



A CONVERSATION WITH **KRINER CASH**

Sponsored by  **Hodgson Russ LLP**
ATTORNEYS AT LAW



ALL PHOTOS: JIM COURNEY

Buffalo Schools Superintendent Kriner Cash shared his strategies for upgrading schools with an audience of business leaders April 21 at Hodgson Russ LLP's Pearl Street offices. His conversation with Business First Publisher Jack Connors continues a series of discussions with industry leaders.

Educating Buffalo

CITY SCHOOLS CHIEF OUTLINES HIS STRATEGIES

BY DAN MINER
dminer@bizjournals.com
716-541-1616 @BfloBiz_Miner

The first thing Kriner Cash noticed when he took over as superintendent of the Buffalo City School District last summer was the lack of a plan.

So he set out to build a strategy that engages the entire community.

The result is an aggressive strategy that focuses on everything from early literacy to innovative programs that align with economic trends in Buffalo and a rollout of

“community schools” that seeks to make buildings hubs of activity in their individual communities.

Cash – who sat down to describe his agenda at a Business First roundtable event – has navigated the complex web of potentially acrimonious stakeholders, including the teachers’ union, school board and state Education Department.

He said the important thing is the students. And it’s crucial to get to them early.

“If I’ve learned nothing else in my career as an educator, (it’s that)

higher graduation rates, well-paying jobs, they don’t begin in 12th grade or in college. They begin in the womb,” he said. “Those first four years of education are absolutely critical.”

Cash is implementing new financial processes, especially during the current process of building a budget. He said his administration is going through every office, every department, every line.

“Leaner, meaner, faster, smarter, cheaper,” he said. “That’s what I want Buffalo public schools to be.”

across the state that are considered persistently failing districts for a long period of time, 10 years to 15 years, and it’s hard finding human capital leadership talent to come to those school districts and help. Would you be interested?” And I said, “Hmm, which one is the most difficult? Which is the one that you need the most help in?” And she said Buffalo. I said, “Then that’s the one that I want to help you at.” That’s when the process began, and it was a process. Because she said, “I can’t guarantee you the job. I can just say that I’ll recommend you. You still have to get vetted through the community and so forth.” And I said I know. I’ve done that many times. I know how that process goes. Memphis was one of the poorest – I thought was the poorest and highest poverty district in the country. But I talked to people here and they said that, no, Buffalo is probably pound for pound the poorest district in the country. So that was an issue. The segregation was an issue. The students with extraordinary needs was an issue. The Buffalo needs are higher, actually. Hunger – students who had acute hunger through the poverty had health issues. You know, on and on, before you even get to academic issues, you had a lot of these tangential issues that you had to deal with. But that was the challenge and I knew from the Miami experience and then the Memphis experience that I was suited at this time for this work and I embraced it. I wanted to come here and help. And then my family said, “You should do that, Dad. You’re kind of built for it. You’ve had enough respite now and rest. You’re kind of getting on our nerves and you need to get back in there in the game and do something.” But anyway, that’s how we got here. The community was very thorough and I enjoyed the opportunity, certainly. And I saw early on that there really was no plan in the Buffalo Public Schools in a whole host of areas, from finance to academics to personnel and leadership, on and on. A lot of areas need a good, solid plan and there certainly was no overlying strategic plan. And that’s what I began to do with the involvement and conversations with all the different stakeholders.

► What drew you to Buffalo?

