



## Board of Education | City of Chicago

### July 20, 2026 #2 Budget Hearing Written Comments Received between, Thursday July 16th and Tuesday, July 21, 2026 Submitted via Written Comments Form

July 20, 2026

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**July 20, 2026 #1 Budget Hearing Written Comments Received between,  
Thursday July 16th and Tuesday, July 21, 2026 Submitted via Written Comments  
Form**

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| <b>1</b> | <p>I am a parent at Mark Sheridan Math &amp; Science Academy as well as an alumni myself. Sheridan has already lost five positions: one teacher, three teaching assistants, and one Special Education Classroom Assistant, and the cuts are affecting programming, including our science lab.</p> <p>I am asking you to support sustainable funding for CPS that protects school-level staffing and student programming and avoids further cuts, employee furloughs, and a mid-year spending freeze. These are not abstract budget reductions; they directly affect the support and educational opportunities available to our children.</p> <p>Sheridan has a history of success but there are certain things like funding and staff that allow for it to flourish. I ask that you please consider the remaining staff and the extra load they would have to take on in order to keep the school up to standard.</p> |
| <b>2</b> | <p>I am a parent/community member at Mark Sheridan Math &amp; Science Academy. Sheridan has already lost five positions: one teacher, three teaching assistants, and one Special Education Classroom Assistant, and the cuts are affecting programming, including our science lab.</p> <p>I am asking you to support sustainable funding for CPS that protects school-level staffing and student programming and avoids further cuts, employee furloughs, and a mid-year spending freeze. These are not abstract budget reductions; they directly affect the support and educational opportunities available to our children</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>3</b> | <p>Hello. I am a parent of a student at Mark Sheridan Math &amp; Science Academy. Sheridan has already lost five positions: one teacher, three teaching assistants, and one Special Education Classroom Assistant, and the cuts are affecting programming, including our science lab.</p> <p>I am asking you to support sustainable funding for CPS that protects school-level staffing and student programming and avoids further cuts, employee furloughs, and a mid-year spending freeze. These are not abstract budget reductions; they directly affect the support and educational opportunities available to our children. Mark Sheridan is a Math and Science academy. By taking away science from our kids we are doing our children's future a tremendous disservice.</p> <p>Very concerned parent.</p>                                                                                                      |
| <b>4</b> | <p>I am a parent/community member at Mark Sheridan Math &amp; Science Academy. Sheridan has already lost five positions: one teacher, three teaching assistants, and one Special Education Classroom Assistant, and the cuts are affecting programming, including our science lab.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |



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| 8 | <p>Hi, I am a parent/community member at Mark Sheridan Math &amp; Science Academy. Sheridan has already lost five positions: one teacher, three teaching assistants, and one Special Education Classroom Assistant, and the cuts are affecting programming, including our science lab.</p> <p>I am asking you to support sustainable funding for CPS that protects school-level staffing and student programming and avoids further cuts, employee furloughs, and a mid-year spending freeze. These are not abstract budget reductions; they directly affect the support and educational opportunities available to our children. Thank you!</p> |
| 9 | <p>I am a parent at Mark Sheridan Math &amp; Science Academy. Sheridan has already lost five positions: one teacher, three teaching assistants, and one Special Education Classroom Assistant, and the cuts are affecting programming, including our science lab.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |



