested \$146.4 million budget. It has been said that there is possibly fat in the School District budget so the second part is to do a separate study of the staffing of all of our schools and administration. CPA firms do such studies indicating over staffing, etc. The beauty of this is that you keep the schools going without crippling service while you are looking more carefully at costs of schools like West High where the Bedford students have been gradually leaving each year. Increase volunteerism, corporate sponsorship and the establishment of sports fees with student activity funding scholarships to pay for needy families would help offset the above costs. I have found personally in my experience working with another school district that we successfully manage the in-house budget of our multiple school district by having each principal justify every line item in detail and reduce it if not essential. In summary, this approach will prevent the crippling of school service to the wonderful 16,000 kids and at the same time limit Manchester's tax increase to the FY07 tax level increase.

**Maura Ouellette**, 3 Summerfare Street, Hooksett stated:

I am the Chair of the Hooksett School Board. Additionally, I have sent children to Central High School for the past seven consecutive years. As a representative of the sending town of Hooksett, I am quite concerned with the magnitude of the proposed cuts and find them unacceptable. At our suggestion, our attorney has sent a letter addressed to Mayor Guinta as well as the Aldermanic Chairman, Michael Lopez, officially notifying the School Board and Aldermen of our intent to strictly construe and vigorously enforce the terms of the tuition agreement. Among other remedies, a violation of this agreement by Manchester would relieve

Hooksett and other sending districts of their obligation to continue to make capital payments under the terms of the agreement. Our contract states the Manchester school district will, during the term of the agreement, provide a course of studies for grades 9-12 in the necessary facilities, equipment, supplies, textbooks, teachers and administration so that all Manchester high schools qualify as comprehensive high schools in accordance with New Hampshire statutes and state standards and are accredited by the New England Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges. With the proposed budget, Manchester will certainly put its accreditation status at risk, thereby jeopardizing students competing for slots in the highly competitive college arena. State minimum standards set class size for instructional purposes at the middle and high school level at 30 students or fewer per teacher. In the interest of safety, laboratory classes are not to exceed 24. Again, with the proposed budget these State minimum standards cannot be met. The proposed cuts under the Mayor's budget would eliminate several programs and initiatives crucial to a high school student's success, programs such as NH's 21<sup>st</sup> Century, which helps to guide at risk students on a path to college. Additionally, with the elimination of sports and arts programs, as well as extra-curricular activities, students from Manchester's high schools could be denied eligibility of scholarships to colleges based on athletic or other achievements. This could make the dream of college impossible for students without other financial means. These programs not only offer a student the chance to excel, it gives them a reason to not only attend school but to do well in school. The ramifications of an ill funded budget are far reaching and almost impossible to correct at a later date. What is even more upsetting is the reality that the proposed budget stops the progress of West High School Academies, a program that I believe would have had a huge impact on diminishing the high school drop out rate. It was such a strong program and I felt we could see it implemented in all Manchester high schools over the next few years. The lack of funds for this program allows at risk students to continue to fall through the cracks. The

success or failure of a school district sets the tone for the City and will significantly determine your property values. If you don't spend the money now, it will certainly cost you much more in the long run. I urge the Aldermen of Manchester to help move the Manchester school district in the right direction. Make an investment in your City, your future, and your most valuable resource, your children. Thank you.

**Lorraine Farrell**, 11 Stirling Avenue, Hooksett stated:

Until two years ago I lived in Manchester for over 20 years. I had three children in the Manchester school district. My oldest graduated from Central in 2003. My middle daughter graduated in 2005 and my youngest child will graduate this year in 2008. I find myself in an unusual position because I am leaving yet I am here to speak to you because what is happening to these children and the budget cuts will affect children after my children and I still think it is really important to speak. As I leave, I think you should know the beginning of my experience in the Manchester school district. When my two girls were in school, they were in private Catholic school until my son was ready to enter first grade and my husband and I realized that the private Catholic school was lacking in a lot of areas but in particular music, arts and sports. So we did the opposite. Instead of putting our children in private school, we took them out of private school and we put them in the public school system and it has been a decision that my husband and I have never regretted. I hope in the future as my children come back to the City as they finish their college experiences and they have their children that the school systems that they will be sending their children to will be just as good and as strong as the ones they were able to experience here. Now I do want to say one last thing because I always like to be a rebel rouser. I have been a little put off by some of the comments that have characterized parents as Chicken Little running around saying the sky is falling. We are not Chicken Little. I am not Chicken Little. You, me and all of these parents and all of these kids are superheroes and

we are going to stay here and continue to fight for children and for their education now and tomorrow. Thank you.