KRINER CASH: Well, I was at home on Martha’s Vineyard with my grandchildren and I had been taking some time to reflect on a pretty long and intense career. I’ve never really had a vacation for more than a week, week and a half in close to 26 years in the work. So I was taking some time away from the Memphis job. I was enjoying myself for that year or so,

and I got an email and it came from MaryEllen Elia. I thought she was in Tampa. It was near the end of the day. I said I’d get back to her the next day. I did get back and she said, “I want to talk to you about Buffalo.” I said, “Buffalo? Are you going to Buffalo?” I’m still thinking she’s in Tampa and she said, “No, I’m the commissioner of education in New York now.” And so another day or two we talked and she said, “Can we meet? I need to

talk to you about Buffalo or about this work.” And so we had dinner. We agreed to have dinner halfway – well, she said she’d meet me halfway from wherever I was. She was in Albany. I was over here. Halfway ended up being in Williamstown, which was 45 minutes for her, about three hours for me. We had a good conversation that night and at the end of it she said, “I need help in New York. There’s about 17 districts

► That’s a great segue into the second area I wanted to talk about, which is basically the New Education Bargain, which is the plan at this point. There are six key components.

A CONVERSATION WITH KRINER CASH

Sponsored by



Is there any one that you see as the No. 1 part of that bargain?

CASH: If I had to pick one, I think the early start is the most important. If I've learned nothing else in my career as an educator, higher graduation rates, well-paying jobs – they don't begin in 12th grade or in college. They begin in the womb and then those first four years of education are absolutely critical. And then kindergarten through third grade is the next critical span of a child's learning. If by 8 years old, 9 years old, we haven't gotten that vocabulary, that interest in continuing learning, that bright, happy face continuing to glow, asking questions and still curious about the world and wanting to answer and get answers for everything – if that starts to dim and the vocabulary is several hundred words as opposed to several thousand words, we're losing the game there. We have a lot of children who suffer from various degrees of trauma, and trauma is defined as anything that disrupts the psychological and emotional balance of an individual. So students who are facing domestic violence, sexual abuse, lead poisoning, for example, the effects of war ... A lot of our new Americans have just come from countries that are in civil wars or in

► CLOSER LOOK AT THE SERIES

The conversation with Kriner Cash is part of an ongoing series of discussions with business leaders.

Throughout the year, decision-makers from diverse Western New York industries meet for discussions moderated by Business First journalists.

Excerpts from the conversation are published two weeks after the event.

Upcoming topics include nonprofits, family-run business, education and the business of sports.

The discussions, sponsored by Hodgson Russ LLP, are held at the law firm's Pearl Street offices in Buffalo.

wars with other countries. And the adjustments – social, psychological adjustments – of those children and families are extraordinary. You have some tremendous resources here; you get an A-plus for that. But what we have to do is be a little bit more coordinated, better coordinated, in aligning them and getting the strategic impact from all those resources so they are not colliding with one another, bumping into one another. And we are measuring them as robustly as we could to get the real effect.

► Are there enough qualified reading and math instructors and support staff?

CASH: Right. And each of these, you unpack them and there's a whole lot of other layers to it. So in rigorous early elementary education, there

are two main things you need. You need really good teachers in that continuum – pre-K, K-1, 1, 2 and 3. Then you need lower class sizes than you currently have. Low class sizes without good, effective instruction is not the issue. You have to have both. Many, too many of our classrooms – probably 75 percent when I first came – pre-K, you have to have 18 anyway, but the others – K, 1 and 2 and 3 – 35, 34, 29. You see 27, 28, 30, 31. And these were one teacher with, like I said, 90 percent of those kids often had extraordinary needs. It's too much for any one teacher to have. So that is what we're in this plan girding. We're undergirding and shoring up those early childhood classrooms. And there are a number of strategies that we're using to do that.

► Looking at some of the other parts of the bargain, strong

community schools seems to be one. Where do you see the challenges right now with that?

CASH: Well, again, I wanted to be ambitious with the effort but yet make it overlay in the city where the greatest need was. I know we had already begun it, but the governor then came and said he wanted to do it where the neediest children and families lived. So we overlay our 18 at first and now we've had to scale it back to about 13 schools that were launched in this first round because we have budgetary challenges. We looked at the city by ZIP code and the west side of town and east side of town, and then you have north and south, but west and east have the poorest concentration there. Most of our community schools will be launched in those sectors of town. The difference between a community school and a neighborhood school is – many of you went probably to a neighborhood school. That means the school in your neighborhood that's down the street, an elementary school, middle school around the corner, high school not too far away. Because we had the desegregation ruling and had to bus our children as a result, we've been doing that a long time. And what I simply said when I came, it was one of those

Hodgson Russ
ATTORNEYS LLP

WE HANDLE LEGAL MATTERS BY THE BOOK.

