



Board of Education | City of Chicago

Board Meeting Written Comments

May 28, 2026

Table of Contents

Public Comments

1. Kristy Burlingame	2-3	33. Z.W.	21	66. Anonymous	33-34
2. aren Shimmin	3-4	34. Anonymous	21-22	67. Anonymous	34
3. Aneidalee Velazquez	4-5	35. Hannah Graber	22		
4. ariana Castillo	5-6	36. Jade McCallum	22		
5. Fadi Alsayegh	6-7	37. M.B.	22		
6. Gabriele Paez	7	38. Jason Dupuis	22		
7. Anonymous	7-8	39. Laura Brandon	22		
8. Janette Ector	8	40. Anonymous	22-23		
9. Tamara Grier	9-10	41. Anonymous	23		
10. ancy Young	10	42. Keelan Scanlan Allende	24		
11. ary F Clark	10-11	43. Anonymous	24		
12. Katherine Fishman	11	44. Anonymous	24		
13. Brendon Monaghan		45. Maria D Guzman	24-25		
Troutman	12-13	46. Anonymous	25		
14. Dina Fennerty	13	47. Anonymous	25-26		
15. atie Wheatley	13-14	48. N.R.	26		
16. Karen Trine	14	49. Anonymous	26-27		
17. Anonymous	14	50. Anonymous	27		
18. Deysi Emeterio	14-15	51. Anonymous	27		
19. Scott Underriner	15	52. Anonymous	27-28		
20. Anonymous	15	53. Diane Byrne	28		
21. Paul DiGiovanni	15	54. Anonymous	28		
22. Anonymous	15	55. Anonymous	28-29		
23. Anonymous	16	56. Ben Gucciardi	29		
24. Jessica Alsayegh	16-17	57. Anonymous	29-30		
25. Anonymous	17	58. Anonymous	30		
26. Anonymous	17-18	59. Anonymous	30-31		
27. Anonymous	18	60. E. T.	31-32		
28. Anonymous	18-19	61. Bret Roberts	32		
29. Anonymous	19	62. Peter Byrne	32		
30. Anonymous	19-20	63. Anonymous	32		
31. Celeste Dupuis	20	64. Anonymous	32-33		
32. Anonymous	20-21	65. Esther Pomranky	33		



**May 28, 2026 Board Meeting Written Comments
Received between Tuesday, May 26th and Friday, May 29th Submitted via
Written Comments Form**

1	<p>Written Comment: Request to Reopen the CPS International Baccalaureate Application Process</p> <p>Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,</p> <p>I am writing as both a parent and a member of the Local School Council at Belding Elementary School to respectfully request that Chicago Public Schools reopen the application process for International Baccalaureate programming.</p> <p>Belding is one of the most diverse neighborhood schools in Chicago. Our students and families represent more than 100 countries and speak 22 different languages. Our diversity is one of our greatest strengths, and our school community has worked incredibly hard to build programs that reflect the potential and promise of our students.</p> <p>In 2021, Belding was authorized as an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) school. This was a major accomplishment for our community and a meaningful investment in our students' future. However, our elementary students in grades K–5 still do not have access to the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), despite recommendations from the International Baccalaureate Organization itself that students begin the framework earlier in their educational journey.</p> <p>Right now, we are asking students to enter the IB model midway through their education rather than allowing them to build those skills from the beginning. We are missing an opportunity to fully support and develop their potential during their most formative years.</p> <p>IB programs are about much more than academic rigor. They help students become thoughtful communicators, critical thinkers, collaborators, and globally minded citizens. They foster curiosity, cultural understanding, problem-solving, and independent thinking — skills that are increasingly important in today's world and in the future workforce our children will enter.</p> <p>These programs are especially meaningful in a school community like Belding, where students come from many backgrounds, cultures, and lived experiences. IB programming helps students see themselves as part of a larger global community while also strengthening empathy, communication, and respect for others.</p> <p>Reopening the application process would not only benefit Belding, but would also allow other CPS schools the opportunity to pursue innovative academic programming that supports student</p>
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achievement and long-term success. IB students consistently demonstrate strong graduation rates, college readiness, and engagement in their school communities.

This investment also has the potential to strengthen neighborhood school pathways across the Northwest Side, including Schurz High School, which would benefit from increased continuity and alignment for students coming from IB-focused elementary environments.

Most importantly, our families want this opportunity for their children. Our school community believes deeply in public education and in creating pathways that allow neighborhood schools to thrive. Belding has already demonstrated its commitment to the IB framework through the successful implementation of the Middle Years Programme. We are ready to continue that work.

I respectfully ask the Board to reconsider the closure of the IB application process and provide schools like Belding the opportunity to apply for and expand IB programming for our students.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued commitment to Chicago's students and families.

Sincerely,
Parent & Local School Council Member
Belding Elementary School

2 May 27, 2025

To the Chicago Board of Education and CPS Office of Early Childhood,

I am a parent of a Kindergartener at Talcott Fine Arts and Museum Academy. I am writing to urgently ask the Board to reconsider the proposed closure of one of the school's Pre-K classrooms. My son attended this Pre-K classroom last year. He is thriving in Kindergarten this year and I know that it is due in large part to the instruction and experiences he received during his 2024-2025 Pre-K year. I am heartbroken to think of the 20 students who will not have access to the opportunity afforded to him. The instructor and SECA in this classroom are gifted teachers and caring professionals and losing them - and this classroom - would be a huge loss to our school, our neighborhood community, and the families who commute from across the city to bring their children to Talcott.

At a time when Chicago should be investing in and protecting multilingual education, this decision sends the wrong message to families and communities who value language diversity, inclusion, and equitable access to high-quality, early childhood education.

Talcott's Pre-K program is highly sought after for 1) a strong early childhood education rooted in Reggio Emilia curriculum that is both creative and rigorous; 2) Meaningful multilingual learning



opportunities; 3) Diverse classrooms that reflect the reality of Chicago's neighborhoods, families, and communities.

Research consistently shows that multilingual education benefits young learners academically, socially, and cognitively. These programs help children develop stronger communication skills, cultural awareness, empathy, and long-term academic success.

Talcott is our neighborhood school. We chose to send our son there because of the multilingual, community-focused approach. I strongly believe reducing access to this program would negatively impact both current and future students, as well as the families in our neighborhood.

This is not the time to reduce multilingual opportunities in CPS schools. We should be protecting and expanding them.

I respectfully urge the Board:

- Reconsider the closure of the Talcott Pre-K classroom
- Preserve multilingual early childhood education at Talcott
- Listen to the voices of Talcott families and the broader community
- Support continued investment in equitable and inclusive public education

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to Chicago students and families.

Sincerely,
Karen Shimmin
Talcott Parent & Community Member
West Town Resident

3 05/27/26

To the Chicago Board of Education and CPS Office of Early Childhood,

My name is Aneidalee Velazquez, and I am a proud Talcott parent with children in first and seventh grade. I am writing to ask CPS to please reconsider the proposed closure of one of Talcott Fine Arts & Museum Academy's Pre-K classrooms.

I am very concerned that this decision seems connected to Talcott wanting to continue offering a multilingual learning environment instead of changing the classroom to an English-only program.

Chicago should be supporting and protecting multilingual education, not reducing it. Decisions like this affect families who value language diversity, inclusion, and equal access to quality early childhood education.

Talcott's Pre-K program is special because of:

- A welcoming, community-centered environment



- Strong early childhood education built on creativity and care
- Multilingual learning opportunities
- Diverse classrooms that reflect Chicago families and communities

Research continues to show that multilingual education helps children academically, socially, and emotionally. It gives students stronger communication skills, cultural understanding, confidence, and long-term educational benefits.

My family chose Talcott because of its strong sense of community and multilingual program. Taking away access to these opportunities would impact both current students and future families.

This is not the time to reduce multilingual programs in CPS schools. It is a time to protect and grow them.

I respectfully ask CPS and the Board of Education to:

- Reconsider the closure of the Talcott Pre-K classroom
- Preserve multilingual early childhood education at Talcott
- Listen to Talcott families and the community
- Continue investing in equitable and inclusive public education

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to Chicago students and families.

Sincerely,
Aneidalee Velazquez
Talcott Parent

4 5/27/2026

To: The Chicago Board of Education and CPS Office of Early Childhood,

My name is Nariana Castillo, and I am a parent of a 4th & 5th grader at Talcott. My children have attended Talcott since they were in preschool. We sought out Talcott specifically because it is a dual language school. I am in shock that we may lose a preschool classroom. I am writing to urgently ask CPS to reconsider the proposed closure of one of Talcott Fine Arts & Museum Academy's Pre-K classrooms.

