

**January 26, 2022 Board Meeting Written Comments
Received between Monday, January 24th and Thursday, January 27th
Submitted via Written Comments Form**

1	<p>I am a community member and parent of a CPS student in the Jefferson Park neighborhood. My spouse is also a CPS employee. The disruptions with CPS's quarantine policies have affected my family since the start of the school year, and have been extremely frustrating. My child's first quarantine occurred on the 5th day of the new school year, and there have since been 2 additional quarantines. Due to the current CPS policy on quarantines and the constant disruptions, I worry that my child is falling behind not only academically but socially as well. I urge the Board members to bring an end to the unfair quarantines. Please ask CEO Martinez and Dr. Arwady that they commit to replacing this flawed policy with a targeted Test-to-Stay protocol at a systemwide level.</p>
2	<p>I'm demanding an investigation be opened by the CPS OIG's office into the 2008 arrest of current Lake View security guard for solicitation of a prostitute (undercover cop) in 2008 when he was employed as security guard at Kelvyn Park HS and why he wasn't fired for conduct unbecoming of CPS employee and painting CPS in bad light. And why he didn't report nor was CPS notified of this arrest and arrests for cannabis to CPS.</p>
3	<p>I am requesting the 2011 security video of a Steinmetz Assistant Principal (AP) choking and shoving a female student in the halls. The AP was charged with misdemeanor assault, charges dropped, and the student and her family received a \$10,000 settlement from CPS.</p>
4	<p>I am requesting the board demand an immediate CPS OIG investigation be opened into the up to (24) CPS Residency Violators that have worked at Steinmetz HS since 2015-16 school year and (16) other CPS employees that I have submitted evidence on multiple occasions to CPS, CPS OIG, Mary Ernesti, CPS Investigation, William Fletcher, Joseph Moriarty, and others throughout CPS.</p>
5	<p>I am a parent of a cps student. I would like to voice my support of implementing policies that are actually keeping our kids safe and are the least disruptive to they're in school learning. A test to stay policy would help keep kids in person. It is a system that has proven to work in private and other public schools. These kids need consistency and routine which is something they have lacked for the last almost 2 years.</p> <p>Taking away things like the travel quarantines that keep some kids out of school for up to 10 days when a child could be more exposed right here in their city. This is a policy that hasn't even been effective and forcing parents to teach their children to be dishonest because life continues. We are vaccinated and would like to see our families and friends after we have spent so much time apart.</p> <p>The pandemic has evolved and our school safety policies need to evolve with it. The quicker that happens the quicker we can get back to our new normal.</p>

6

- I am a CPS Parent with two children at Lane Tech. Both of my children have been forced to quarantine and miss schoolwork and sports activities that were important to them at times when they were 100% healthy. Chicago Public Schools' quarantine policy continues to impose disruption and inconvenience on tens of thousands of healthy kids every day. Please do your duty as Board members and help bring stability to our communities by urging an end to these unscientific and unfair quarantines. Ask CEO Martinez and Dr. Arwady when they will commit to replacing this flawed policy with a targeted Test-to-Stay protocol at a systemwide level. Such a policy is in effect at many Chicago-area and Illinois schools, and CPS should follow-suit immediately. Thank you.

7

I am the parent of two boys in CPS. It has been most difficult to see my kids being quarantined almost every other week though they are completely healthy and NOT considered close contacts to the person infected by COVID. Please reconsider a test in option. In one instance, my child sat 15 feet away from the infected kid. there was no contact. This was made public knowledge by the teacher letting the classroom know. How does that constitute a 10 day quarantine? No sense in this when my sons have remained healthy. This is affecting their education. They only receive 1 hour of remote instruction time. This feels like a punishment and coercion to comply. This also weighs heavily on they mental state of mind as they continue being segregated in their classrooms by peers and teachers even to the point of bullying all because we have chosen to wait on this emergency use vaccine for children. This decision does Not come lightly. It is with thoughtfulness and out of concern since my son had a previous reaction to vaccines. Our medical history should NOT be a factor here nor be the reason my sons are being punished by their school and district and not allowed to participate. We have always been compliant with all necessary vax schedules. This is hurting their education, their well-being and is very disruptive and unnecessary to have continued quarantines.

8

I am a community member in Logan Square. I am fed up with the constant disruptions that Chicago Public Schools' quarantine policy continues to impose on tens of thousands of healthy kids every day. Please do your duty as Board members and help bring stability to our communities by urging an end to these unscientific and unfair quarantines. Ask CEO Martinez and Dr. Arwady when they will commit to replacing this flawed policy with a targeted Test-to-Stay protocol at a systemwide level.

9

Public Comment to the Board of Education (1/22)

CORE PRINCIPLES:

The current state of education has recently proven that we are not able to adequately ensure the long-term stability for all our students.