Hodgson Russ's Education Practice represents and counsels boards of education and administrators, locally and throughout the United States, on all aspects of the law affecting public, private, and charter schools.

We take care of the legal issues so that educators can focus on providing students with the highest quality programs possible.

hodgsonruss.com

The Guaranty Building, 140 Pearl Street, Suite 100 Buffalo, NY 14202 716.856.4000

Albany Buffalo New York City Palm Beach Saratoga Springs Toronto

Attorney Advertising Practice restricted to U.S. law

A CONVERSATION WITH KRINER CASH

Sponsored by



things where you have to look at the data, look at the present conditions before you build a plan and what the effects of that have become. And one of the effects was we had all of these children being bused all over the city to another school, but mainly for safety reasons as opposed to going to a better school, necessarily, in terms of academics. So while it started out as an inequity issue and you wanted to get that evened out through busing, it is not that any longer. We have largely hardworking folks but mediocre schools in terms of outcomes of achievements and performance and so forth. There's still a lot of work to do there and I just thought that kids are on the bus too long getting to somewhere that is not proving value. Then they're coming back home a long way and the schools are shut down, closed at 2:30, 3 o'clock. Everybody is gone and that building is sitting there. So a community school, in short, is open 7 to 7 and provides an enriched schoolday, but then also has afterschool for both the children and for adults. It has an adult education component in it for families that want to continue their education and then it has a whole host of wrap-around services to support the families that need them. That's what a strong community school is. And so we have four high schools and nine elementary schools that we're going to, in each quadrant of the city – a cluster, north, south, east and west – start to roll out these community schools this fall.

► Besides being a key component of the community school, does that also help neighborhood schools?

CASH: Well, with neighborhood schools we have to be careful because it gets politically controversial and because what you don't want in Buffalo is people to think, "Well, if we go back to a neighborhood school, you can't come to our neighborhood school if you don't live in our neighborhood." So we're going to still have choice but we're going to talk about it in terms of a community school. Now, all over the city, people bus. I mean, even in good neighborhood schools, folks are being bused out of that school, going to other schools. We don't take it away overnight. This is a gradual process and you have to rebuild trust in all of this is what I'm saying. But certainly if there are seats and you want to go to your school nearby, that's fine. It's just that today, most of our schools are actually community schools more so than neighborhood schools.

► The barrier that was always claimed was negotiating the

union contract, not necessarily with the teachers but with the building custodians and the engineers and making sure that those schools could be open after 3 or 4 o'clock.

CASH: Again, this is why you take it to the community. At the end of the day, the community will say what they want. And we've had a lot of enthusiastic response to this community school notion, especially from the parents. So I'd expect we'd be able to work something out with the unions.

► Let's talk about the academic portion of it. One of the keys is the relationship with the teachers. What's the status of that relationship at this point other than the fact that they're suing?

CASH: Well, suing is not always a bad thing; sometimes you sue to get clarification on things that are new and different. I think the personal relationships are fine. Teachers and I get along fine. I want to start having more town hall meetings with teachers. That's my next move – to meet with small groups of teachers and large groups to hear what they need, what they feel is helpful and supportive and those things that are not as supportive and helpful as they could be to help. Let them do their best work. They haven't had a contract in a long time, but they also have a very good contract. So I'd like to sit down and work to resolve a contract; we're trying to do that. You value them as professionals and you make sure they get the professional development and growth and support they need to continue to do their best work.

► Have they been receptive?