I am deeply concerned that this closure appears tied to Talcott's commitment to maintaining a multilingual learning environment rather than converting the classroom into a monolingual English-only program.

At a time when Chicago should be investing in and protecting multilingual education, this decision sends the wrong message to families and communities who value language diversity, inclusion, and equitable access to high-quality early childhood education. This school is a gem to myself and all those who have had the opportunity to attend.

Talcott's Pre-K program is highly sought after because of its unique strengths:

- A warm, community-centered environment



- Strong early childhood education rooted in creativity and care
- Meaningful multilingual learning opportunities
- Diverse classrooms that reflect the reality and richness of Chicago families

Research consistently shows that multilingual education benefits young learners academically, socially, and cognitively. These programs help children develop stronger communication skills, cultural awareness, empathy, and long-term academic success.

As a family who specifically chose Talcott because of its multilingual and community-focused approach, I strongly believe reducing access to this program would negatively impact both current and future students.

This is not the time to reduce multilingual opportunities in CPS schools. It is a time to protect and expand them.

I respectfully urge CPS and the Board of Education to:

- Reconsider the closure of the Talcott Pre-K classroom
- Preserve multilingual early childhood education at Talcott
- Listen to the voices of Talcott families and the broader community
- Support continued investment in equitable and inclusive public education

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to Chicago students and families.

Sincerely,

Nariana Castillo

TALCOTT PARENT

5 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing to urge you to preserve the Arabic program at Lincoln Park High School. Since 1990, the program has been an important part of the school community and provides students with a unique academic and cultural opportunity.

Arabic is one of the world's most significant languages, and studying it prepares students for careers in diplomacy, international business, education, journalism, humanitarian work, and national security. The program also helps students become more globally aware and culturally informed.

Beyond academics, the Arabic program has created a strong sense of belonging for many students. Families have seen students build friendships, confidence, and meaningful connections through the program's cultural and educational activities. These experiences strengthen student engagement and contribute positively to school culture. The community strongly supports keeping the program. Families actively choose Lincoln Park High School because of it, and a petition supporting the program received more than 1,300 signatures within hours. Parents, alumni, teachers, and community members are also willing to help secure funding, partnerships, and other support to sustain the program.



	<p>Concerns about enrollment should not outweigh the program's long-term value. Parents have reported barriers to enrollment, including limited course availability and changing requirements. Removing introductory courses only weakens the program's future growth and accessibility.</p> <p>Eliminating the Arabic program would also send a discouraging message to Arab and Middle Eastern students and families who value cultural representation in education. Schools should expand opportunities for inclusion and cultural understanding, not reduce them. We respectfully ask the Board to work collaboratively with families, students, and educators to preserve this important program. The Arabic program is not simply a class; it is a meaningful educational opportunity that has benefited the Lincoln Park community for decades.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p> <p>Sincerely, Fadi Alsayegh</p>
6	<p>Educators have formally requested an official ESL curriculum for High School ESL classes for years now. OMME has requested this from the Office of Teaching and Learning, per Dr. Karime Asaf, yet nothing. OMME has request this be included in next year's budget. Teachers are still having to purchase or make up their own ESL curriculum. We NEED an ESL curriculum that speaks the to linguistically diverse populations we serve. Otherwise kids go years without ever attaining English proficiency. At this point, it is likely to result in a formal grievance.</p>
7	<p>I am writing to express deep concern regarding the decision to close the blended dual language Pre-K classroom at Talcott Fine Arts and Museum Academy for the 2026–2027 school year.</p> <p>This classroom serves preschool students with disabilities alongside typically developing peers in an inclusive dual language environment. Closing this classroom would reduce access to both inclusive early childhood education and dual language programming at a time when CPS already faces a shortage of blended preschool classrooms.</p> <p>Talcott's blended dual language program is already fully staffed, established, and functioning successfully within the school community. Families of current age cycle 3 students are actively requesting to return to Talcott next school year to continue in a blended dual language setting. These students and families are already connected to the school community, routines, relationships, and support systems at Talcott.</p> <p>Forcing students with disabilities and multilingual learners to leave their established school community and attend unfamiliar schools elsewhere for appropriate services does not feel inclusive or equitable. Students with disabilities should not lose access to a dual language school community because they require specialized support services.</p>



Talcott's program is especially valuable because it combines inclusion with dual language education. Students with IEPs learn alongside English-dominant and Spanish-dominant peers in a rich bilingual environment that supports language development, social development, and early academic growth for all students.

Research consistently shows that multilingual learners benefit academically and linguistically from strong dual language programs. English learners develop English proficiency while also strengthening their home language, leading to stronger long-term academic outcomes, literacy development, and family connection. Young children learn language most effectively through meaningful peer interaction in authentic bilingual environments, and Talcott's program provides exactly that opportunity.

It is also important to note that last year's under-enrollment was connected to a stop on enrollment that impacted the program. That issue has since been resolved. Current enrollment interest does not reflect a lack of demand. In fact, there are currently more than 40 applicants waiting to hear back regarding placement and waitlist status for Talcott's Pre-K program, demonstrating clear community interest and need.

Families and staff have repeatedly advocated for the continuation of this classroom. At the same time, there have been conflicting explanations and changing enrollment criteria surrounding the closure decision. There also appears to be a disconnect between departments regarding enrollment, placements, and the districtwide shortage of blended preschool programs.

I respectfully urge the Board of Education to review this decision and consider:

- the districtwide shortage of blended preschool classrooms
- the importance of dual language education for English learners
- the need for inclusive settings for students with disabilities
- the fact that Talcott's program is already fully staffed and operational
- the desire of current Talcott families to continue in the program
- the more than 40 applicants currently awaiting placement information
- the fact that prior under-enrollment was connected to an enrollment stoppage that has since been corrected
- the harm caused by disrupting continuity for young children and families

Closing this classroom would not simply eliminate a section. It would reduce access to inclusive bilingual early childhood education for students who benefit from it most.



8	<p>Good afternoon, Board Members. I am a staff member at CICS Loomis Primary and a proud parent of a rising 3rd grader. I am here today to support the official relocation of 3rd grade to the CICS Loomis campus.</p> <p>My daughter is currently finishing 2nd grade at CICS Loomis. She is curious and bright, and like many 2nd graders heading to 3rd grade, she is still growing her confidence. At Loomis, our teachers and staff are experts in early childhood learning, which is exactly what is needed during 3rd grade. This is the year where academics become more challenging; she'll begin IAR testing and make the big shift from learning to read, to reading to learn. For my daughter, tackling these new academic challenges in a smaller environment with familiar faces teaching her is the difference between anxiety and success.</p> <p>From the staff member perspective, I love hearing parents share how excited they are to keep their children at Loomis just a bit longer. Our families advocated for this change because they want that extra year of growth in a primary school setting before moving to the upper grades. As a result, we have seen a greater retention rate of rising 3rd graders. With a pivotal year like 3rd grade, parents have more touchpoints during morning drop offs and after school dismissal with staff that a smaller campus allows.</p> <p>At CICS Loomis, sometimes a child just needs a hug and some reassurance to feel ready for the day. Supporting this 3rd grade relocation means the board is helping our students and their families get that reassurance before they step foot into the "big kid school."</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
9	<p>Good afternoon, Board Members. As a staff member for both CICS Loomis Primary and CICS Longwood Elementary, I see firsthand how students navigate change. That's why I am here today to support the relocation of 3rd grade from the Longwood campus to the Loomis campus.</p> <p>Moving from primary grades to elementary school has been challenging at a large campus like CICS Longwood. Primary students are still learning how to be in school and it's not enough time to shift gears before moving to the elementary building. Coupled with new responsibilities that come with being a 3rd grader, adding the transition to elementary school can be overwhelming.</p> <p>This request is the result of parent feedback. We sent family surveys and met with parents to better understand their perspectives, and consistently heard worries about their young students entering the older kids' school. With 3rd grade at CICS Loomis, we have created a bridge year between the two campuses to aid the transition. 3rd grade teachers joined the Loomis team to provide families with insight into elementary school. There's also more K through 12 programming to strengthen a cultural connection between all of the campuses.</p>