**Elaine Hobbs**, 62 Maverick Drive, Auburn stated:

I am the Chair of the Auburn School Board. I will try not to be redundant about what fellow SAU #15 member Maura Ouellete said but I do have my own comments. I am here tonight to stand up for the high school students in Auburn as well as those in Manchester. I am a proud parent of a junior and a freshman at Memorial and I thank you for this opportunity to speak. I have some real concerns about the budget cuts you are proposing. Like many others, my concerns are for the students. With the potential cuts, the program deficiencies, both co-curricular and extra-curricular are devastating. Students in this day and age need to be well-rounded students. We look for them to participate in athletics and clubs to become better students. Colleges even require students to be involved in many activities. Class size is a concern, as well as overtaxing the administrative staff and the guidance department. There are many reasons why students participate in programs other than the scholastic requirements. It could be to exercise team spirit, make friends, keep busy, the love of the activity, or to just be part of the school and for that experience to be put on a college application. Regardless of the reason, these programs are essential for the students of the district. Now specifically as a school board member, I have some concerns about how the cuts would affect our contract. Our attorney, Gordon Graham, sent a letter to you dated April 23 outlining the details of this. So if the cuts are to take place, you may be in breach of this contract, which would allow Auburn, Hooksett, Candia and probably Bedford to opt out early without penalties and/or would not be responsible for the capital component in the contract. This could have another serious financial effect on the budget. At the very least, it could cost all districts involved a great deal of money towards attorney fees, which will further impact the taxpayer. Finally, I have always been a proponent

of Manchester high schools. I supported the long-term agreement in 2003. I truly believe that the Manchester school district has a lot to offer the students but with these cuts that would no longer be the case. I am proud of Memorial High School as a parent and as a board member. I only hope that I can continue to be and I am afraid with these cuts I will not longer be able to be. Thank you.

**David Sacks**, Bedford stated:

Honorable Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Manchester, I am the Chairman of the Bedford School Board. I am accompanied by the full Board, Terry Wolfe, Cindy Chagnon, Bob Dungroff and the Superintendent of Bedford Schools, Tim Mays. I am here to represent students and parents of Manchester High School West, particularly the 215 Bedford students that will graduate from West High at the end of the 2008-2009 school year. This will be Bedford's last graduating class at West High, spanning a tradition nearing 90 years. I am here tonight to express our concern regarding the current budget proposal that is being considered for Manchester's schools and in particular for West High. We are currently in a tuition agreement with the Manchester school district that was signed in January of 2006. Under this agreement, high school students from Bedford would phase out of West High over a three year period. We are grateful to Manchester that you agreed to allow our students to complete their education at their high school, West High. As part of the contract, Bedford agreed to pay the per student tuition rate, as well as an additional \$200 transition fee per student. Another key term of this agreement is that Manchester would continue to offer the same quality of education and programs as was offered under the prior agreement subject to the typical curriculum review and student interests. If the proposed budget cut is realized, it will be virtually impossible for West High to comply with the terms of this agreement. We believe that this budget cut will deeply impact student to position themselves as best as possible for the college or career of their choice. The proposed budget reductions under consideration would

potentially jeopardize New Hampshire school approval status and be viewed as a substantive change by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, which could result in an immediate change to the accreditation of all City high schools, let alone West High. The Bedford School District has acted in good faith. Manchester was provided significant notice of Bedford's withdrawal from West and the negotiated tuition contract allows a gradual withdrawal of Bedford students from West High. Bedford has paid significant dollars for long-term infrastructure improvements to Manchester high schools and assisted with potential transition expenses. Bedford paid Manchester \$10.6 million in capital costs from 2004 to 2006 in the prior three year tuition contract. We strenuously object to the possibility that Bedford seniors be provided with an educational program that is significantly less than what was required in our contract. It could impact them and all of their fellow students for the remainder of their lives. We urge you to seriously consider our thoughts today. We have a near 90 year tradition. As president, I am asking you to consider the children and the future of this region as you contemplate drastically impacting their means to success. Thank you very much.