CPS's current policy- which automatically sends unvaccinated "close contacts" of a COVID-19-positive peer home for 10 days of remote learning- is unscientific and unfair. With its constant threat of keeping healthy kids home for no reason, CPS policy continues to erode public confidence in our schools, hitting working families and poor

families with extra force. Since September, between 4,000 and 15,000 kids have been kept home every day.

Test-to-Stay would end this misguided policy, allowing such students to stay in school, so long as testing yields a series of negative COVID-19 results. As parents and community members, we demand that the Chicago Public Schools move toward immediate adoption and implementation of a Test-to-Stay policy for students who have been identified as exposed to a COVID-19-positive peer.

Our view is simple: Only a child who is sick with COVID symptoms or has a confirmed positive test should ever need to be excluded from school. Test-to-Stay provides the relevant data, enacts a safety procedure on that basis alone, and allows us to minimize the disruptions and stratifications that COVID (and misguided COVID policy) have enacted on our city.

As we all hope for COVID's ultimate passage from a pandemic to an endemic stage, parents, teachers, and citizens need to stand by the pillars of our civic life, and resist the temptation to relapse into modes of panic or paranoia.

On the Costs and Burdens of Remote Learning

Weighed against the obvious benefits of active, thriving school communities, CPS' current quarantine policy is ill-fitted to the realities of the pandemic, imposing a rolling schedule of child-care emergencies on parents, and needlessly interrupting the intellectual and social development of our children. With only 40 documented instances of transmission within Chicago schools since September and less than two percent of quarantined kids ultimately contracting the virus, the public health benefits of intermittent mass quarantines are dubious. Meanwhile, the lost wages, lost learning, and replacement of social life with screen-time are measurably bad news for kids and families.

On the Social Injustice of Quarantines

Current policy has effectively created two tiers of educational access in Chicago, using scientifically irrelevant data points that are irrespective of vaccination status to exclude masses of kids with no symptoms or positive test results from schooling. The heaviest count of unnecessary exclusions are landing on our students that have already been neglected within the school system. Working families and poor families will continue to be hit hardest by the current policy.

On the Politics

The wisdom of maintaining in-person schooling is being embraced irrespective of political party. No matter if you usually root for Republicans or Democrats, progressives or conservatives, we should all welcome support of good public policy!

In the recent agreement that ended the 5-day stoppage of classes, BOTH CPS and CTU affirmed the intent to "promote" the Test-to-Stay pilot, which is currently only active at one school. The Board needs to turn this unique point of agreement into policy.

On the Science

A Test-to-Stay policy represents the most responsible and scientifically supported approach to safeguarding the health of our children and educators while also ensuring the integrity and stability of our institutions of public schooling. The Federal Centers for Disease Control, the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Department of Public Health, and the Chicago Department of Public Health have specifically authorized a Test-to-Stay protocol as part of official Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools.

10

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of my comments and observations. Michele

11

I'm Nick Kryczka, a parent of two current CPS grade school students, a graduate of a CPS elementary school, and a former CPS teacher. I call on the members of the Chicago Board of Education and on CPS CEO Pedro Martinez to end the district's unfair and unscientific quarantine policy, which keeps tens of thousands of healthy kids out of their school communities every day. Just this past Friday, over 23,000 schoolchildren were excluded from attending school.

The vast majority of these youngsters were not kept home because they were sick, nor because they had tested positive for COVID-19, but because they had been identified as "close contacts" of a COVID-19 case. There is no public health justification for this broad application of mass quarantine upon perfectly healthy children. Running on inertia, CPS policy needs an urgent update in light of current conditions. The use of a targeted Test-to-Stay protocol in instances of exposure would be a step in the right direction. Only a child who is sick with COVID symptoms or has a confirmed positive test should ever need to be excluded from school. Test-to-Stay provides the relevant data, enacts a safety procedure on that basis alone, and minimizes the disruptions and stratifications that COVID-19 (and misguided COVID policy) have enacted on our city.

For nearly two years, pandemic conditions have forced administrators into the unprecedented decision of replacing in-person schooling with virtual remote instruction, whether in the form of systemwide closures or rolling quarantines. While plausibly necessary in the early days of the pandemic, there is no scientific ambiguity about the negative effects of this historic shift in K-12 education: school closures and quarantines have proven ineffective at curbing the spread of COVID-19 while proving extremely effective at curbing the intellectual and social growth of kids and the economic health of households.

Left unaddressed, CPS' current quarantine policy threatens to send waves of childcare emergencies and lost wages rolling across households at a moment's notice. Since December, fully vaccinated kids were granted exemptions from these rolling quarantines. While families like my own might be tempted to breathe a sigh of relief, this has effectively created two tiers of educational access in Chicago, using a blunt-- and in light of the transmissibility of current variants irrespective of vaccination status-- scientifically irrelevant basis to exclude masses of kids with no symptoms or positive test results from schooling. You don't need to look at a map to guess where the heaviest count of unnecessary exclusions are landing. Working families and poor families will continue to be hit hardest by the current policy.