CASH: My sense is that the majority of the teachers are. Whenever I am in the schools, they're very pleasant, always wanting me to come in and see what they're doing in the classroom. Very cordial. I don't feel tension or anything in the air. And that can happen when you get this long of an impasse between contracts. So I feel very good about it. Even with the leadership, we're going individually. We talk, we tease each other and so forth. So I like the leadership and the people, but I just know that it's a tough situation because there are so many things that we have to do. We would have to work through them and we're going to keep trying.

► Let's talk about the receivership issue with not necessarily the implementation of the plan for the schools in receivership but more so the release of 10 schools from receivership. What's your take on the commissioner's desire to have those other schools stay another year in receivership?

CASH: New York was trying to advance its agenda, making sure that their students were competitive with other students across the country. So those are different gaps. Knowledge gaps and employability gaps, achievement gaps, top talent gaps, opportunity gaps. A big one in Buffalo is the opportunity gap. But all of these gaps are important. Achievement gap is talked about the most. We're lagging in state to state. And we're lagging certainly here in Buffalo in terms of our competitiveness with school systems and top talents around the country and then around the globe. So if you stay the way you are, then you'll be where you are. But if you stay sharp, stay competitive and develop a program of action to get your children to be competitive, the way the world is changing, then that's what you should be doing. And I think that's what New York was trying to do. Whether you had Common Core, whether you had the state test, whatever you had, everyone knows whether a school is a good school or not. We all know that. You know it here in Buffalo and that's why you had busing because you started off with "Well, I don't want my kid to go to that school. I want my kid to go to that school." That's why City Honors has so many applicants every year. You know what your best schools are. What I want to see is us have every school be a really, really high-quality, excellent school. Doesn't have to be 38 or 55 City Honor schools but they all need to be competitive like that. So that when you finish, your degree means something and you can take it into the world of work or into the world of higher education and it will play well in that next level. We're not there yet. I think students have some good high school choices, about eight in the high school. But we have 16, 17 – and those other 17 – I mean, those other eight are what I'm working with, innovative new high schools, so that they're all competitive and students feel good about their choices. And again, they align well to the jobs that are coming to Buffalo. So I think we need a long time. We need more than one year with all of our schools that are struggling. And they struggle for legitimate reasons. It's not just a bad school. It's a school

that has kids with extraordinary needs. That's the difference between a school that's called priority in Buffalo and a school that's in good standing. Some schools have figured out how not to get special education and students who don't know how to speak English sent to their schools. So what we end up having is extraordinary-need children packing up in a handful of schools. And guess which schools those are? Those are your receivership schools. Those are your high priority schools. That's an equity issue, right, where we're a public school system, not a private school system. I think we need to stay, not so much in receivership per se, but we need to stay supportive with these resources that we need to get those schools into good standing beyond. Just to talk about that, the innovative high schools, these are really just at the start: South Park's partnership with SolarCity and the STEM high school with the research lab program.

► There are strong partnerships there with UB and Empire Genomics. You have the International School. Emerson has always been a strong program and is looking to expand now. What do you need from the business community to help those schools and others become more successful?

CASH: Well, the first thing, as I started to allude to, is the alignment with the skill set. There's going to be 165,000 new jobs – just roughly, as I understand it – coming to the Buffalo region over the next 10 years. Those are in the fields like health care, IT, software design, app development, analytics in the organization for performance improvement. So in the business community we need to get on advisory boards, so to speak, and to say, "Yes, you have a program of work that is going to align well with our needs over the next 10 years." I want a good align. I don't want us guessing about it or us trying to do it.

We want the business community saying, "You are on the right track with these schools and these high schools, as well as the hiring and so forth." So that's one thing. And then the other is just to keep fighting for the economic equity that is needed in public education. We have a strange phenomenon here. I'm just going to call it out. You have a tremendous insertion of money into Buffalo for economic development. It's the Buffalo Billion and all of that great stuff. It's really terrific. But meanwhile, we're either flat or actually declining in the investment in public education from the state. I'm worried about that because we're

A CONVERSATION WITH KRINER CASH

Sponsored by



in a structural deficit around that issue. Not flourishing.