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|           | I am asking you to support sustainable funding for CPS that protects school-level staffing and student programming and avoids further cuts, employee furloughs, and a mid-year spending freeze. These are not abstract budget reductions; they directly affect the support and educational opportunities available to our children! Please                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>10</b> | <p>I am a parent at Mark Sheridan Math &amp; Science Academy. Sheridan has already lost five positions: one teacher, three teaching assistants, and one Special Education Classroom Assistant, and the cuts are affecting programming, including our science lab.</p> <p>I am asking you to support sustainable funding for CPS that protects school-level staffing and student programming and avoids further cuts, employee furloughs, and a mid-year spending freeze. These are not abstract budget reductions; they directly affect the support and educational opportunities available to our children</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>11</b> | <p>As a parent and community member at Mark Sheridan Math &amp; Science Academy, I am writing to urge your support for sustainable funding for Chicago Public Schools.</p> <p>Budget reductions are not abstract spreadsheet adjustments; they have immediate, damaging consequences for our children. Sheridan has already lost five critical positions: one teacher, three teaching assistants, and one Special Education Classroom Assistant. These staffing shortages are actively eroding our student programming, including the operations of our vital science lab.</p> <p>Our schools cannot withstand further cuts, employee furloughs, or a mid-year spending freeze. I ask you to prioritize and protect school-level staffing and student programming so that our children receive the stable, high-quality education they deserve.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p> |
| <b>12</b> | <p>I am a parent/community member at Mark Sheridan Math &amp; Science Academy. Sheridan has already lost five positions: one teacher, three teaching assistants, and one Special Education Classroom Assistant, and the cuts are affecting programming, including our science lab.</p> <p>I am asking you to support sustainable funding for CPS that protects school-level staffing and student programming and avoids further cuts, employee furloughs, and a mid-year spending freeze. These are not abstract budget reductions; they directly affect the support and educational opportunities available to our children</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>13</b> | I just finished my 3rd year in CPS, 6th year overall as a school counselor when I received word I was cut. My school has had a growing incoming freshmen population each year, enrollment is not declining. Along with increasing population has come a major Increase in social emotional needs. I work in a high needs school. My student population has also suffered most from the outcomes of immigration enforcement in our city, losing their parents, grandparents, etc. They have now been stripped of a counselor and support that they need more than ever. Other positions are being added elsewhere but taking their counselor was what was advised to be cut. My students need me. They                                                                                                                                                                                        |



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|    | <p>need that support in the building. This will have a major affect on them and the other counselors who will now be overworked and burnt out trying to do something they love.</p> <p>On a more personal note, I am 4.5 months pregnant with my first child. I am now faced with the reality I may not be able to provide for my family and that people won't want to hire someone who will need to go on leave. I'm due in December. If I don't find a full time position now, I won't be able to try to find one until next school year knowing I will be out the first few months of 2027. This will be detrimental to my family. The last summer I have before the baby comes has been taken from me and my partner, riddled with stress and anxiety instead of joy and excitement. After a whole year of expensive fertility treatments now to add on to the bills with my income being taken away.</p> <p>I love my job. I love my school. I love my students. I love my coworkers, and I love Chicago. Please put our kids first and give them the supports they need in school. Please consider the repercussions of these decisions.</p> |
| 14 | <p>As a parent and community member at Mark Sheridan Math &amp; Science Academy, I am deeply concerned about the impact of recent budget cuts on our school. Sheridan has already lost five positions: one teacher, three teaching assistants, and one Special Education Classroom Assistant. These reductions are already affecting student learning and programming, including our science lab.</p> <p>I urge you to support sustainable funding for Chicago Public Schools that protects school-level staffing and preserves the programs our students rely on. It is critical to avoid further staffing cuts, employee furloughs, and a mid-year spending freeze.</p> <p>These are not abstract budget decisions—they have real consequences for the support, resources, and educational opportunities available to our children every day. Our students deserve stable, fully staffed schools where they can learn, grow, and thrive. Please make sustainable investment in our public schools a priority.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and for your commitment to our students.</p>                                                        |
| 15 | <p>Hello, I am a parent at Mark Sheridan Math &amp; Science Academy. Sheridan has already lost five positions: one teacher, three teaching assistants, and one Special Education Classroom Assistant, and the cuts are affecting programming, including our science lab.</p> <p>I am asking you to support sustainable funding for CPS that protects school-level staffing and student programming and avoids further cuts, employee furloughs, and a mid-year spending freeze. These are not abstract budget reductions; they directly affect the support and educational opportunities available to our children.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 16 | <p>It is completely unacceptable to lay off 760 teachers and 963 other essential positions, and cut 2.3% of remaining teaching staffs salaries. Education is a pillar of society, and teachers are essential to this mission. These cuts will not only devastate students and teachers, but have broader economic and social impacts on Chicago.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |



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|    | You must reconsider and find new avenues to address funding shortages.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 17 | I am urging the Chicago school board to vote down this budget. It will devastate our students and teachers who work so hard to create a positive learning environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 18 | Do not cut funding to CPS. Public schools are a pillar to Chicago                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 19 | <p>Staffing cuts is one of the last things our students need!</p> <p>So many classrooms and especially legal accommodations are not being meet by CPS already... did you catch that word... LEGAL... CPS is already not meeting its legal responsibilities.</p> <p>I can give a specific example that happened last year with testing.</p> <p>Children were having to miss out on class time because there was not enough staff to accommodate testing.</p> <p>Find another way.</p> <p>DO BETTER for the kids.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 20 | You must oppose the CPS budget. It punishes school communities instead of making good on the promises made to our city. I am a preschool teacher in an oversized Blended classroom. We wouldn't have made it through last school year without our oversized classroom assistant. She made our classroom community a nurturing and joyful space for our young learners. Now she is laid off, and our school will suffer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 21 | Please vote down the budget that cuts down funding for hundreds of teachers as this will negatively impact the future of these children                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 22 | Students rely to forge a successful future. Moving forward with mass layoffs of Cook County educators is a detrimental decision for our children as literacy rates in the US continue to drop. We need passionate teachers to encourage imagination and ingenuity in a generation being raised with technology that threatens to replace the things that make us human. To lay off these educators is a step toward abandoning the next generation to mindless consumption and addiction to technology. Where is the planned funding? Do better                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 23 | <p>The blatant miscarriage of duty that has been demonstrated this past week makes me furious. As a long time citizen of Chicago to see devoted educators lose their employment because of this humbug cannot stand. Do everything in your power to correct the layoff of these CPS employees.</p> <p>I haven't the slightest clue as to how we have got to this point with the board. There is so much potential for the organization to be a power for good in this city. Please divest from AI tools and invest in the great people that make this cities future possible. It would be a True travesty to see this be upheld today. Think deeply about the direction you want to steer this ship in the face of the federal funding and ensure that you're not putting the first hole in the stern yourself .</p> |
| 24 | Full funding now. Equitable funding. Exhaust all other options.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 25 | I have lived in Chicago for 15 years. I have paid my taxes, raised my voice for this city, and believed in what it could be for the next generation. That belief is being tested right now by a budget proposal that would eliminate the role of an 8th grade teacher in Chicago Public Schools, a woman who has spent years being far more than a teacher to the children in her classroom.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |



My cousin does not clock out when the school bell rings. She spends hours beyond the school day mentoring students, checking in on the ones who are struggling, showing up for the kids who need a steady adult in their corner. In a neighborhood that has too few resources and too many obstacles stacked against its children, she is one of the people making a real difference. She is not just teaching lessons. She is teaching kids that someone believes in them, that they matter, that their future is worth fighting for.

Eliminating a role like hers is not a line item. It is a decision with a human cost. It tells students in that neighborhood that the adults who show up for them, who mentor them, who see their potential when the system does not, are expendable. It tells a community already stretched thin that it will be stretched thinner. And it tells taxpayers like me, who have invested in this city for a decade and a half, that the people doing the most important work on the ground are the first to be cut when budgets get tight.

This is not just foolish. It is short sighted in a way that will cost this city far more than it saves. The research is clear that mentorship and stable, invested adult relationships change outcomes for children, especially in neighborhoods facing economic hardship. Cutting positions like hers does not save money. It shifts the cost forward, onto the children who lose a mentor, onto a neighborhood that loses stability, onto a city that will eventually pay for the consequences of disinvestment.

I am asking the Board and every decision maker behind this budget to reconsider. Do not balance a spreadsheet on the backs of the students who need the most support and the educators who show up for them every single day, on the clock and off it. Chicago cannot afford to lose people like her. Our children cannot afford it either.

I urge you to reverse this decision and protect the educators who are doing more than their job description ever asked of them.

- 26** As a parent I appalled to learn of the recent layoffs -- notifying educators just weeks before the start of the school year that they are no longer employed. My family is fortunate enough to work with a CPS instructor over the summer (a truly inspiring, difference-making human) and the news has been absolutely devastating for her. This bad faith decision is creating chaos for our most crucial community members and it cannot be allowed to happen!

I urge the board to VOTE DOWN THE CURRENT BUDGET and hold the state accountable. These positions must be restored. The state owes CPS \$2 billion in funding. A special legislative session should be held to find emergency revenue to cover our schools. I cannot believe that our Governor would deny this.