	<p>As a scholar of educational history, I am profoundly aware of school's place as an essential part of our democracy and our society. It shapes how we grow up, how we parent, how we organize our work, and how we develop and connect as citizens. The pandemic has had the effect of eroding the public trust and civic vision that sustains public schooling. We expect Board members to do everything in their power to rebuild and reinforce the long-term availability, stability, and integrity of these vital institutions.</p>
12	<p>Students should NOT be quarantine if in contact with a Covid case but has no symptoms and is NEGATIVE!!</p>
13	<p>As a parent who has two fully vaccinated children attending CPS, I'm in full support of implementing the Test to Stay policy. Simply put, we've had two years of living through this pandemic and now have a better understanding of how COVID is spread and how to increase our chances of avoiding it, masks and vaccinations. Currently the transmission rate occurring in schools are not the super spreaders that people were fearing. The majority of transmissions are coming from behaviors out side of the schools. At this point it is counterproductive to our students education as well as their social and emotional well being. I have unfortunately witnessed first hand the negative emotional affects that the isolation and inconsistent learning environment has had on our children. Add that to the inequities between the families that lack the time or resources for childcare when a student is forced to stay home. For some of the students, school is their safest option. Please keep our kids in school at all costs.</p>
14	<p>Good afternoon, I'm writing to make you aware, once again, that these mandates, which are not laws-the vaccine, testing, and masking, are unconstitutional. We all know that the Covid-19 vaccine has not stopped the spread and does not help with immunity. Natural immunity lasts longer then any shot. The masks are not providing any protection as well, but instead, children are being forced to breathe in bacteria and we will see long term affects in their lungs. As for testing, well it is known now that it can't identify between the flu or Covid-19 and can give false positives/negatives. So, please, we ask you reconsider and take away all these unlawful and unjust mandates. Thank you, Concern Parent!</p>
15	<p>As the husband of a CPS teacher, the safety of students and teachers is my utmost concern. I believe that a test to stay solution for those in close contact with a confirmed COVID case is the most responsible way to keep teachers, students and parents engaged and safe during this time.</p>
16	<p>I strongly support a limited test-to-stay protocol for kids in instances of "close contact" with a COVID-19 case. CPS's current policy-- which automatically sends unvaccinated "close contacts" of a COVID-19-positive peer home for 10 days of remote learning-- is unscientific, unethical, and unfair; it places a disproportionate burden on poor and working families. A Test-to-Stay policy represents the most responsible and scientifically</p>

supported approach to safeguarding the health of our children and educators while also ensuring the integrity and stability of our institutions of public schooling.

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I believe school is essential to our society—in particular, in-person classroom instruction for K–12 students. As a father of two CPS students during the unprecedented 2020–2021 remote school year, I know firsthand the challenges that arise when children are removed from an authentic, in-person social setting and asked to focus through a screen. The numerous reports of these challenges—from learning loss to psychological stress to a ratcheting up of antisocial behavior—are all true. Our family made it through that difficult year relatively unscathed—we were lucky—and we respect the tremendous effort CPS made, along with all the families, students, and teachers, to make it work. But we do not want to see it happen again.

COVID-19 presents, and will likely continue to present, serious and unique public health challenges. But we can meet these challenges without rolling quarantines. A Test-to-Stay approach would allow students to stay in school so long as they have tested negative for COVID, regardless of whether they have been in contact with someone who has tested positive. Not only is this a common-sense approach, it has been specifically authorized by the Federal Centers for Disease Control, the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Department of Public Health, and the Chicago Department of Public Health as part of official Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools.

As a parent and community member, I demand that the Chicago Public Schools move toward immediate adoption and implementation of a Test-to-Stay policy for students who have been identified as exposed to a COVID-19-positive peer. Only a child who is sick with COVID symptoms or has a confirmed positive test should ever need to be excluded from school. Test-to-Stay provides the relevant data, enacts a safety procedure on that basis alone, and allows us to minimize the disruptions that COVID has enacted on our city.

18

Students in Chicago Public Schools have endured constant disruptions to their education these past two years. After schools were categorized as "non essential" institutions at the onset of the pandemic in 2020, CPS students were subjected to remote learning that did not even begin to approximate a healthy and vibrant in-person classroom. While plausibly necessary in the early days of the pandemic, there is no scientific ambiguity about the negative effects of this historic shift in K-12 education: school closures and quarantines have proven ineffective at curbing the spread of COVID-19 while proving extremely effective at curbing the intellectual and social health of kids and the economic health of households.

Now that schools have reopened, these same students are under constant threat of being sent back to remote learning if a classmate tests positive for COVID-19, while their parents are forced to scramble, with little notice, to find childcare for their quarantined child.