	<p>During our recent step up days for students, our 3rd graders asked thoughtful questions to a 4th grade panel of students about their school experience. Because they had an extra year to grow in the primary setting, they are approaching the transition to elementary school with curiosity and excitement!</p> <p>I urge the board to officially assign 3rd grade to CICS Loomis. This move will ultimately set them up for long-term success as they make their way through the Loomis-Longwood continuum.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
10	<p>Good afternoon, Board Members. I am the parent of a current 3rd grader at CICS Loomis Primary. I am here today to support the official relocation of 3rd grade to the CICS Loomis campus from the CICS Longwood Elementary campus.</p> <p>Last year, I was faced with a tough decision, whether to send my 2nd grader to the much larger CICS Longwood Elementary campus for 3rd grade, or find another, smaller school. For my young 2nd grader who had a tough year, this didn't feel like it was the best fit for her.</p> <p>As it turns out, the decision was made for me when Principal Nash announced 3rd grade relocating to CICS Loomis! This put my mind at ease and helped my student find a love of learning again. Staying at the primary level for another year gave her the security and comfort of familiarity in a smaller nurturing environment while taking on new academic challenges that come with 3rd grade. Her teacher is caring and supportive while upholding high standards for her classroom. She involves her students in their learning so that they develop that sense of agency and responsibility necessary at CICS Longwood. The CICS Loomis community has created a way to bridge 3rd grade, preparing students both academically and social-emotionally for what comes next.</p> <p>As for my daughter, I've seen her regain excitement for school. Her maturity has blossomed over this year, and we are both feeling more confident in the transition to CICS Longwood Elementary. This is why I am asking you to make 3rd grade official for CICS Loomis. My daughter and her classmates have built more independent thinking and social skills, all necessary for entering 4th grade. The holistic progress our students have made during 3rd grade at CICS Loomis has equipped them for what comes next.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
11	<p>I'm a parent of a Pre K 4 student at Haugan Elementary in Albany Park. Haugan needs overcrowding relief. I want to make sure NO classes at Haugan are overcrowded next year. As a parent of a young child, I'm very concerned about kindergarten class sizes. All kindergarteners should be able to have classes capped at 25 students. It is unacceptable to have kindergarten rooms of 26 students or more. Same with class sizes caps for all the other grades. Haugan needs the Board's help to find long term</p>



solutions for growth at Haugan. I'm so happy more neighborhood families are choosing to send their children to our neighborhood school. This means the school needs more classrooms. The Leeland school building (3729 W Leeland) can help with overcrowding relief. The building is one of our neighborhood assets and should serve our neighborhood students. I support Haugan students using the 3rd floor. Most of all, I want the residents of Albany Park along with Haugan's school community to give input about what happens at that building.

12 May 28th, 2026
To the Chicago Board of Education and CPS Office of Early Childhood,
My name is Katherine Fishman, and I am a current Talcott parent of a child in 1st, writing to urgently ask CPS to reconsider the proposed closure of one of Talcott Fine Arts & Museum Academy's Pre-K classrooms.
I am deeply concerned that this closure appears tied to Talcott's commitment to maintaining a multilingual learning environment rather than converting the classroom into a monolingual English-only program.
At a time when Chicago should be investing in and protecting multilingual education, this decision sends the wrong message to families and communities who value language diversity, inclusion, and equitable access to high-quality early childhood education.
Talcott's Pre-K program is highly sought after because of its unique strengths:

- A warm, community-centered environment
- Strong early childhood education rooted in creativity and care
- Meaningful multilingual learning opportunities
- Diverse classrooms that reflect the reality and richness of Chicago families

Research consistently shows that multilingual education benefits young learners academically, socially, and cognitively. These programs help children develop stronger communication skills, cultural awareness, empathy, and long-term academic success.
As a family who specifically chose Talcott because of its multilingual and community-focused approach, I strongly believe reducing access to this program would negatively impact both current and future students.
This is not the time to reduce multilingual opportunities in CPS schools. It is a time to protect and expand them.
I respectfully urge CPS and the Board of Education to:

- Reconsider the closure of the Talcott Pre-K classroom
- Preserve multilingual early childhood education at Talcott
- Listen to the voices of Talcott families and the broader community
- Support continued investment in equitable and inclusive public education

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to Chicago students and families.
Sincerely,
Katherine Fishman
TALCOTT PARENT



13 My name is Brendon Troutman. I am a public health advocate and safety net hospital worker at Roseland Community Hospital on the far south side. I am a resident of Little Village where I volunteer as a rapid responder in support of our immigrant neighbors and families.

I am writing today on behalf of our northside community and specifically in support of the Arabic language program at Lincoln Park High School. LPHS administrators have made a decision to no longer offer onsite Arabic instruction to incoming students and instead have opted to move the program to a completely different school, creating a situation where incoming students would need to travel to another building just to access the opportunity to learn the Arabic language.

I write in support of over 1300 parents, teachers, students, alumni, and community members who have signed on and spoken out against this action which will limit current and future opportunities for students while creating additional concerns, burdens and obstacles on both students and parents.

Removing the Arabic program from within the walls of Lincoln Park High School sends a discouraging message to Arab and Middle Eastern students and families who value cultural representation in education. All CPS schools should expand opportunities for cultural understanding, not reduce them. Lincoln Park High School's decision to limit and reduce access to Arabic language instruction is a failure to uphold Chicago Public Schools Core Values of: Student-centered, Equity, Academic Excellence, Community Partnership, and Continuous Learning.

Students involved in the Arabic program have developed strong connections, friendships, and a meaningful sense of community. Programs that create belonging improve student engagement, retention, and overall school culture. At a time when so many of our young people in the city face increasing challenges, including mental health, violence, substance use disorder, and socioeconomic factors that create barriers to their wellbeing and success, Lincoln Park High School and CPS have an opportunity and an obligation to foster and facilitate all programs that create a sense of community and connection. Programs like this help students become globally aware, culturally informed, and better prepared for a diverse world.

There is not a single governing body in this city; from the Mayor's office, to the County Board President, to Chicago Public Schools that doesn't love to tout Chicago as a "world class city." How can we expect to maintain and grow our world class city status by reducing and eliminating access to language and culture in our public schools? Arabic is one of the most globally significant languages, spoken by hundreds of millions of people across the world. Keeping the Arabic language program within the walls of Lincoln Park High School not only ensures opportunity and education for our students, it ensures our success as a city.

Respectfully, it is absurd to me that we are even having this debate to preserve the Arabic language, here in Chicagoland where we have the largest Palestinian population in the United States; an estimated 85,000 people, which accounts for 60% of the Arab population in the region. And as an Irish



American who is an 18 year resident of this city which has beautifully designed plazas and buildings bearing names like Daley, Dunne, and O'Brien, may the President and Board forgive me for pointing out the irony of my statements today on behalf of all Chicagoans who also come from Irish ancestry for we know all too well what it means to have our language and culture limited, then hidden, then banned, and erased.

I thank the board for accepting my comments into the record. And I urge you to maintain and expand the Arabic language program at Lincoln Park High School, making it available and accessible, without additional barriers and challenges for students and parents.

14 I would like to take this opportunity to speak about space concerns at Haugan Elementary, and recommend the CPS Board and Portfolio Office find long term solutions to our overcrowding (space) concerns.

I am writing to you today as a concerned teacher in the Albany Park community. I want to express my growing alarm regarding the severe overcrowding at Haugan Elementary, which is significantly impacting our children's learning environment, campus safety, and overall educational quality.

Currently, Haugan is operating well over its intended capacity. Class sizes are at capacity, leaving little to no room for individualized instruction (small student groups have to meet in hallways or closets) or the specialized attention our children need to thrive. Furthermore, essential shared facilities—such as the cafeteria, gymnasium, and library (which is now an office for our counselors, bilingual teachers, and other non-teaching staff)—are strained to their limits. This lack of adequate space is a detriment to academics, compromising our students' college and career readiness, which negatively affects their future potential. It also impacts our logistical needs in regards to safety and security to our school community.

As our community continues to grow, we urgently need a proactive and sustainable solution to accommodate our neighborhood students. I ask that the CPS Board review and evaluate our building capacity, and allocate space and resources to ease the strain on Haugan.

15 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,
My name is Katie Wheatley, and I am writing to you today as a preschool teacher at Haugan Elementary School. As an educator who welcomes our youngest learners into the CPS system, I am deeply invested in our school's future. I am reaching out to highlight a critical issue that is severely impacting our ability to safely and equitably serve our community. We need additional space. The district frequently states that one of its primary goals is to support and invest in neighborhood schools. Haugan is the very definition of a vital, loved neighborhood school. We serve a passionate PK-8 community, and we want our school to continue to grow. However, the district's inaction is holding us back.