► What impact have the charter schools in Western New York, primarily the ones in the city of Buffalo, had on the Buffalo school district. Are they acting more as private schools as opposed to public education?

CASH: They're not taking money. As long as it's our students in Buffalo, then they're our students – charter, public. They're our students. The funding could be better around those issues. But both charters and the traditional schools have arguments to be made to the state around that. So I don't want that to be a tug of war. If we are going to continue to grow charter schools, I think we need to be strategic and we need to make sure that we're not getting a system of inequity around the students in those schools. We have a lot of students with extraordinary needs. My one complaint was that we find that many students get kicked out of charter schools who aren't behaving well, who have specific needs. They'll say, "We don't have a program to deal with it." So they end up back and that's fine, but if it becomes like that and you become really unequitable, the children get hurt. So as long as charters that are proven to be effective can take all the children and continue to give options to families, that's a good thing. We look for partners like that. But I'm a bit concerned that the disproportionality, I would say, in what the Buffalo Public Schools – particularly those schools in receivership and high priority status – the challenge is that we're serving without the adequate budget to go with the need. It's a concern. And I'll continue to try to address it but we really need to keep that issue out in front of everyone so they understand it fully.

► You're going through a bit of a different budget process for the schools this year. How is it different from in the past? And is there more accountability where the money is being spent and how it is being spent?

CASH: There is a business side to the house and I've always kept my eye on both the academic and the business sides of the house. I want to make sure that we squeeze as many efficiencies on the business side so that we can feed the academic side, and we don't often do that. Buffalo public schools have been haphazard at best in taking good, hard looks at



JIM COURTNEY

Kriner Cash wants to strengthen the link between city schools and the Buffalo business community.

the business side of the house and where we're actually losing money on an annual basis. So this year, I began the process of not a zero-based budget but looking at every department, every line item, every expenditure to make sure that it was a productive expenditure and force staff to explain to me why do we need that? Why are we doing that? What are we doing here? What is this? Because budgets like to creep, the baseline is what you had last year and then you ask for some more than last year, then you ask for some more. So over time you may grow when the clients haven't grown. And no business really operates like that. Leaner, meaner, faster, smarter, cheaper – that's what I want the Buffalo public schools to be.

► One of your key points was to recognize the role that parents and guardians play in supporting their children in the schools. Can you expound on that?

CASH: One of the things that seemed to be lost in recent years – maybe I'm getting old – is the issue of personal responsibility. It always was key in my values growing up. I want it as part of the values of our organization. My grandmother used to say, "Sweep in front of your own doorstep first and the whole neighborhood will be clean." And what she was talking about was personal responsibility. You do what you're supposed to do. That's what you can do. And so, to me, the bargain with students and parents is something like this: I try to bake it down into the simplest ingredients. Parents, I need you to do four things – four things. If we could shake on that, it would be terrific in helping us to advance your child's progress. No. 1, you have to ensure and take personal responsibility for your child going to school. Non-negotiable. Got to do

kinds of things back into the Buffalo school system?

CASH: That's a really good, good question. One of the plans I didn't talk much about, but you've given me the opportunity to do it, is the extended learning excellence for all students – extended learning excellence. We are working with Say Yes and with community-based organizations to make sure that every family and every child now has a two-hour afterschool program five days a week that has three components to it. An academic enrichment component that the teachers will teach. And then a health and wellness component and a recreational component, because many of our children need more playtime, recreation time, and they need education in health and wellness. And then there's a third part, which is social and psychological behavioral support. And that part is where what you're talking about comes into play. It's the mentoring. It's the teaching about etiquette, the teaching about hygiene and how you conduct yourself in a civilized society. How you become a citizen. Character education, for lack of a better word. But if it's not taught at home, then we have to teach it. But it goes directly to your program because that's where they learn about these motivations and intrinsic motivation. Habits for life. We call them habits for life. Thank you for that question.