CPS's current quarantine policy is unscientific, unethical, and unfair. With its constant threat of keeping healthy kids home for no reason, CPS policy continues to erode public confidence in our schools, hitting working families and poor families with extra force. Since September, between 4,000 and 23,000 kids have been kept home every day. With

only 40 documented instances of transmission within Chicago schools since September and less than two percent of quarantined kids ultimately contracting the virus, the public health benefits of intermittent mass quarantines are dubious. Meanwhile, the lost wages, lost learning, and replacement of social life with screen-time are measurably bad news for kids and families.

I urge the immediate adoption of a Test-to-Stay policy wherein children are not automatically quarantined if a classmate tests positive. Test-to-Stay would allow COVID-negative students to stay in school where they belong.

Only a child who is sick with COVID symptoms or has a confirmed positive test should ever need to be excluded from school. Test-to-Stay provides the relevant data, enacts a safety procedure on that basis alone, and allows us to minimize the disruptions and stratifications that COVID (and misguided COVID policy) have enacted on our city.

As we all hope for COVID's ultimate passage from a pandemic to an endemic stage, parents, teachers, and citizens need to stand by the pillars of our civic life, and resist the temptation to relapse into modes of panic or paranoia.

19	I am writing to state my opposition to rolling quarantines for students as well as general coronavirus related school closures. Missing school disproportionately harms children of color and children from disadvantaged families. For the most vulnerable among us, neither the value of in person learning nor the harm of its absence can be overstated. Schools must stay open and healthy kids exposed to coronavirus should test to stay.
20	You should oppose rolling quarantines and support a limited test-to-stay protocol for kids in instances of "close contact" with a COVID-19 case. Don't keep healthy kids out of school. Only sick kids should be required to stay home!
21	I am a parent with 2 children in CPS schools. I am fed up with the constant disruptions that Chicago Public Schools' quarantine policy continues to impose on tens of thousands of healthy kids every day. Please do your duty as Board members and help bring stability to our communities by urging an end to these unscientific and unfair quarantines. Ask CEO Martinez and Dr. Arwady when they will commit to replacing this flawed policy with a targeted Test-to-Stay protocol at a systemwide level.
22	Sick kids should stay home. Don't keep healthy kids out of school.
23	My child caught COVID at school as soon as the work stoppage ended. She then gave it to me. I had to miss two weeks of work without pay, my kids all missed school. Almost two weeks later nobody has heard from the CPS contact tracing team. No email went out from the principal. My kids are now trying to take finals after missing instruction time, no materials or anything were provided to them while they were out. Why is this considered to be the better option than remote learning?

24	Sick kids should stay home. Don't keep healthy kids out of school.
25	Healthy kids deserve to be in school, please end these rolling quarantines and update the test to stay policy ASAP. In other districts, children have remained in school while Covid cases come and go. We need to live with it and continue moving forward, not backwards. These children deserve the best education possible and they are simply not getting it at CPS.
26	To avoid creating more anxiety for parents, students, teachers and staff at schools, do not do away with a mask mandate in schools even if the city changes policies. We need some stability.
27	Stop penalizing all students. sick children should and need to stay home. Healthy kids need & deserve to be in school. Kids online are left behind.
28	<p>Good Morning President del Valle, distinguished Board Members and Dr. Martinez.</p> <p>My name is Reyna Rodriguez and I am a proud parent of two students who attend Esmeralda Santiago, an Acero Charter School. My oldest son Luis Delgado is in 7th grade and my youngest, Giovanni Delgado, in 1st grade. Both of my children love their school and are proud to be a part of the Santiago community in Humboldt Park.</p> <p>My experience at Santiago has been nothing short of phenomenal. The teachers and administrators at the school have created a warm and welcoming environment that you feel the moment you walk through the doors. The dedication to student success and family support is felt and that is why I chose Santiago for my children's education. It's no surprise why Santiago has been ranked as one of the best charter elementary schools in the city.</p> <p>The passion for learning I see from the school compelled me to be a part of my children's learning journey. I joined Santiago's parent committee and have become the President of our parent group and consistently attend school meetings. I've also participated in the parent program called Padres Comprometidos. I'm now in my second Padres cohort. The program focuses on strengthening relationships with our school administrators and more importantly our children. I am thankful for the resources that Acero and Esmeralda Santiago provide parents like myself to aid in our children's academic success.</p> <p>Santiago has provided a supportive environment during the pandemic. Acero makes sure that we are well informed and that students are engaged in learning, even when the pandemic requires us to go remote for 14 days. The network offers opportunities for COVID vaccinations at Santiago for the community and weekly testing for staff and students to ensure that they are in a safe environment.</p> <p>Our charter schools matter and I call on the Board to recognize the amazing work that happens at charter schools like Santiago. Acero schools not only give our students an</p>

education, they provide families with resources and provide services that strengthen our communities.

Buenos días Presidente Del Valle, Dr. Martínez y distinguidos miembros de la Junta

Mi nombre es Reyna Rodríguez y soy una orgullosa madre de dos estudiantes que asisten a Esmeralda Santiago, una Escuela Charter Acero. Mi hijo mayor, Luis Delgado, está en 7° grado y mi hijo menor, Giovanni Delgado, en 1° grado. Mis dos hijos aman su escuela y están orgullosos de ser parte de la comunidad de Santiago en Humboldt Park.