**Scott McGilvray**, Hooksett stated:

I am President of the Manchester Education Association. I am here tonight representing the 1,300 teachers in the City of Manchester. I am here to give you a little information and give each and every one of you an opportunity to be proactive in this very difficult budget process. You are dealing with difficult issues and certainly difficult decisions that each of you are going to have to make as well as the Board of School Committee. The 1,300 plus teachers, paraprofessionals and support staff provide vital services to this community and its most precious asset, the children. The most valuable asset that the City of Manchester has and must protect and provide for are its children and its youth. It is the responsibility of all of us stakeholders in the community I believe to provide

the youth of Manchester with the best possible education, not just an adequate education which is a term that has been tossed around tonight. You would not hire an adequate teacher. You would not hire an adequate principal. You would not elect an adequate Board of Mayor and Aldermen. We want things to be the best they can possibly be under the conditions, not just adequate. Adequate doesn't cut it in anybody's book. I would not pass an adequate child in class. There are two key ingredients in the success or failure of a student in school – parents and teachers. It is no secret in this community that the people who take care of educating our children each and every day are highly qualified, hard working, put in the extra time needed, spend the extra money out of their own pocket, work their nights and work their weekends and are very proud teachers and I am proud to stand here representing them. It is my hope that the district receives whatever money necessary to provide a first class education that all of the children deserve. It is also my hope that the monies received by the school district from the Manchester taxpayers be spent prudently and with great care. Regardless of the amount of the final budget, it is important for all parties involved to remember the two most important pieces in a student's education are parents and teachers. That being said, it is my hope that the hardworking teachers that I represent would be the last option in any cuts that need to be made by this district. We have all been and will continue to be the vital people that carry Manchester forward taking care of our most cherished and treasured possessions – our children. The opportunity I give you is that the Manchester Education Association led by myself or Ben Dick our Vice President or any member of our association are here to reach out to you and the members of the School Board and I will address them also. We are here to help you answer any questions, give you ideas and thoughts. We are veteran people. I have been here 20 years. I have coached. I have taught. I have advised. I know what is going on and if I don't know it, I can find somebody who can help you. I will leave my business card with my own personal home phone number and my office number. I am available

days, nights or weekends to help you guys as you go through this budget process and I will give the same opportunity to the School Board. Thank you very much.

**John Lazarz**, 547 Manchester Road, Manchester stated:

I moved here three years ago from Massachusetts and as some of you may know the taxes are quite a bit higher than they are here and that is why my parents moved here. When I got here, I was at the nadir of my life. I hated most of my classes and moving here I didn't have any friends. One of the classes I wanted to take here was orchestra and when I got there I found the friendliest group of people I have ever seen in my life. They gave me a chance to move myself forward and take away the sadness I felt from leaving all my friends behind in Massachusetts. Now that chance is going to be denied. That budget may not directly take away funding for orchestra and band but you are cutting elementary school funding. That means in three or four years there will be no students in these programs at West or Central or Memorial. There will be no one who has been taught the fundamentals. They will be starting at step one. I hated orchestra too when I got here but I love it now. It is my favorite class. My teacher left and he is a lucky guy. I hope he is in bed asleep. Mr. Bryan. He is my favorite all time teacher. He makes me love orchestra and I do love it and I love the people in it but I wouldn't have gotten that chance if I came here four years from now. I just have one more point to make. I am very interested in politics and I like to try to think ahead to the future not to just what is going to happen a few years from now and I see myself in four or five years getting out of college and coming back to where my parents live and becoming a journalist. That is my hope. That is my dream. Now I don't want to live here if I know my kids won't get a good education. I will go back to Massachusetts and I will pay the taxes. Thank you.

**Cassy Hobbs**, 62 Maverick Drive, Auburn stated:

You guys look a little tired, a little bored, a little hungry maybe? Well I don't live in Manchester and I don't pay taxes here so I have been waiting here for five hours to tell you how I feel. Typically you know what? I don't mind that I have had to wait here for five hours to express my opinions because I don't live in Manchester. I leave my house at 6:45 AM and I come back at 7 PM. Where does all of that time go? Well if you look at that, over half of my time is spent in Manchester at this school. Do you want to know why that is? Because I get here early and participate in the arts. I play sports and I love every minute of it. I would rather spend twelve hours at this school than eight miserable hours somewhere else with no programs. Now why am I up here? Well I could have easily decided to go with most of my middle schools friends to school in Derry or maybe a private school but I wanted to go here, not only for the diversity but for the support and I knew I would have these programs. I think it is kind of sad that maybe one day my brother won't be able to have some of these opportunities that I had. I think what would have happened if I didn't have my soccer team to support me when I was a freshman or what would I have to fall back on if I didn't have the art program? You guys want dedication? Have you guys gone to "Seussical"? These kids are here...they pretty much slept here in the school to put on a presentation and it came out incredible and you want to cut the arts and music programs? Our art department in a statewide competition...we have just as much...they call them gold keys as schools like Phillips Exeter or nationwide and you know what, we don't have \$10,000 scanners. We had to fundraise...I like photography and we had to fundraise to be able to afford film and paper let alone \$10,000 scanners and to cut the budget even further, that seems crazy to me. I know I am not alone in saying this but if you cut the AP classes and the sports, all of these kids are affected. That is what they like to do. I know myself I wouldn't be in this district if it weren't for these programs. Mayor Guinta I was with you...I was a witness when my friend John actually interviewed you for our