- 27** Do not balance the budget on the backs of our students and teachers!  
A special session must be held. The fact that teachers are hearing notice about their positions a month out from the start of the school year is truly terrible. Our teachers and kids deserve better.





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| <b>28</b> | I urge the Board to continue prioritizing and fully funding public education. Investing in our schools is an investment in our children, their future opportunities, and the long-term strength of our communities. Every student deserves access to the resources, educators, and support they need to learn, grow, and succeed. Please continue making education a priority.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>29</b> | I urge the Chicago Board of Education to vote down the budget which will have a devastating impact on our Chicago students. We need more teachers and support in our schools, not layoffs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>30</b> | CPS board, you CANNOT let this disastrous budget go ignored or be approved. We owe it to our children and our dedicated staff. You have real options in front of you instead of approving this lazy budget.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>31</b> | Children need a system that cares! CPS laid off hundreds of extremely dedicated teachers who spent their own time and money to ensure these children got the education they deserve. We cannot turn our backs on them, especially at underfunded schools that need it most. Please reconsider this drastic budget cut and reinstate these star teachers so that children across Chicago are given the chance to thrive. It breaks my heart watching amazing teachers lose a role they are so passionate about and watching kids lose their opportunity to have a real, solid education. Thank you. |
| <b>32</b> | Please support Chicago's students and teachers by voting down the proposed budget in order to allocate for funds that actually support the students/educators!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>33</b> | This budget has severely impacted the livelihood of our educators and students alike. Promises are not being kept and it is hurting everyone where it really matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>34</b> | I do not support this budget that requires laying off some of Chicago's best teachers. The students will be the ones to suffer here. We know Chicago has the money - so go find it!!!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>35</b> | Please don't vote for a budget that will harm any more teachers. They keep the city alive. Chicago's have seen this time and time again and are sick of it. And pulling away money from an investment in education should be the last place it's taken from.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>36</b> | Please do not pass a budget that allows over 700 teachers and school staff to lose their jobs. Our students need them, and their hard work should be rewarded, not punished, when our city needs them the most.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>37</b> | Some of the teachers who are being laid off during these budget cuts are dedicated educators who have the students' best interests at heart. How can CPS be firing committed teachers and then also reporting teacher shortages? This decision is reprehensible and does not have student welfare in mind.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>38</b> | I'm sorry, but the inability to fund education in this city is nothing short of shameful. Teachers are the front line of education and have more of a direct impact on student success than any other board controlled factor. Firing so many teachers while administrative bloat continues to drag the budget down is impotent and embarrassing policy making at its best and seriously destructive to the lives of both students and teachers at its worst                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>39</b> | I am writing to strongly advocate for RESTORING THE 1:21 TEACHER FUNDING RATIO in the 2027 BUDGET. If the the teacher/student ratio is increased from 1:21 to 1:22, every school in CPS will lose core teachers, which will negatively and seriously impact student learning. Increasing the ratio is short-sighted and will have a direct and immediate effect on the quality of our schools and the future of our children.                                                                                                                                                                      |