Mi experiencia en Santiago ha sido nada menos que fenomenal. Los maestros y administradores de la escuela han creado un ambiente cálido y acogedor que se siente al momento en que cruzas las puertas. Para la educación de mis hijos, yo elegí la escuela Santiago, por la dedicación al éxito estudiantil y el apoyo familiar que se siente. No me sorprende que Santiago haya sido clasificada como una de las mejores escuelas primarias chárter de la ciudad.

La pasión por aprender que veo en la escuela me obligó a ser parte del viaje de aprendizaje de mis hijos. Me uní al comité de padres de Santiago y me convertí en la presidente de nuestro grupo de padres y asisto constantemente a las reuniones escolares. También he participado en el programa de padres llamado Padres Comprometidos. Ahora estoy en mi segunda cohorte de Padres. El programa se enfoca en fortalecer las relaciones con los administradores de nuestra escuela, y más importante la relación con nuestros hijos. Estoy agradecida por los recursos que Acero y Esmeralda Santiago brindan a padres como yo, para ayudar al éxito académico de nuestros hijos.

Durante la pandemia, Santiago ha proporcionado un entorno de apoyo. Acero se asegura de que estemos bien informados y de que los estudiantes participen en el aprendizaje, incluso cuando la pandemia nos obliga a trabajar de forma remota durante 14 días. Para garantizar que se encuentren en un entorno seguro, la red ofrece oportunidades de vacunación contra el COVID en Santiago para la comunidad, y pruebas semanales para el personal y los estudiantes.

Nuestras escuelas chárter son importantes y pido a la Junta que reconozca el increíble trabajo que se lleva a cabo en las escuelas chárter, como Santiago. Las escuelas Acero no solo brindan educación a nuestros estudiantes, sino que brindan recursos a las familias y brindan servicios que fortalecen a nuestras comunidades.

29

I am strongly opposed to rolling quarantines and wish to voice my support of a test-to-stay protocol for kids in instances of "close contact" with a COVID-19 case. The research is clear that children who are quarantined, isolated, and relegated to remote learning are suffering emotionally, academically, socially and mentally. It is well past time for CPS to make the investments in a comprehensive COVID protocol that is designed to keep children healthy and IN THE CLASSROOM. I urge you to take quick and decisive action before the mass exodus of CPS families continues.

30

Bottom line: children need to be in school, in person, and we as a community should not have to worry about school closures and remote learning. Remote learning DOES NOT WORK. Jim's beings are social creatures and will not thrive in isolation for an extended period of time. If these teachers and staff are so afraid of a virus then they are in the wrong profession. Enough of this in again out again with our schools. Our children are being treated like yo-yos and are not given any consideration about their academic future and emotional health. We as parents should not be stressed about whether or not our kids will be "in" school week to week. The suburbs don't seem to have a problem staying open. Why do we who chose to stay in the city have to deal with such paranoia and nonsense? Even the head of public health stated that this omicron variant hits like the flu and schools have never been closed for extended periods of time because of influenza cases rising in the winter. CPS needs to read the science and make rules accordingly. These staff members cannot just walk out whenever they feel like it without consequences, but so far there have been none. As far as Test To Stay I completely agree. I am very grateful that my children's school does have weekly testing in place and anyone who tests negative is not automatically sent home. It is ludicrous to keep a healthy child at home because of "possible exposure." If the child tests negative, end of discussion. They go back to class and resume their life. This constant paranoia over a virus is absurd and obnoxious. We have been in this for 2 years already and enough is enough. If you choose to refuse the vaccine that is on you. The rest of the community, particularly our school children, should not have to pay for ignorance.

31

How could CPS deliberately skew the data regarding student covid rates? Where are the supports necessary for schools to function and truly support students and families. Kids are struggling. It seems everyone is waiting on the day for things to return to March 16, 2020, it is not and will not. During the pandemic we were changed and although students had to shift, they are survivors and resilient. When will we begin to think intentionally and collaborate to tap into doing the right thing, versus the politically correct or money driven choice? We must lead and be willing to see things differently for our students to receive the support, love and resources they so desperately need.

Some students adjusted well and have found that they are self sufficient and like a hybrid or remote option. Some are burned out overall, some love being back in school and socializing with friends and interacting with people daily. It is not a one size fits all approach. Where are the surveys asking parents and students what they need? How can we trust leadership when We (parents and students) are being dishonored, shut out and lied to at every turn?

Ruth Shannon

32

I was dismayed to hear that CPS stopped showing all reported COVID cases in schools. Parents should know immediately when there is a possible exposure or outbreak.

33

1. I would like to stress how overwhelmed it has been for me to return my child to in-person learning due to the fact i know that our school has had sanitary issues before the pandemic.