	<p>We are currently operating under physical constraints that directly compromise student well-being and privacy. We love our PK-8 students, and our staff works tirelessly every day to give them a high-quality education. But we cannot wrap our services around the "whole child" if we do not even have the rooms to house those services. We need space for our PK-8 classrooms, counseling, therapy from related service providers, and SPED students.</p> <p>If the district is truly committed to equity and investing in neighborhood schools, Haugan cannot be left behind. I urge the Board to collaborate directly with the Haugan administration and community to identify and fund a long-term facility solution so we can safely and effectively meet the needs of all our students.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, consideration, and your stated commitment to our neighborhood schools.</p> <p>Sincerely, Katie Wheatley</p>
16	<p>To the Chicago Board of Education, At Whitney Young high school, losing 8.6 teacher positions, closing the library, writing center & math center as well as cancelling Ap Classes and elective arts and music classes available to students are the consequences of this cycle's lack of funding.</p> <p>These will definitely impact students and families in a negative way. Please reconsider budgeting priorities to keep funding in the schools where students benefit directly instead of administrative network positions.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
17	<p>The current budget allocation for Whitney M. Young Magnet High School is insufficient and will severely impact the student body. The budget shortfalls will result in the following critical losses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8.6 teacher positions, directly leading to larger class sizes (well beyond the contractual 28). - The closing of the writing center, math center, and the library. <p>Whitney M. Young Magnet High School is facing the real possibility of having to cancel several AP Classes, art classes, band and/or orchestra, and a world language program. These cancellations will severely limit student choice in scheduling and academic pathways. I urge the Board to reconsider these cuts to preserve the academic integrity and resources of the school.</p> <p>I thank you in advance for your time and consideration.</p>
18	<p>To the Chicago Board of Education, The current budget allocation for Whitney M. Young Magnet High School is insufficient and will severely impact the student body. The budget shortfalls will result in the following critical losses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8.6 teacher positions, directly leading to larger class sizes (well beyond the contractual 28). - The closing of the writing center, math center, and the library. <p>Whitney M. Young Magnet High School is facing the real possibility of having to cancel several AP Classes, art classes, band and/or orchestra, and a world language program. These cancellations will</p>



	<p>severely limit student choice in scheduling and academic pathways. I urge the Board to reconsider these cuts to preserve the academic integrity and resources of the school.</p> <p>I thank you in advance for your time and consideration.</p>
19	<p>To the Chicago Board of Education,</p> <p>The proposed budget is insufficient, outrageous, and offensive. Schools all around the city will suffer, and their students most of all. Arts programs, AP courses, and student electives will be cut. In light of the new contract signed capping high school classes at 28 students, there will be staffing issues, overcrowded classes, and contractual violations. It is imperative that appropriate funding is secured so that our schools can run properly and our students can experience the best possible education we can offer.</p>
20	<p>The budget that we were given and expected to run our school is NOT appropriate! We need to do better for our students, teachers, staff, and city!</p>
21	<p>I believe that the methodology of the new budgeting structure is inappropriate for typically well-achieving schools. The opportunity index score (which allocates an additional \$18 per student per index point) for a well-achieving school calculates the lowest budget for schools with: 1) low teacher turnover and 2) high student diversity. These metrics have a negative effect on schools with content teachers who stay at their school to build community. These metrics also specifically punish schools that have achieved a high level of diversity within their student body. From a budgetary standpoint, this encourages well-performing schools to do "worse," rather than incentivizing the desired improvements.</p>
22	<p>Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,</p> <p>I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the opportunity index is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment and high-achieving magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.</p> <p>As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.</p>



23 I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

24 I am a CPS parent, a Chicago resident and a former classroom teacher.

I am writing with strong concern about the possibility of the Arabic program being dropped from Lincoln Park High School's course offerings.

My son is currently a freshman in the Arabic program at LPHS and has shown tremendous growth this school year with the language- he is able to hold a conversation, read Arabic and write using the Arabic alphabet. In addition he has earned A's every quarter.

Last summer as a prospective freshman he chose to attend LPHS because the Arabic program was being offered. When schedules were released in June 2025, we were notified he would be placed in French, which was not even one of his two preferred selections. When I emailed back to say he would like Arabic, a stale reply was given that there were not enough students and they assigned him to Mandarin. Dr. Luque, the Arabic teacher, was kind enough to work with us on a plan that eventually allowed our son to join the Arabic program. Since he has some prior experience with the language at home, he was able to test into Arabic 2.

The program, which has been running at LPHS since 1990, offers students the opportunity to learn Arabic, a rich and diverse language that has been in existence for thousands of years, while exploring cultural aspects of the SWANA region. Dr. Luque is dedicated to his students and offers them diverse learning experiences like attending and participating in the Model Arabic League conference to gain leadership and critical thinking skills.

It was extremely disappointing to hear that this program may be taken away from the LPHS community. Concerned parents, teachers and community members have formed a committee to



bring attention to this serious matter. We have a petition circulating on change.org that currently has 1,392 signatures in support of maintaining the program.

It is also concerning that there are currently six elementary "feeder schools" that teach Arabic and currently LPHS is one of only three high schools that students take Arabic at.

Even more important is that the option was not even provided to incoming freshman to make the choice to study Arabic at LPHS. It's almost like there is some desire to just diminish the program like it never even existed.

I urge you to speak up in support of the future of the Arabic program at LPHS. Now is the time to uplift and protect the honor and integrity that the Arabic program has withheld for nearly forty years. The Chicagoland community with its diverse and vibrant mix of cultures and traditions cannot afford to miss out on this opportunity for its youth.

25 I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

26 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to



selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

The teachers at my school have directly influenced my life and helped me. Removing over 5 in the coming year could have negative impacts, as many students may not be able to be impacted by those teachers in positive ways. More students in a classroom would also reduced the availability of one on one learning with the teacher if a student has a question or needs help.

27 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

I would not be here if not for some teachers who fought for me, when I couldn't fight for myself. It pains me to have to write to argue for something so blatantly obvious. We need our teachers. There are some teachers here who helped me rebuild myself when I fell down. Whether it be through the arts in band or just simply leaving me a happy birthday note on my desk, those small moments have helped me when I struggled through the day. School is tough, but there are teachers who remind us that it is a privilege to be here. I say this with my heart, I would not be here if there were not teachers to guide me and to help me when I needed help. We cannot just deny these facts that teachers are key leaders who are needed in the community, and we cannot cut them out as if they are not.

Thank you.

28 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,



I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Especially one that is heavy surrounded by teachers in the diverse learners department losing any one of them is taking away from every IEP student that needs the extra support. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

29 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. It is ridiculous to create a system where having the highest diversity rate is correlated to reduced fundings, especially as it promotes schools decreasing their diversity to increase the money they receive. Even though our score has dropped, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

Thank you.

30 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,



I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

As a Whitney Young student, I am so fortunate to have access to an incredible education that so many people don't get the chance to get. In order to make this world a better place, there need to be more educated youth. We have seen the firsthand effects of budget cuts with the lack of toilet paper in the bathrooms or the lagging internet. Having enough teachers at a school is bare minimum. Please consider this.

Thank you.

31 Do not make significant budget cuts. As students of one of the largest public schools in Chicago, we are already struggling. Teachers have had to fight for the basic pay that they have now, which is not enough for how much they do. One of the most important parts of Whitney Young is the community, so by laying off teachers, the state would be destroying that community. My past three years in this school have been defined by my teachers, all of which are talented and absolutely crucial for CPS. One proposed solution is reaching out to the capital, Springfield, for support. Public schools typically support marginalized communities in a way that private schools do not, and gives everyone a chance for education. If significant budget cuts were to happen, many would be out of a job, leading to even more loss overall. As a community, we strive for the support of everyone, especially those who can not afford private education. CPS is so so important for this, and we need to continue offering a high standard of education, without compromising the personal lives of our educators.

32 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts that would deeply affect student life here. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce



our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions that we cannot afford. We urge the district to reconsider how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible. As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

Thank you.

33 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year! Our school budget simply cannot take these losses. We can already barely afford soap and paper towels regularly. We plead that the district would reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we that we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible and what little resources we already have.

As students, we will also directly feel the impact of these cuts! Losing our teachers will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will harm our academics and our overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to please reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions that our school deeply relies on.