school newspaper and you said you wanted to help bring more people back to Manchester because right now we have more people leaving than coming. It seems kind of counterproductive because if you cut these programs fewer kids are going to come here. If I were in my position four years later, I would have chosen to go to Derry with most of my friends. I hope that you think this over and I thank you for all of these opportunities that I have been given that the City has provided for me. I hope that in the future you continue to provide these programs for my little brother and all of the other kids coming from the feeder schools. Thank you.

**Linda Englehart**, 15 Wentworth Drive, Bedford stated:

I work in Manchester. I would like to just continue as far as the opening remarks from your principal who I never had the pleasure to meet before tonight as well as all of the concerned residents here tonight from Manchester. Every concerned parent here has their own issue with the proposed cuts that will adversely affect their own student. Speaking for myself and my daughter who is a junior at West, and by the way was in a fender bender on her way here tonight and that is why she is not standing here with me, I am deeply concerned about the proposed cuts at this late date with courses already chosen that will greatly impact senior year and college plans, which are well underway. In our case, the program I am speaking about is the art program. I strongly feel that the situation for the Manchester school district seniors needs to be taken into account to allow them to be able to finish out at West and all of the other schools as agreed upon particularly with the West contract with no change to their curriculum next year. Thank you.

**Debbie Lane**, 61 Tirrell Road, Bedford stated:

I would like to point out the NH statute Title 15 regarding adequate public education, specifically Section 193-E. It states "the criteria for an adequate

education should provide all students with the opportunity to acquire skills in reading, writing and speaking English to enable them to communicate effectively.” It also in the statute states that “the students should have access to a grounding in the arts, languages and literature to enable them to appreciate our cultural heritage and to develop lifelong interests and involvement in these areas.” Additionally, the statute states that the content of an adequate education for the 2008-2009 school year includes the following: English, Language Arts, Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies, World Languages, Health Education, Physical Education, Technology Education, and Arts Education. If you propose your budget, some of these items will have to be cut. Public schools and public academies in the statute shall adhere to these standards. Also in summary it says “the general court shall ensure that the high quality of the standards is maintained.” On a personal note, I have three children. Two of them have been at Manchester West. Last year my oldest daughter graduated from West and she is currently a biology pre-med major in Florida. She may be your doctor one day. In high school she was involved in the orchestra and after playing the cello for only two years she was elected to become the section leader in the high school orchestra under Ms. Thor. She also took many art classes throughout her high school education. Although she decided to be a science major, she was involved in the AP portfolio art program and a lot of her friends needed to take that portfolio art program in order to get accepted into art programs at the college level. I know she would have had a difficult time getting into college without the well rounded education that included the orchestra and her art classes specifically with Ms. Claudia Michael. My second child is a junior and a member of the last class from Bedford to go through West. She, too, has been involved in the arts as well as being a member of the high school swim team, qualifying for the state championship her freshman year, her sophomore year and her junior year. You are about to take that away from her for her senior year and it is very, very sad. If you take away the arts and the sports and you take away her competitive edge to

get into a good college or into college at all for that matter, as far as I am concerned you will not be funding an adequate education as it states in the statute and I consider that a breach of the contract with the Bedford School District. I thank God that my youngest child will not be a victim of your budget cuts but she will continue her education in the Bedford School District. Thank you.