	<p>2. I also would like to know how did the Board come up with the guidelines on how to go about our children coming into 1st, 2nd, & 3rd contact where their parents sitting at the table giving input?</p> <p>3. Why wasn't remote a option for the 2021-2022 School Year?</p>
34	<p>"I am a community member in West Lawn, married to a former local school council member. I am concerned about the constant disruptions that Chicago Public Schools' quarantine policy continues to impose on tens of thousands of healthy kids every day. Please do your duty as Board members and help bring stability to our communities by urging an end to these unscientific and unfair quarantines. Ask CEO Martinez and Dr. Arwady when they will commit to replacing this flawed policy with a targeted Test-to-Stay protocol at a system-wide level."</p>
35	<p>Dear Board Members, I am concerned that CPS has been making decisions on behalf of parents regarding covid risk management without our consent. Things like hiding and changing case counts in schools, not informing parents of vaccinated children's exposures, not allowing vaccinated children to access remote learning along with their quarantined classmates, not addressing exposure during lunch, failing to provide real-time tracking of classroom conditions (like Boston is doing), making testing opt-in instead of opt-out, not providing sufficient high-grade masks in a timely fashion, not improving ventilation, and so on make it impossible for us parents to protect our families as we see fit and destroys our trust in CPS as a whole. DO BETTER.</p>
36	<p>Re: Data Reporting Changes: The changes in data reporting happening quietly and without clear documentation has caused general loss in faith among Chicago Ed stakeholders. The post-facto justification of this change by Dr. Fox in the meeting today was insulting. Changes, if necessary, must be clearly explained when they are made, not apologetically several weeks after the change when multiple articles have been written to document the change. Minimizing the impact of this change does not increase public trust in CPS right now. This inability to properly collect data seems especially concerning in the face of test-to-stay programs that rely on data collection to evaluate their outcomes. At the end of the day, CPS needs to do better in explaining and documenting changes to data reporting, and NEEDS TO APOLOGIZE FOR LOSS IN PUBLIC TRUST DUE TO POOR DATA PRACTICES.</p>
37	<p>I am a substitute teacher for Chicago Public Schools. I consider the CPS's quarantine policy to be extremely disruptive and harmful to students. A healthy child has the right to go to school. CEO Martinez and Dr. Arwady need to replace the unscientific quarantine policy with test-to-stay protocol which is approved by the CDC.</p>
38	<p>It is very destabilizing for children to be under constant threat of being pulled out of school for a long period of time without actually being sick. It is very destabilizing to families, especially working parents, to be under constant threat of requiring childcare at a moments notice for a long stretch of time. It only makes logical sense that children should be tested daily and stay in school so long as they don't show symptoms or test positive. Otherwise what is the point of developing these tests to begin with? If students</p>

are tested everyday, the chances of a false negative multiple days in a row go down significantly. The benefit to these students getting uninterrupted learning at the same quality as their peers is ultimately much greater than the negligible risk of a series of false negative tests. This is just the common sense approach to adapting to the information and resources we now have. Thank you.

39

See attached letter.

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You can purchase my book "13" on Amazon. Chyann McQueen

ATTACHMENTS

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Weighed against the obvious benefits of active, thriving school communities, CPS' current quarantine policy is ill-fitted to the realities of the pandemic, imposing a rolling schedule of child-care emergencies on parents, and needlessly interrupting the intellectual and social development of our children. With only 40 documented instances of transmission within Chicago schools since September and less than two percent of quarantined kids ultimately contracting the virus, the public health benefits of intermittent mass quarantines are dubious. Meanwhile, the [lost wages](#), [lost learning](#), and [replacement of social life with screen-time](#) are measurably bad news for kids and families.

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On the Politics

The [wisdom of maintaining in-person schooling](#) is being embraced [irrespective](#) of political party. No matter if you usually root for Republicans or Democrats, progressives or conservatives, we should all welcome support of good public policy!

In the recent agreement that ended the 5-day stoppage of classes, BOTH CPS and CTU affirmed the intent to “promote” the Test-to-Stay pilot, which is currently only active at one school. The Board needs to turn this unique point of agreement into policy.

On the Science

A Test-to-Stay policy represents the most responsible and scientifically supported approach to safeguarding the health of our children and educators while also ensuring the integrity and stability of our institutions of public schooling. The Federal Centers for Disease Control, the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Department of Public Health, and the Chicago Department of Public Health have specifically authorized a Test-to-Stay protocol as part of official [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#).

Dear Chicago BOE,

Hope you all continue to be well. I wanted to follow up on my earlier written communication to the BOE about the delay in extending Safe Passage routes north of Division street here on the Near North side. The Near North Unity Program (NNUP), members of the nearby community, and the 18th District continue to believe connecting Safe Passage routes from Ogden Jenner to the George Manierre school would support enhanced student safety in the area as violence has increased and many children from the Marshall Field Garden Apartments are walking students who attend nearby CPS schools Manierre, Franklin, Salazar, and Ogden-Jenner.