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| 40 | Students in CPS need teachers like Ms. White who are willing to go above and beyond for their learning, and it is ridiculous that CPS continues these layoffs even for those type of teachers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 41 | I urge the Chicago Board of Education to vote down the budget on behalf of the CPS teachers who have been let go.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 42 | The increase in student-to-teacher funding ratio from 21-1 to 22-1 has been very detrimental for many CPS schools, especially for the Selective Enrollment High Schools (SEHS) which have also traditionally been allocated a lower Opportunity Index compared with many non-SEHS schools. For SY27, many CPS schools, especially SEHS, have seen devastating cuts in teaching positions because of the increase in the student-to-teacher funding ratio and the lower Opportunity Index. I strongly urge the Chicago BOE alleviate the outsized negative impact to the education of many students across multiple CPS schools (especially the SEHS) by restoring the student-to-teacher funding ratio to 21: 1. Restoring the 21:1 student-to-teacher ratio will preserve many vital teaching positions across CPS without which the educational experience of our students will unfairly suffer. On behalf of the students and families, we thank you for taking action to restore the 21:1 student-to-teacher funding ratio.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 43 | <p>Dear Chicago Board of Education,</p> <p>Hello! I am a long term CPS parent and a CPS High School LSC parent representative at Walter Payton College Prep.</p> <p>For SY27, many CPS schools, especially selective enrollment high schools, have seen devastating cuts in teaching positions, as a result of the change in student-to-teacher ratio. I am strongly advocating for the reversal of the change in the student-to-teacher ratio in order to save teaching positions all across CPS.</p> <p>According to the presentation given during the CPS Budget Feedback Session at Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy on Jul 13, 2026, the initial budget deficit for SY 27 (\$700M+) is lower than that of SY26 (\$734M). However, SY 27 has seen so many more cuts in teaching positions compared to SY 26, which results in closing vital positions for beloved teachers with years of classroom experiences and termination of cherished programs that took years to cultivate. If CPS was able to manage the SY26 budget without reducing as many teaching positions, would it be possible to refrain from cutting so many teaching positions in SY27?</p> <p>On the other hand, for many of the CPS SEHSs, their low opportunity indexes determine the low amount of flex fund which schools may utilize for personnel cost, in order to buffer the impact from the change in the student-to-teacher ratio.</p> <p>Jones college prep, for example, is losing 6 teaching positions for SY27. In order to save as many teaching positions/programs as possible, after exhausting almost all of their flex funds towards personnel cost, they have to operate on a meager amount of \$29,000 on all other expenses for the entire SY27. This level of budgetary restrictions are not sustainable and threaten the future of our city.</p> |



Compounding an increased student-to-teacher ratio with low opportunity indexes, the SEHSs and many CPS schools are in an extremely financially precarious situation, which greatly threatens the quality of public education Chicago offers. This trend, if not reverted, will directly influence whether the city will see another great exodus as parents move away from Chicago in search of better education for their children. The decline in the quality of education will directly lead to a loss in our competitive edge, and have a negative impact on our future as a people.

In order to save our future, I am strongly advocating for the reversal of the change in the student-to-teacher ratio in order to save precious teaching positions all across CPS. Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A long term CPS parent and a CPS High School LSC parent representative at Walter Payton College Prep

**44** I think the Board should vote against laying off excellent teachers like Margaret White. I personally know that she is a devoted and caring teacher.



**\*\*ATTACHMENTS\*\***



# Chicago Tribune



\$4.00 | THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2026 | CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

## GOP senator lambastes Lightfoot

At hearing, Kennedy attempts to turn focus away from Blanche

By Alice Yin and Dan Petrella  
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Former Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot was singled out by a Republican senator on Wednesday as someone who should not be put in "charge of a ham sandwich" during acting Attorney General Todd Blanche's confirmation hearing.

Blanche, President Donald Trump's former personal attorney who has been leading the Justice Department on an interim basis, was expected to face fresh scrutiny during a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing over politicizing the law

**MORE COVERAGE:** Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche faced skeptical questioning at a Senate confirmation hearing. **Nation & World, Page B4**

enforcement arm against the president's enemies and other controversies.

But Blanche also benefited from a friendly face, Republican U.S. Sen. John Kennedy from Louisiana, who sought to turn the focus of the hearing to instead attacking Lightfoot, a Democrat who had a stint as a federal prosecutor before her single mayoral term that ended in 2023.

The two sought to paint her as soft on crime and incompetent, leading the former mayor — who is always eager to pounce on Republicans — to point the finger back at the two Trump allies.

"Consider the source: an unrepentant racist remarks on the tenure of a Black female former mayor of the third largest city in the country," Lightfoot retorted in a statement Wednesday afternoon. "What do you think is going to come out of his mouth? A whole lot of ignorance."

Kennedy had brought up a letter

See **HEARING** on Page A2



Sen. John Kennedy, R-Louisiana, questions Todd Blanche, the acting attorney general and President Donald Trump's pick to take the job permanently, at his confirmation hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee on Wednesday. **KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES**



### CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## 760 teacher layoffs in proposed budget

District looks to close massive deficit with job reductions, furlough days

By Kate Armanini  
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Chicago Public Schools leaders unveiled a proposed budget Wednesday with layoffs of 760 teachers and 801 school-based support staff, along with five

pc \$732