► Richard Linn, Trocaire College: Can you talk about the role of these public-private partnerships? An example is the P-Tech program that the governor has supported which guarantees a student who starts in ninth grade the opportunity to go to college for two years for free and then have a job when they walk out the door. Is that a model that we could expand on in Buffalo? How would we do that?

CASH: That's a good model. Again, in these travels and in these conversations, a lot of citizens say, "You know, we used to have a really good vocational program." I hear that a lot. "But then something happened and they all died and we needed to bring that back." And I don't disagree. What I say, though, is we need to bring back not what you had as much, but we need to go forward and bring new CTE programs that are aligned to these emerging careers. If that's what we mean, then I'm

it. No. 2, you have to make sure your child goes to class once they go to school. Check on it. Ask them. Use your GPS on your cell phone, too. Because if you're not in class, you're losing time. You're not learning. No. 3, do the work. Complete your assignments. Do your homework. Finish your classwork. Parents, make sure your child is doing his or her work. Fourth, make sure your child respects authority. That's your job as a parent because you want your child to respect you, but you have to make sure that you teach your child to respect teachers, to respect the adults in the school whether it's the bus driver, the custodian, the cafeteria worker. Children have to be taught that. Then on the child's side, there are two things. You have to take responsibility for your own learning and you have to understand and come to understand how important it is, your schooling, in a country where public education is free. The competition is fiercer than ever and if you don't do your work, students, and if you don't study, here's the metric. If you don't study for at least 10,000 hours for the next 10 years, 10 straight years, 10,000 hours, you're going to lose your seat. We used to play a game: Move your feet, lose your seat. You have to go around and sit in the chairs. Our young people in Buffalo, grown and raised in Buffalo, will lose their seat in the competition if they don't stay competitive and just do their part. Study, work hard, be respectful and get your study in. So what 10,000 hours amounts to is two hours a night. That's what students need to do and parents need to do. And if they do that, we'll do those six things and we've got a bargain. We've got a bargain.

► Ryan Hartnett, Villa Maria College: What is the role of extracurricular activities and how are we going to reinvigorate those

A CONVERSATION WITH KRINER CASH

Sponsored by



good for that. So grants are out there. Opportunities are out there. Businesses want to align and help our young people get prepared for those industries.

► Andrew Freedman, Hodgson Russ LLP: What metrics are you using to measure success?

CASH: I think achievements should be right at the top. And I would look at that and peel that off in the third through eighth grade. The high-stakes assessments are important to look at in math and in the ELA. The Regents exams are important to look at, math and ELA. And then you grade those out by ethnicity, by gender, by socioeconomic status and so forth. And that's the first part under achievement as part of your metrics and scorecard. But you have to go well beyond that. You have to go into how you're servicing your special-education learners, your ELL learners and the services and the success that they're finding. You have to go into your work with the business community. You have to look at accountability measures from business to procurement to purchasing to overtime to just efficiency across the organization on a business side. That's a whole host of metrics. You need to look at the diversity of your teaching staff and your staffing of personnel across the system. Are you recruiting and developing diversity in your workforce? And then how are you rewarding and recognizing teachers and making sure that they continue to get the professional growth and development that they need? How are you bringing ESL teachers and special education, hard-to-staff positions into the system, you see? So there is a whole host of metrics, depending on the strategic goals.

► Joseph Benedict: Construction Exchange of Buffalo: What role do some of the traditional vocational programs – manufacturing, construction – play in the district?