To bolster the community and schools in the area there must be equity, equity for student safety and equity in the services that CPS provides for every student in the community. Below is an example of the LaSalle Language Academy playground on Orleans vs George Manierre's school playground. These schools are blocks apart but equity wise they are eons apart. Just look at the physical appearance of the outside play area for these two schools.

LaSalle, a school with a high income diverse student population, has a newly renovated playground and turf field and Manierre, a primarily low income Black school makes due with a concrete pad and an old small playground. Students at LaSalle safely come to school and play on their playground before and after school everyday while the students at Manierre can't even walk around to the Cleveland side of their building before school without worrying about safety.

Thank you for considering this communication. Please let NNUP know if we can help in any way to connect Safe Passage routes from Ogden Jenner to Manierre north of Division street and help to bring equitable student access to enhanced safety and services to all our CPS schools here on the Near North side. These are doable steps that can have a big impact. Please just do them.



My Best.
Michele Dreczynski
mdreczynski@nnup.org

Reyna Rodriguez - Remarks

CPS Board Meeting | January 26, 2022

Good Morning President del Valle, distinguished Board Members and Dr. Martinez.

My name is Reyna Rodriguez and I am a proud parent of two students who attend Esmeralda Santiago, an Acero Charter School. My oldest son Luis Delgado is in 7th grade and my youngest, Giovanni Delgado, in 1st grade. Both of my children love their school and are proud to be a part of the Santiago community in Humboldt Park.

My experience at Santiago has been nothing short of phenomenal. The teachers and administrators at the school have created a warm and welcoming environment that you feel the moment you walk through the doors. The dedication to student success and family support is felt and that is why I chose Santiago for my children's education. It's no surprise why Santiago has been ranked as one of the best charter elementary schools in the city.

The passion for learning I see from the school compelled me to be a part of my children's learning journey. I joined Santiago's parent committee and have become the President of our parent group and consistently attend school meetings. I've also participated in the parent program called *Padres Comprometidos*. I'm now in my second Padres cohort. The program focuses on strengthening relationships with our school administrators and more importantly our children. I am thankful for the resources that Acero and Esmeralda Santiago provide parents like myself to aid in our children's academic success.

Santiago has provided a supportive environment during the pandemic. Acero makes sure that we are well informed and that students are engaged in learning, even when the pandemic requires us to go remote for 14 days. The network offers opportunities for COVID vaccinations at Santiago for the community and weekly testing for staff and students to ensure that they are in a safe environment.

Our charter schools matter and I call on the Board to recognize the amazing work that happens at charter schools like Santiago. Acero schools not only give our students an education, they provide families with resources and provide services that strengthen our communities.

Buenos días Presidente Del Valle, Dr. Martínez y distinguidos miembros de la Junta

Mi nombre es Reyna Rodríguez y soy una orgullosa madre de dos estudiantes que asisten a Esmeralda Santiago, una Escuela Charter Acero. Mi hijo mayor, Luis Delgado, está en 7° grado y mi hijo menor, Giovanni Delgado, en 1° grado. Mis dos hijos aman su escuela y están orgullosos de ser parte de la comunidad de Santiago en Humboldt Park.

Mi experiencia en Santiago ha sido nada menos que fenomenal. Los maestros y administradores de la escuela han creado un ambiente cálido y acogedor que se siente al momento en que cruzas las puertas. Para la educación de mis hijos, yo elegí la escuela Santiago, por la dedicación al éxito estudiantil y el apoyo familiar que se siente. No me sorprende que Santiago haya sido clasificada como una de las mejores escuelas primarias chárter de la ciudad.

La pasión por aprender que veo en la escuela me obligó a ser parte del viaje de aprendizaje de mis hijos. Me uní al comité de padres de Santiago y me convertí en la presidente de nuestro grupo de padres y asisto constantemente a las reuniones escolares. También he participado en el programa de padres llamado Padres Comprometidos. Ahora estoy en mi segunda cohorte de Padres. El programa se enfoca en fortalecer las relaciones con los administradores de nuestra escuela, y más importante la relación con nuestros hijos. Estoy agradecida por los recursos que Acero y Esmeralda Santiago brindan a padres como yo, para ayudar al éxito académico de nuestros hijos.

Durante la pandemia, Santiago ha proporcionado un entorno de apoyo. Acero se asegura de que estemos bien informados y de que los estudiantes participen en el aprendizaje, incluso cuando la pandemia nos obliga a trabajar de forma remota durante 14 días. Para garantizar que se encuentren en un entorno seguro, la red ofrece oportunidades de vacunación contra el COVID en Santiago para la comunidad, y pruebas semanales para el personal y los estudiantes.

Nuestras escuelas chárter son importantes y pido a la Junta que reconozca el increíble trabajo que se lleva a cabo en las escuelas chárter, como Santiago. Las escuelas Acero no solo brindan educación a nuestros estudiantes, sino que brindan recursos a las familias y brindan servicios que fortalecen a nuestras comunidades.