**Kayla Scullin**, 34 Grafton Road, Bedford stated:

I am here to represent the National Art Honor Society at West. My teacher, Ms. Morris just left actually because she was really tired and had jet lag. My friend the other day stated that high school at West now is kind of like that scene in Indiana Jones where the big rock is chasing after Indiana Jones and he is trying to get out of the cave. That is what West is like right now. Everything is falling apart and we are trying to pick up the pieces and run out at the same time. It is not really working out too well. So I don't know. What I am trying to say is the whole reason I go to school is for art. There is no other reason for me to be at school most days. All of the other classes to me don't matter as much. They matter to certain people. Everyone has their own passion obviously but art is my thing and with this budget cut potentially we will have two art teachers next year to teach 16 art classes, cutting out portfolio, cutting out painting, cutting out computer graphics. As Mr. Kinnard said earlier, he made the schedules for next year and I have five art classes, one English class and half a credit of U.S. History next year. That is all I have so without these art classes I will be going to school for one class period, which is kind of pathetic. I am not going to lie. Art at West is like incredible. It is the one thing that is going to get me into college. The teachers actually care about you. I have this one teacher, Mr. Siz. He is like the coolest guy ever. That is all I have to say but I transferred to West my sophomore year from a Catholic school that had one art class. He got me into art and he was like join the National Art Honor Society so I was like okay I will join and we do all of these fun field trips. We are going to New York in May to look at all of the

museums and we went to portfolio day in Boston where you bring all of your artwork and there are colleges there and they look at it and tell you whether it is good or not good. That happens. That's life. These teachers actually truly care about our future and I don't understand why you want to get rid of some of them, especially Ms. Morris. She has only been a teacher one year. She is one of the most dedicated individuals I have ever met in my entire life. She spends so much time...every day she is there until at least 3:00 or 4:00 PM. Has everyone seen our computer lab? The same with Mr. Kennard. Two of our teachers are retiring next year. We are not supposed to know about this but we know about this. If you fire Ms. Morris you will only have two teachers and all of these kids here, we won't have an art department. You are thinking of cutting theatre too? Art and theatre have started to merge and work together this year, which is really cool because we help paint their set for a really cool play even though I didn't go. It was really cool. It was "Into the Woods" and we painted this incredible backdrop. It is actually getting kids involved in school. I actually care about school now even if it is just art class. I like going to school.

**Craig Benton**, 36 Clifton Road, Bedford stated:

Granted I am from Bedford but it really doesn't matter. I spent the last four years of my life at West and I don't regret it for a minute. In those last four years, I spent most of my time with Theatre Nights and that is our theatre group at Manchester West. It has been my backbone along with a lot of kids here today. Without Theatre Nights and chorus, I don't know what I would have done. My grandfather being a former Superintendent of Manchester schools, Eugene Ross, he would be very disappointed if he didn't see me up on stage performing and doing choral concerts throughout my high school career. He would be very disappointed in Manchester schools. Without what I have done in the past four years with theatre and all of that, I wouldn't be going on to college in New York City to Mary Mount Manhattan. I just really wish that you guys would take into

consideration that without these programs we wouldn't be the people we are today. We do not spend hours and hours in them to have fun. We do it to respect not only ourselves but to respect the city that we live in. We take this destination and we will bring it with us to college and further our career and what we do in life. This year I will be honored as an Honor Thespian in the International Thespian Society and if I didn't have that, that is something that I wouldn't look back on and be extremely proud of. So I would like you guys to think twice about what you do with the budget cuts because it will make a difference in so many other kids' lives. Thank you.

**Megan Elrick**, 276 N. Amherst Street, Bedford stated:

I know we have had a couple of West students up here before me but I am also a member of the arts and music, not so much the visual art...I am not good at drawing but I am really close with a couple of the art teachers, including Ms. Morris who was going to speak here tonight. I would like to speak mostly on behalf of our marching band, concert band and our theatre company. Manchester West is the last school in Manchester that has a theatre company, which is really sad to think about because we are in this beautiful auditorium right now and there is no theatre company that works here. Next year I am going to be the technical director, producer and business manager of theatre and even with the budget cuts we are going to try to operate, which will definitely make my job a little more difficult in raising and finding money to be able to fund these projects that we do. We put on these productions and we spend about \$10,000 making a show. We really don't get that great of a turnout but it is mostly for the students. We spend so much money and so much time in these productions. I know I spent upwards of 30 hours a week after school every week from December until two weeks ago when we performed. It is a lot of time that I spend that I know everyone in the front row and almost everyone back here have spent time doing the same thing as me. The budget cuts are threatening to take away our theatre stipend, which helps

give our theatre direction just that little bit of money to use and spend his time here with us working. I also am a member of the West High School marching band and concert band and I just joined them my sophomore year. I played clarinet back when I was in fifth grade but now I play trumpet in the band and it is really important to me. I had private schools calling me and asking me to go at the end of middle school. They were like come to our school, it's awesome and I begged my mom to let me go to the Manchester school district because you guys had an awesome art program and because your music program was excellent. I am the oldest child in my family. I didn't have any brothers or sisters before me but I heard such great things from all of my friends and all of their older siblings that I was like wow I really want to go here. I know that my little brother and sister will be going to the Bedford school district but I have really grown close to so many of the Manchester kids that I want them to have this opportunity that I have had. I enjoy this school district so much that it would be such a shame to let it go to waste. Thank you.