CASH: It's clear that in all of this renaissance, for example, that building is alive and well. I mean, you're under construction here in Buffalo and I consider the schools to be under construction. So there's still a need for talent skilled in the trades. Some of these professions, it's tough to get in. For whatever reason, it's tough to get in them. And I want to create a culture through the conversations like we're having that says, "If my kids work hard and my kids come to school, my kids are good kids, they show the character,



JIM COURTNEY

Kriner Cash seeks more accountability from Buffalo public school students, their parents and guardians.

they show the values, they do all the things that they're supposed to do and they come out with either a trade, occupational certification or a high school degree or a college degree, is there work for them in heading toward the boardroom and not just in the mailroom?" I think there's still room for CT programs that teach young people to do the trades, but also I want them to learn what it takes to be a GC, you see, and help them get into that world because lawyers and contractors are making money in Buffalo.

► Benedict: Some of our vocational schools are great and a lot of them are very competitive. A byproduct of that is that some of the kids who are interested in the trades end up getting left out of those schools because they're not as competitive as some of the kids. We talk to some of the students at McKinley and they're doing great there, but they don't really have an interest in being in the trades after they get out of school. They are just there because it's a good, safe school.

CASH: That's real. So maybe in this round that we're coming with, we can take some lessons learned and make sure that you have 17 good options, high-quality options, then the choices make it so that you're choosing (a high school) because you really want to go all the way through. What I kind of see now is eight pretty good (high school) choices for kids. They're good there, but then there's another group, at least currently, that it is often their third choice. They don't really want to be there. I can't let that stand, at least if I'm

superintendent. I can't let that keep going. I saw the faces on some of the students at some of the schools. They just didn't really want to be there and that shouldn't be, when we have all these really exciting careers and things. And all of you are great when you come out and speak to the kids and so forth. But I think if they're immersed in a school where that becomes sort of their family and their club and they know what they can be, I think the attitudes are changing and their attendance improves and other things will begin to improve. But there's still a lot of work and lift on this. I'm not naive to that.

► L. Nathan Hare, Community Action Organization of Erie County: One of the things that I get concerned about is that the time period between 3 o'clock in the afternoon and 8 p.m. is a very dangerous time for young, adolescent children especially. That is one of the reasons there has been a lot of conversation about having afterschool programs – not just to extend the academic treatments that we provide for children, we provide them with support services, but to also give them things to do after school. And my concern about that is: Is there a role for community-based organizations? When you're talking about extracurricular activities, lots of things that may be of interest to the student builds a sort of bond to going to that school.

That may need to be done by people other than the teachers in the school because it may not be affordable waiting on the teachers to get it done. You may have to get this done with volunteers or low-paid people, if that makes some kind of sense.

CASH: That's why I explained that in the afterschool model there are three components: academic enrichment, the social-psycho-emotional supports and then the health, recreation and wellness piece. The academic enrichment piece I want to leave to the teachers because that's an extension of the day and, you know, the teachers want to teach in that program, then they'll be given first dibs at that. The other two components are open to community-based organizations. And that's what we'll be putting out RFPs. I've asked Say Yes to help us. To vet those organizations so that we make sure that we have proven community-based organizations in that space. And even ones that may be startups but really are going to help with that psycho-social behavior, are part of the community, live in the community and have good rapport with the kids. They'll be welcome, as well. So that's how we'll kind of split the baby, if you will. We'll have both. It won't be an either/or; it will be a both/and. We have a lot of really, really good teachers and a receivership model I wanted them to continue with the kids in that afterschool part, on the academic part, because they already have a rapport and a relationship. But I can choose the teachers for that. So they, in fact, are the ones, the best choices, for those kids. But the others – it's a whole host of them. As you know, we have a whole lot. I don't know if it's hundreds. It's probably hundreds, but we have a lot of strong community efforts and supports here from the Boys & Girls Club to the United Way – a whole lot of players. Your organization in the pre-K space, in particular, and then there's just a lot. So we want all of them to sign up, to be helpful in this community-school model.

► The teachers should do the teaching. If we're going to do extended education, we should do it with people who are good teachers. It's the rest of the effective stuff where I think we can use the community groups.

CASH: And we are. That's what this model includes. So thank you for that.