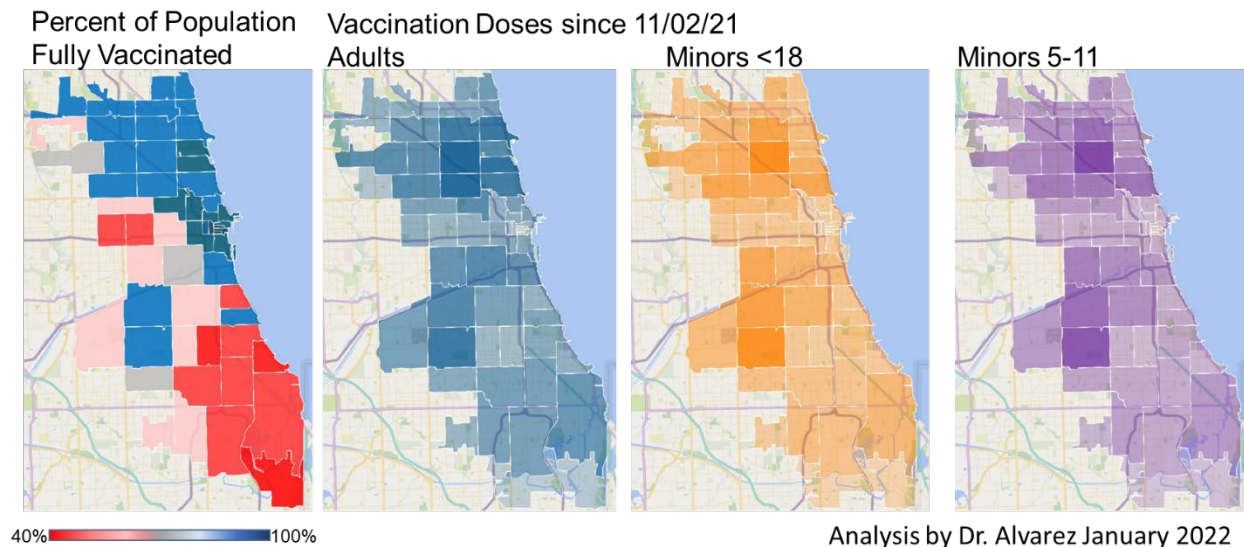
January 27, 2022

Dear Mayor Lightfoot, CTU President, and CPS President and Board Members,

The work stoppage and brinksmanship over how to provide safe in-person instruction failed to take into consideration the impact on the vulnerable students, including those with insecure housing. The safety measures that I have advocated for should be universally accepted.

1. Consistent and appropriate masking.
2. Limited close interactions
3. Appropriate ventilation and air filtration
4. Proper tracking and quarantine
5. Wide-spread surveillance testing
6. Near-universal vaccination for those that are eligible

However, there is still inconsistency over implementation. CPS is significantly undercounting COVID infections and the risks are burdened on communities that remain underserved.



Therefore, I call on you to develop a plan in the event of future strikes or work-stoppages to develop safety measures for housing insecure and other vulnerable students. I again extend my willingness to advice on more effective and equitable solutions to address disparities that effect our students.

Be well,

Dr. Angel Alvarez

Statement to the CPS Board on January 26, 2022

Good morning, Mr. President and members of the CPS Board, I am Chyann McQueen, an **Alumna of CCA Academy, a YCCS network campus** on the westside. I am here to celebrate CCA and YCCS as I am a testament to the life changing opportunities YCCS offers students like me who need a non-traditional high school environment with a supportive faculty that listens and provides you with the education and support that helps YOU succeed. I took chances with everything that was offered to me and it has continued to lead me to success. **Participating in the 2018 YCCS Civic Engagement forum, I won first place for my project and my poetry.** This led me to be a judge for the **YCCS Artivism - art and activism** – contest where I encouraged creative current students.

My YCCS mentor Kofi Ademola presented me with the chance to do grass roots work in my community which guided me to speaking at the **March For Our Lives Chicago** rally of over 100 thousand people. It also led me speak truth to power on **Chicago Tonight**. Recently, I worked mentoring seniors at YCCS with their post-secondary paths. And, I've worked as a receptionist for a real estate law firm, thanks to encouragement from YCCS faculty.

Now, I am a published author. You can purchase my book, **titled "13" on Amazon.** 13 is a reflection of my experience growing up in the underserved communities of Chicago.

I have many more accomplishments I was able to attain through CCA and YCCS, and I am **grateful to Dr. Myra Sampson and my CCA Family, as well as Ms. Sheila Venson and my greater YCCS Family,** for listening to me, and giving me the encouragement to overcome the same barriers that so many youth in underserved neighborhoods face today. **Thank you for hearing my voice.**

Sincerely,

Chyann McQueen