**Jocelyn Cordell**, 38 Hawthorne Drive, Bedford stated:

I will keep it very brief because I am in trouble of almost missing my curfew. I am a Bedford resident and I have attended West for almost four years. Within those four years I have grown to love this school. I received a very well-rounded education. I have participated in most everything at West, including F.I.R.S.T. Robotics, chamber choir, three honor societies, Theatre Nights, and soccer. I have grown to understand that without this I would not be the person I am going to be. I can't forget band. My good friend, Sarah Ginta, would never forgive me if I didn't bring that up. Anyway, I just want to share something with you. When I was eight years old I was still watching Disney movies and the first thing I noticed about them was the score. I always wanted to be a musical composer, the next John Williams or if I can't do that at least the next David Lance. The whole music department at West has allowed me to do that. I have been in the chamber

choir with Craig and this opportunity has allowed me to go to Carnegie Hall to sing in New York last May and without it I would not be getting a trustee scholarship of \$64,000 to go to Lake Forest College. I would like the honored members of this Board and the Mayor to remember one thing. Remember your own opportunities. Remember how it felt when you were in school, and I'm sure that with all of the things you have heard tonight you will make the right choice. I realize it is late and thank you very much for your time.

**Beth Glennon**, Bedford stated:

I am a junior at West. I just want to say that next year I am in a similar position to my friend Kayla. The classes that I am taking are mostly music and art classes because when I go on to college I want to pursue a career in music management and I am going to need those classes next year so I really hope they don't get cut. Also, I am a cheerleader and no one has brought up sports lately but I love the feeling of having my uniform on and being in front of everybody on a Friday night and going out and supporting my school. If that gets cut next year, I won't be able to do that. So I hope that doesn't get cut or music or art. Thank you for sitting here for five hours.

**Joe Richard**, 100 Union Street, Manchester stated:

I want to talk about the West Side Library next to West High School. I have my opinion on everything that everybody else said but they said it beautifully so I don't need to waste anymore of your time but if this budget cut actually happens and you actually go through this ridiculous thing then most likely that will be closed down. I know 50 or more kids who go there who can't afford Internet service or books and stuff like that who like to read after school there and do projects there. They can't do projects there if they don't have Internet access. If this happens, I just want you to know that. Have a good night.

**City Clerk Carol Johnson** stated I would like to note that we have received a few communications that we are going to place in the file. The first is from Jeanne Eslinger of 76 Goodwin Street. She is submitting a letter in support of the Mayor. These will be distributed to the Board. Steven Matheau has also submitted a letter which is in support of the Mayor's budget and that will be distributed to the Board. There is a 34 page petition that was submitted in support of the Manchester Transit Authority's budget, which will also be distributed. A letter from Child Health Services in support of additional funding for Child Health Services in the CIP allocations will also be distributed to the Board. Finally, we have a letter from David Sacks, Chairman of the Bedford School Board. That will be submitted to the Board. We have a communication from Lisa Frisselle also containing additional materials which will be submitted to the Board and a student petition that will be submitted as well.

**Patrick Gocklin**, Manchester stated:

I am a student here at Manchester Memorial. I am a senior, the Class President, and I also have a twin brother who goes to school here. Growing up, I played on many sports teams and have been a captain and everything. I have a brother who is going to Michigan on a music scholarship just because he started playing music in elementary school. From playing sports on teams and everything there is leadership, there is everybody taking a part and the leader on the team sets the example. Now you are the leader of the City representing all of these people up here and you are basically telling them that education shouldn't be the most important part of this City with the budget you are presenting. Now what are you saying to this City as a leader? The image that you are showing this entire City is not good. You shouldn't be doing that. You are only hurting your self-image anyway. You are supposed to be thinking of the best for the entire team. All of these people want the same opportunities as you and we are only looking for a chance. The fact is as students we are smart and no matter what you do, we will

make the best of it and defy and make sure we do succeed no matter what happens.

**Mayor Guinta** advised that all wishing to speak having been heard, the comments presented shall be taken under consideration with actions by the Board.

*On motion of **Alderman Smith**, duly seconded by **Alderman Pinard**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk