

Questions Asked of the Board of Education, October 25, 2021

1. I want to commend New Haven Public Schools staff, including bus drivers and administrators. This has been a difficult year for many of us. Our students are having many enriching experiences at Nathan Hale. However, families are forced to face unsafe conditions as they try to maneuver Townsend Avenue with no crossing guard.

Crossing guards are overseen by the City of New Haven Office of Transportation, Traffic and Parking, not by the school district or the Board of Education. We have alerted them to the concern about safety along Townsend Avenue.

2. Many people in our schools are working hard and are very stressed. I worry teachers and school staff are working beyond their capacity. We are losing good staff to better paying positions elsewhere. We need social workers, psychologists, and security officers. This situation is not sustainable.

We have seen an uptick in behavioral issues among students. There is no question that this stress has taken a toll on our teachers and principals. We have utilized grant funds to help reduce class sizes wherever possible. We have invested more in social workers and counselors, but some of these challenges go beyond the available resources. We have increased wages for substitutes but still are having trouble finding them. We are trying to identify other supports for teachers in the classroom. We are grateful to teachers who have given up prep time in order to step in to help their colleagues.