34 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

Every teacher has their own knowledge ,experience, and wisdom such as how my teachers have taught me how to budget properly, how to be active within my community, how to better understand how every action has an impact on the world and how each action can effect others. I believe to cut funding and to remove teachers of a job would negatively impact the learning environment and would greatly dilute the quality of education within Chicago, furthermore, a decrease in budget makes remaining teachers have to increase the burden on themselves with increased class sizes and



	would also lessen the choices of the students which would further restrict their freedom in choices of courses. Which is why as students we respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.
35	As a member of the Whitney Young High School community, I urge the members of the school board to take action against staffing and budget cuts that directly impact our youth. Eliminating educators who uplift and support our students and help create better outcomes for our youth is not the answer. Larger class sizes, fewer course offerings, and higher stress on remaining educators does not serve the best interest of the Whitney Young community, nor the community at large. Education is the key to the future. I urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the essential educators who make our students thriving community possible. Please reconsider.
36	Dear members of the board, I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young Magnet High School and the wonderful faculty we have here. Due to shifts in funding, our school is projected to lose several teachers across the next year. Whitney has created such a wonderful atmosphere in so many ways and a large part of that is due to all the great teachers we have here. I personally have experienced the love and expertise of the faculty shares across the board. However, that atmosphere is a delicate balance. While we lose major funding due to lowered opportunity index scores, our actual needs don't change. This strike on our school's ability to care for and nurture the many brilliant minds that pass through our doors will uproot that talent and remove the fertilizer needed to flourish. We implore you to reconsider the funding metrics, especially in regard to selective-enrollment schools. Thank you.
37	I believe the CPS should not incorporate budget cuts because it will have a significant impact on our education. As a student of a considerably large public high school, I believe that everyone deserves education. This budget cuts will significantly impact our educators which is very important because as students we need them. Public high schools help support marginalized groups in receiving access to education. Education is a very important keystone in adolescents lives and can have a significant impact on the future of our youth.
38	I strongly oppose any budget cuts to arts and humanities programs for CPS schools for the 2026-27 school year. These programs are integral to a well-rounded education and benefit students immeasurably.
39	"As a member of the Whitney Young High School community, I urge the members of the school board to take action against staffing and budget cuts that directly impact our youth. Eliminating educators who uplift and support our students and help create better outcomes for our youth is not the answer. Larger class sizes, fewer course offerings, and higher stress on remaining educators does not serve the best interest of the Whitney Young community, nor the community at large. Education is the key to the future. I urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the essential educators who make our students thriving community possible. Please reconsider"
40	Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,



I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

41 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,
I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

Without these amazing teachers, I personally wouldn't be able to have the most wonderful experience within Whitney Young that I possibly can, and it disheartens me to see that we will lose so many educators that have gone above and beyond to not only teach, but to create a welcoming environment within our schools. With more teachers gone, it will be harder to accommodate every child's needs which can affect everyone academically. The teachers here at Whitney Young are exemplary educators, and they each strive to challenge their students academically but also support them whenever they can which is why I love the school so much. I always feel like I'm challenged, but I'm always encouraged to persevere and I think I wouldn't have the drive that I do to perform good in school if I didn't have these teachers.



42	Budget cuts during this time would be especially dangerous, in the wake of the miseducation caused by the pandemic, we cannot afford to risk the education of children currently enrolled in CPS. It is imperative that funding will not reduced.
43	<p>Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,</p> <p>I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.</p> <p>As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Every teacher in this school plays a large part in the overall community. With larger classes and less course options, which are part of what makes Whitney Young so great, we feel the quality of our education will be greatly diminished. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
44	Mr. Hanafee should no longer be employed. Mrs. Floreani does her job bad. Mr. Christensen is mean and unhelpful. Mrs. Sobalvarro is the worst teacher I have had so far, her classroom is uninviting, she's
45	May 27, 2026



	<p>not nice, please cut her from the faculty because she ruins lives. Yes, lives PLURAL. Please save the children and their mental health from these people.</p>
	<p>To the Chicago Board of Education and CPS Office of Early Childhood, I am a current Talcott parent of a child in Kindergarten, writing to urgently ask CPS to reconsider the proposed closure of one of Talcott Fine Arts & Museum Academy's Pre-K classrooms. I am deeply concerned that this closure appears tied to Talcott's commitment to maintaining a multilingual learning environment rather than converting the classroom into a monolingual English-only program. At a time when Chicago should be investing in and protecting multilingual education, this decision sends the wrong message to families and communities who value language diversity, inclusion, and equitable access to high-quality early childhood education. Talcott's Pre-K program is highly sought after because of its unique strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A warm, community-centered environment • Strong early childhood education rooted in creativity and care • Meaningful multilingual learning opportunities • Diverse classrooms that reflect the reality and richness of Chicago families <p>Research consistently shows that multilingual education benefits young learners academically, socially, and cognitively. These programs help children develop stronger communication skills, cultural awareness, empathy, and long-term academic success. As a family who specifically chose Talcott because of its multilingual and community-focused approach, I strongly believe reducing access to this program would negatively impact both current and future students. This is not the time to reduce multilingual opportunities in CPS schools. It is a time to protect and expand them. I respectfully urge CPS and the Board of Education to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconsider the closure of the Talcott Pre-K classroom • Preserve multilingual early childhood education at Talcott • Listen to the voices of Talcott families and the broader community • Support continued investment in equitable and inclusive public education <p>Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to Chicago students and families. Sincerely, TALCOTT PARENT</p>
46	<p>Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,</p> <p>I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our</p>



students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

Thank you.

47 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

48 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.



	<p>As a student involved in the arts, the programs I'm involved in will take a direct hit. Our theater program will be limited as our teachers will be forced to take on more classes in addition to drama-based classes. This will make the production of two amazing shows per year impossibly hard. We have worked through budget cuts before, but these limits will significantly affect us and we may only be able to put out one production next year. While this may seem menial in the larger image, the slow destruction of arts is the slow descent of humanity in learners. If you care at all for the arts programs at schools like ours, please protect teaching positions and defend against these budget cuts.</p> <p>As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
49	<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>This matter is extremely concerning. We are failing and getting left behind in education in many ways. I have a hard time understanding how eliminating teachers is going to improve this. Keeping a budget is important, but eliminating positions that educate and support our children is completely unacceptable. We can lose extremely qualified educators and may never get them back! These decisions will have major negative impacts on the students and public schools as a whole. Why would a teacher risk losing their career and financial stability at no fault of their own.</p>
50	<p>As a member of the Whitney Young High School community, I urge the members of the school board to take action against staffing and budget cuts that directly impact our youth. Eliminating educators who uplift and support our students and help create better outcomes for our youth is not the answer. Larger class sizes, fewer course offerings, and higher stress on remaining educators does not serve the best interest of the Whitney Young community, nor the community at large. Education is the key to the future. I urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the essential educators who make our students thriving community possible. Please reconsider</p>
51	<p>Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,</p> <p>I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School regarding the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's change in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose more than five teachers next year. At the same time, our Opportunity Index score dropped from 15 to 12, reducing district funding and forcing additional staff cuts.</p> <p>These funding changes do not reflect our students' actual needs. As our school has improved in areas such as diversity and stability, we have paradoxically lost funding. We urge the district to reevaluate how these formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools.</p>



	<p>Students will directly feel the impact through larger class sizes, fewer course offerings, and a weakened learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the educators our school depends on.</p>
52	<p>Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,</p> <p>I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.</p> <p>As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. We believe our community at school is built by our diversity in fields, and education, leading to many of us learning from each other. That is due to the amount of teachers that teach these many classes. Teachers are also important to our community because they serve as role models and mentors. Students get to build real relationships with our teachers and that leads to growth in character, and education, and life. Having teachers means more opportunity for diverse learning and more fields and backgrounds for our diverse student population to relate. That is why we believe that when teachers leave, a piece of our schools identity and a great learning environment goes away. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on</p>
53	<p>As a member of the Whitney Young High School community, I urge the members of the school board to take action against staffing and budget cuts that directly impact our youth. Eliminating educators who uplift and support our students and help create better outcomes for our youth is not the answer. Larger class sizes, fewer course offerings, and higher stress on remaining educators does not serve the best interest of the Whitney Young community, nor the community at large. Education is the key to the future. I urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools, so we do not lose the essential educators who make our students thriving community possible. Please reconsider.</p>
54	<p>Hello, I am a parent of a Whitney M. Young student. After being notified of the budget cuts for the school, I feel deeply disappointed in the decision to cut back on classes and teachers. I believe that every child deserves a wonderful teacher in their classes, and the beauty of Whitney M. Young is the fact that it is truly, a possibility to have such a thing. Cutting back on teachers and classes hurts students indefinitely. Furthermore, I've been specifically notified of the removal of many Diverse learner staff and students, and I am repulsed that such an idea would exist. Removing access to students who need it most should be completely out of the question, as they also deserve a great</p>



education. WY is one of the best schools for diverse learners, so to have that change would be asinine. For being one of the top schools in the nation, it appears that CPS does not consider how many lives these budget cuts would impact, from students to their families. Since classes have already been finalized for the next school, I'm afflicted as to how my payment of classes will be handled. I'm not sure if the classes my child has chosen will even be here next year, so to have payment be send to the school (and at least some cut to CPS) despite that fact that classes are being cut is absurd. In the event that a schedule is changed, this was never implied until almost summer break, which is horrible communication, and as a parent, I don't feel the need to pay for school fees for classes both me and my child do not want. I believe the voice of the people is powerful, and I hope that CPS will see the error in their ways, as education is one of, if not, the most important thing in the world. As my child is a junior, I'm sure colleges will be dismayed to see certain extracurriculars or electives were not continued for all four years of high school. I am counting on the jurisdiction of CPS for my child, and others throughout CPS. Thank you.

55 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible. I would not be in the place I am today without the educators at my school, and the support they provide me. The amount of time and effort they put into their classes and extracurricular opportunities for students is what makes this school special. The loss of these teachers would greatly affect their ability to continue to support our student needs to be able to thrive. These teachers leave personal impacts on us daily that leave lasting impacts on our futures.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on."

Thank you.

56 I just received an offer from CPS to serve as a consulting educator, meaning that to the district my ratings are excellent enough that I am qualified to coach tenured teachers placed on remediation plans.

Ironically, my school is losing 8 positions next year and I currently live in fear of losing my job.



Presently, I am not sleeping and do not have much of an appetite, and it's been like this for a week. My partner quit her job recently to move here to be with me. I don't really know what we're going to do.

I find the district's policy of not permitting notification of at risk teachers until July utterly reprehensible and demeaning.

I'm not waiting. I am already applying to different jobs. I love Chicago and I love where I work, what I do. It's all I ever think about. My desk is covered with thank you cards from graduating seniors. But I don't deserve this. No one deserves this.

57 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Each teacher provides students with a new opportunity to learn new material. Teachers for me has acted as trusted adults with each carrying their significance, teaching me something new beyond academics. Each teacher has a specific skill that I have learned from the way they treat students that cannot be replicated by other staff members who don't share the same experience of managing students. Teachers are already overwhelmed with high number of classes with some crying from the workload of students and having another staff would be immensely helpful in reducing classes to allow for more break time and also to manage their emotions, reorganize themselves to show up as a better role model for students, and reduce how they're being overworked. Thank you for taking the time to read this and preferably increase the amount of teachers rather than decrease if the amount of teachers needs to be changed.

58 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall



learning environment. For me personally, all the teachers in my school community have been essential for supporting me emotionally throughout the challenge (and sometimes joy) that is high school. I don't think I could have made it to where I am with any fewer of them. Teacher cuts will put myself and my fellow students at a massive disadvantage compared to how we are now. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

59 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As students, we will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. Budget cuts are also impacting our extracurriculars. Remaining teachers will become more responsible for picking up the slack of the colleagues they have lost, and will, therefore, have less time to dedicate to the activities they are passionate about and our students are passionate about. This will weaken the very thing Whitney Young prides itself on, our ability to provide a comfortable space to the multitude of diverse students who work to get into this school. Just as every single student is vital to the Whitney Young community, every single staff member is as well. We cannot afford to lose these amazing teachers. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on.

Thank you.

60 Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School (WYHS) to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, my school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. My local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, WYHS' Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, my school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are



	<p>applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.</p> <p>My teachers are some of the most incredible people I've met. Since elementary school, math has challenged me beyond frustration. The math teachers I've had during my time at WYHS have spent their office hours patiently answering my questions, helping me to gain confidence in my math skills. As a result, I have enrolled to take AP Calculus next year, a class my younger self never could've envisioned myself in. I can say with certainty that this would not be the case if it weren't for my teachers who saw past my failures and lovingly helped me.</p> <p>This has been the case for every teacher I've had at WYHS. In an ever-increasingly digital age, my English teachers have worked against this flow to instill a love of reading in their students. This year in my AP Lang class, my teacher assigned my class to excerpts of a wide variety of books. I learned about the dangers of blind obedience through Eichmann in Jerusalem, the dangers of depression from John Berryman's "Dream Songs" and critically thought about the Elon Musk/Open AI trial from a New York Times piece. My curiosity has extended beyond the classroom, and I've borrowed many of these and other teacher-recommended books from the library, and it has helped me become a more well-rounded individual. These are topics that I could never have discovered on my own.</p> <p>As a student, I will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will result in larger class sizes and fewer course offerings. Students like me will have no opportunity to explore our interests in music, English and world language. We will be unable to build relationships with trustworthy adults who offer us invaluable advice and encouragement during an unsteady and difficult chapter of our lives.</p> <p>With these things in mind, I respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions that my school relies on. Thank you!</p>
61	<p>I know the budget is difficult. But cutting SECAs is terrible. Children who receive special education services are the most vulnerable in our society and they should be protected. Part of the protection means that they have access to the best education that can make them as independent as possible.</p>
62	<p>"As a member of the Whitney Young High School community, I urge the members of the school board to take action against staffing and budget cuts that directly impact our youth. Eliminating educators who uplift and support our students and help create better outcomes for our youth is not the answer. Larger class sizes, fewer course offerings, and higher stress on remaining educators does not serve the best interest of the Whitney Young community, nor the community at large. Education is the key to the future. I urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the essential educators who make our students thriving community possible. Please reconsider"</p>
63	<p>The Agendas for these meetings are not readily available. They should be posted in the page where you can watch live or on the calendar link. Please make sure the agendas are easy to find for the general public</p>
64	<p>5/28/2026</p>



To the Chicago Board of Education and CPS Office of Early Childhood,
My name is Brandon Scarbeary, and I am a current Talcott parent of a child in 2nd grade, writing to urgently ask CPS to reconsider the proposed closure of one of Talcott Fine Arts & Museum Academy's Pre-K classrooms.

I am deeply concerned that this closure appears tied to Talcott's commitment to maintaining a multilingual learning environment rather than converting the classroom into a monolingual English-only program.

At a time when Chicago should be investing in and protecting multilingual education, this decision sends the wrong message to families and communities who value language diversity, inclusion, and equitable access to high-quality early childhood education.

Talcott's Pre-K program is highly sought after because of its unique strengths:

- A warm, community-centered environment
- Strong early childhood education rooted in creativity and care
- Meaningful multilingual learning opportunities
- Diverse classrooms that reflect the reality and richness of Chicago families

Research consistently shows that multilingual education benefits young learners academically, socially, and cognitively. These programs help children develop stronger communication skills, cultural awareness, empathy, and long-term academic success.

As a family who specifically chose Talcott because of its multilingual and community-focused approach, I strongly believe reducing access to this program would negatively impact both current and future students.

This is not the time to reduce multilingual opportunities in CPS schools. It is a time to protect and expand them.

I respectfully urge CPS and the Board of Education to:

- Reconsider the closure of the Talcott Pre-K classroom
- Preserve multilingual early childhood education at Talcott
- Listen to the voices of Talcott families and the broader community
- Support continued investment in equitable and inclusive public education

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to Chicago students and families.

Sincerely,

Brandon Scarbeary

TALCOTT PARENT

65 At this point, I am not sure what to write that you haven't already heard. Haugan parent and teacher representatives have spoken and submitted comments for nearly every school board meeting during this school year. We have mobilized community advocates in our neighborhood to amplify our voices. We are regularly speaking with our elected officials about our concerns. Frankly, none of us are thrilled to spend our free time on this unglamorous hobby.

But we are doing it anyway because you, our Board of Education, have failed us. And you continue to fail us with every month that passes without any action. Despite hearing from us repeatedly, only one of you has taken the time to actually visit Haugan. I'm deeply disappointed in the disrespect



shown to the Haugan community by the silence of CPS and this school board. The apathy is astounding.

At this point you have to realize that we are not going to be quiet and go away. So what are you waiting for? For the political pressure to become unbearable? For the school to be so overcrowded that neighborhood parents increasingly rely on selective enrollment to send their children elsewhere? For ICE raids to drive enough Latino families out of the attendance district that enrollment declines? However this plays out, you must realize that the optics aren't great.

Rather than feed this firestorm of negative publicity with your silence and inaction, wouldn't it be easier and more politically expedient to make a plan and meet with a delegation from Haugan to discuss it? Better yet, schedule a meeting with delegates from Haugan to come up with a plan together. And even better still, create a task force with delegates from all Albany Park schools to formulate a long-term plan for addressing the needs of this community.

66 "Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am writing on behalf of Whitney Young High School to urgently address the upcoming staffing and budget cuts. Due to the district's shift in the teacher-to-student ratio from 21:1 to 22:1, our school is projected to lose over 5 teachers this upcoming academic year. Our local school budget simply cannot absorb these losses. Furthermore, our Opportunity Index score recently dropped from 15 to 12 out of 55, which will reduce our funding from the district and will force even more staff reductions. Since the Opportunity Index score is calculated based on metrics such as diversity and the amount of turnover, our school has lost points as we have improved in these aspects. As our score drops, our students' needs do not. We urge the district to reevaluate how these funding formulas are applied to selective-enrollment magnet schools so we do not lose the educators who make our thriving community possible.

As a student, I will directly feel the impact of these cuts. Losing these educators will lead to larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, which will be deeply detrimental to our academics and overall learning environment. We respectfully ask the Board to reconsider these funding metrics and protect the teaching positions our school relies on."

Thank you.

67 The board that were appointed by the mayor, should be ashamed of themselves. You have no clue what you are doing and showed in this meeting. You all will be replaced in November. Zaccor you lost the election and just because you're a CTU puppet, Johnson appointed you. You will be replaced in November.



****ATTACHMENTS****

Table of Contents

Public Comments

1. Tamara Fouche
2. Maggie Cullerton Hooper
3. Cristina Codina
4. Katherine Best
5. Emily Cortina
6. Dr. Angel Alvarez

Dear CPS CEO Macquiline King, members of the Chicago Board of Education, and Chicago Public Schools Leadership:

Attached is a community letter affirming North River Elementary as an Albany Park School and demanding relief from overcrowding for Haugan Elementary students.

We would also like to note that budget cuts are compounding the issues at Haugan, making an already untenable situation even worse.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamara Fouche
Community Member, Albany Park
33rd Ward Working Families
Unite for Our Schools

Albany Park Schools Community Letter to CPS | Carta de la comunidad escolar de Albany Park a las CPS

Dear CPS CEO Macquiline King, members of the Chicago Board of Education, and Chicago Public Schools Leadership:

We are members of the Albany Park community who are deeply committed to and engaged with our CPS schools. We have come together to support the best interests of all the children learning in our community and, specifically, to demand that students at Haugan Elementary (one of our neighborhood schools) and North River Elementary (a city-wide, lottery-based school), are treated with the dignity they deserve and have access to a learning space that encourages students and enables them to thrive.

For years, both Haugan Elementary and North River Elementary have faced ongoing instability and frequent changes in direction from the CPS central office that have negatively impacted students' sense of security, ability to learn, and ignored the needs and concerns of our community.

We are requesting that CPS take action using the broad capacity management systems and internal, unilateral authority to immediately relieve overcrowding at Haugan Elementary School by granting temporary, limited use of the currently vacant 3rd floor of the building at 3729 W Leland Avenue for SY 2026-27 (next year). We strongly support Haugan Elementary's pursuit of a permanent co-location to the now vacant 3rd floor of the building at 3729 W Leland Avenue beginning SY 2027-28, to be re-submitted through the formal co-location application process in the fall of SY 2026-27. Because of repeated threats by the district to deny Haugan's current programs, we want to emphasize that:

- Haugan's PreK is a part of their school, and strong PreK programs are essential to early education and childhood development.
- We also request that CPS grant Haugan the Dual Language designation, which they have been building towards for years.

Haugan Elementary, located at 4540 North Hamlin Avenue is currently overcrowded, with 1,074 students, and continues to grow. The current conditions at Haugan are egregious and unacceptable, with art and supplemental reading programming on carts, students meeting with social workers & counselors in hallways or under stairwells, and the school being forced to return STEM kits because storage closets are the only available space to accommodate learning services and supports for students with disabilities - to name a few. Requests from community have been ignored, CPS has provided inaccurate and conflicting information, and leadership has continued a decades long pattern of apathy and delay - actively perpetuating deep inequities in our kids' ability to access an equitable, quality public education.

North River Elementary School is located one block away on the 1st and 2nd floors of the building at 3729 W Leland Avenue. Prior to being located on Leland Avenue, North River was housed above a local church, which made learning unfairly difficult. We are happy that, after years of advocacy and being ignored by the CPS central office, North River has finally found a permanent home in Albany Park.

North River is also an important Albany Park CPS school and valuable member of our community. **We fully support and will protect North River's home, remaining on the 1st & 2nd floors of the building at 3729 W Leland.** Furthermore, we would like to continue the conversation with North River to determine how the community and local government officials can support their goals to continue to thrive as a school through a neighborhood subcommittee with participation from community stakeholders.

Albany Park Schools Community Letter to CPS | Carta de la comunidad escolar de Albany Park a las CPS

CPS central office continues to misinform our community and ignore the concerns and the needs of Albany Park schools. They have actively worked to pit these two schools against one-another to avoid their obligations to our children for two decades. We refuse to allow this practice to divide us.

We urge the members of the Chicago Board of Education and the newly confirmed, permanent CPS CEO, Macquiline King, to take action immediately - through any emergency or temporary authority available - by granting Haugan Elementary's request to utilize the now vacant third floor of the building at 3729 W Leland for the upcoming 2026-27 school year to relieve their overcrowding crisis.

—

Estimada Directora Ejecutiva de CPS, Macquiline King; miembros de la Junta de Educación de Chicago; y equipo directivo de las Escuelas Públicas de Chicago:

Somos miembros de la comunidad de Albany Park, profundamente comprometidos e involucrados con nuestras escuelas de CPS. Nos hemos unido para velar por los mejores intereses de todos los niños que reciben educación en nuestra comunidad y, específicamente, para exigir que los estudiantes de la Escuela Primaria Haugan (una de las escuelas de nuestro vecindario) y de la Escuela Primaria North River (una escuela de ámbito municipal con sistema de admisión por sorteo) sean tratados con la dignidad que merecen y tengan acceso a un entorno de aprendizaje que los estimule y les permita prosperar.

Durante años, tanto la Escuela Primaria Haugan como la Escuela Primaria North River han enfrentado una inestabilidad constante y frecuentes cambios de rumbo provenientes de la oficina central de CPS; situaciones que han afectado negativamente el sentido de seguridad y la capacidad de aprendizaje de los estudiantes, y que han ignorado las necesidades y preocupaciones de nuestra comunidad.

Solicitamos que las CPS tomen medidas, haciendo uso de sus amplios sistemas de gestión de capacidad y de su autoridad interna y unilateral, para aliviar de inmediato el hacinamiento en la Escuela Primaria Haugan, otorgando el uso temporal y limitado del tercer piso —actualmente desocupado— del edificio situado en el 3729 W Leland Avenue para el año escolar 2026-27 (el próximo año). Apoyamos firmemente la gestión de la Escuela Primaria Haugan para lograr una co-ubicación permanente en el tercer piso —ahora desocupado— del edificio en el 3729 W Leland Avenue, a partir del año escolar 2027-28; dicha solicitud se volverá a presentar a través del proceso formal de solicitud de co-ubicación en el otoño del año escolar 2026-27. Debido a las reiteradas amenazas por parte del distrito de suprimir los programas actuales de Haugan, deseamos enfatizar lo siguiente:

- El programa de PreK de Haugan forma parte de su escuela, y los programas sólidos de educación preescolar son fundamentales para la educación temprana y el desarrollo infantil.
- Asimismo, solicitamos que las CPS otorguen a Haugan la designación de Programa de Lenguaje Dual, objetivo para el cual han estado trabajando durante años.

La Escuela Primaria Haugan, ubicada en el 4540 de North Hamlin Avenue, se encuentra actualmente superpoblada, con 1.074 estudiantes, y sigue creciendo. Las condiciones actuales en Haugan son flagrantes e inaceptables: los programas de arte y lectura complementaria se imparten desde carritos móviles; los estudiantes se reúnen con trabajadores sociales y consejeros en los pasillos o bajo las escaleras; y la escuela se ha visto obligada a devolver los kits STEM debido a que los armarios de almacenamiento son el único espacio disponible para albergar los servicios de aprendizaje y apoyo para

Albany Park Schools Community Letter to CPS | Carta de la comunidad escolar de Albany Park a las CPS

estudiantes con discapacidades, por nombrar solo algunos ejemplos. Las solicitudes de la comunidad han sido ignoradas; las CPS (Escuelas Públicas de Chicago) han proporcionado información inexacta y contradictoria; y la dirección ha mantenido un patrón de apatía y dilación que se extiende por décadas, perpetuando activamente profundas inequidades en la capacidad de nuestros hijos para acceder a una educación pública equitativa y de calidad.

La Escuela Primaria North River está situada a una cuadra de distancia, ocupando el primer y segundo piso del edificio ubicado en el 3729 W Leland Avenue. Antes de establecerse en Leland Avenue, North River funcionaba en las plantas superiores de una iglesia local, lo cual dificultaba injustamente el proceso de aprendizaje. Nos complace saber que, tras años de defensa y de ser ignorada por la oficina central de las CPS, North River ha encontrado finalmente un hogar permanente en Albany Park.

North River es también una importante escuela de las CPS en Albany Park y un miembro valioso de nuestra comunidad. **Apoyamos plenamente y protegeremos el hogar de North River, garantizando su permanencia en el primer y segundo piso del edificio situado en el 3729 W Leland.** Además, nos gustaría continuar el diálogo con North River para determinar de qué manera la comunidad y los funcionarios del gobierno local pueden respaldar sus objetivos de seguir prosperando como institución educativa, a través de un subcomité vecinal que cuente con la participación de las partes interesadas de la comunidad.

La oficina central de las CPS continúa desinformando a nuestra comunidad e ignorando las inquietudes y necesidades de las escuelas de Albany Park. Durante dos décadas, han trabajado activamente para enfrentar a estas dos escuelas entre sí, con el fin de eludir las obligaciones que tienen para con nuestros hijos. Nos negamos a permitir que esta práctica nos divida.

Instamos a los miembros de la Junta de Educación de Chicago y a la recién confirmada Directora Ejecutiva permanente de las CPS, Macquiline King, a tomar medidas de inmediato —haciendo uso de cualquier autoridad de emergencia o temporal que tengan a su disposición—, concediendo la solicitud de la Escuela Primaria Haugan para utilizar el tercer piso del edificio situado en el 3729 W Leland —actualmente desocupado— durante el próximo año escolar 2026-27, con el fin de aliviar su crisis de superpoblación.

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

33rd Ward Working Families
Political & Community Organization

Ald. Rossana Rodriguez Sanchez
Aldersperson 33rd Ward

Maggie Cullerton Hooper
Albany Park Resident, Hibbard Parent, LSC Member

Tamara Fouche
Community member, 33rd Ward Working Families Member

Delaney Bonacquisti
Roosevelt High School LSC Community Representative

Meg White
Neighbor

Tiffany Harvey
Haugan parent/ LSC member, Albany Park resident

Robert L Stack
Albany Park Community member

Christina Pintado
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Billy Rivi
Neighbor

Polly Yukevich, 33rd Ward Working Families
Neighbor

Gabrielle Bienasz
Neighbor

Elizabeth Stone Albany Park community member
Neighbor

Monica Malate
Neighborhood School!

Ana Mercado, Public School Strong
Neighbor and voter within the school boundaries

Susan Freund
Haugan parent

Simon Crow
Neighbor

Jacob Dohm
Haugen Parent/Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Mike Chandler
Neighbor

Tara Donnelly
Community Member

Elizabeth A Rochford
District Councilor and community member

Julia Marselle
Neighbor

MacKenzie Bearley
Neighbor

Esther Pomranky
Haugan LSC Parent Representative

Kenneth Barrios
33rd Ward Working Families, Neighbor

Geri Newfry
Neighbor

Gabriela Naveda
Community resident

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Heather Fitch
Volta Volunteer

Michelle O'Neill
Volta neighbor

Mirella Gómez peña
Miembro de la comunidad

Hannah Bonifacius
Haugan Parent

Mary Clark
Haugan parent

Betsy Johnston, Gather Together
Community Member

Abigail Alvarez
Neighbor

Brooke Sinnen
Neighbor

Alison True
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Catherine Longkumer
Neighbor

Mackenzie Modrovsky
Neighbor

Cole Bonifacius
Haugen Parent

Jane Murtaugh
Albany Park community member

Heather Robarge
Community member and Haugan teacher

Janet Hotch
concerned Chicago resident

Lillian Carter
Neighbor

Raven
Haugan Parent

Community member and Henry parent
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Hans Devereaux
Neighbor

Linda Fleener
Neighbor and 2022-2024 LSC Community Representative for Roosevelt High School

Christine Tran
Neighbor

Madeline Brigell
Community member

Molly Simpson
Neighbor

Halley Gardner
Albany Park Resident

Elora Karim
Neighbor living between Haugan and North River

Peg Anderson / Self
Neighbor

Elizabeth Pearson, Albany Park Community Member
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Stephen Simpson
Neighbor

Andrea Macias
Haugan and North River community member

Jennie Thai
Neighbor

Lisa Lux
Hibbard LSC member, Hibbard parent, Albany Park resident

Angela Davis
Hibbard Teacher/LSC teacher Rep.

Colleen Kehoe
neighbor & Edison RGC Parent

Emily Tamblyn
Albany Park resident, Hibbard LSC Community member

Emily Kuhn
Neighbor

Peggy Cushing
Neighbor and parent and work at local clinic Tapestry 360

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Phil Robarge Tabor Church
Haugan LSC Community Rep

Breana Ferguson
Neighbor

Kelly Connolly
Albany Park neighbor

Colin Theis
Community member

Maegan Rodovich
Haugan Elementary Parent & Albany Park resident

Mary Rodovich
Haugan student caregiver

Rachael Goins
Neighbor

Lauren Wozniak
Neighbor

Gerald Muñoz
Haugan Parent and community member

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Jennifer Nguyen
Albany Park Resident, neighbor, and former student of Volta

David Amato
Neighbor

Liz Bynum Sorrell
Neighbor

María Callan
Neighbor

James Rodovich
Haugan parent

Claire Oliver
Neighbor

C Coleman
Neighbor

Allie Peluso
Neighbor in 60625

Daniel Hudson
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Brandon Blessman - Pastor at Missio Dei Albany Park
Pastor

Christine Dussault
Neighbor

Keith Friedlander
Neighbor

Drew Orosz
Neighbor

Whitney Renfro
Neighbor and community member

Hannah Chandler
neighbor

peter dorman - parks for all
community member

Pastor Tomas Sanabria, M.Div, Iglesia del Pacto Evangelico de Albany Park
Senior Pastor

Sarah Rahman
LSC Member, Parent, Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Ana Suarez
Haugans Teacher

Marni Willenson
Haugan LSC Member, community resident

Jessica Shrewsbury
Hibbard Parent

Max Epps
Hibbard Parent/community member

Samantha Estacion
Future Haugan parent

Brigette Atcheson-Demke
Neighbor and future Haugan parent

Meradey Tim
Neighbor

Deanne Puloka
Hibbard LSC parent representative

Megan Backes
Volta Community Member and CPS Parent

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Cassandra Kaczocho
Parent, Raise Your Hand President

Merita Bushi
Roosevelt LSC

Vanessa Hernández
Neighbor

Christine Tvedt
Neighbor

Jeannette Wider
Neighbor with children who will attend Haugan

Jessica Wood
Haugan parent

Anabelle Obregon Fajardo
Parent of future Haugan student /neighbor/ currently parent of Hibbard student

María Boyzo
Patente Hibbard

Joanna Nieves Bosque
Neighborhood parent

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Alison Shah
Neighbor

Alicia Gabriel
Haugan Parent

Courtney Phelan
Albany Park resident

Bridget Murphy
Volta Parent and incoming LSC member

Georgette Foss
Neighbor

Susana Baca
Neighbor

Lindsey Fox
former Volta Parent

Gabriela Naveda
Neighbor

Jennifer Nguyen
Haugan volunteer and Albany Park resident

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Liz Krause
Teacher

Katherine Aviles Lopez
Haugan parent

Madeline Talbott
Neighbor

Allison mckinnon
Neighbor

Sara Herman
Neighbor

Volta Neighbors
Neighbor

Sumie Song, Ph.D.
Neighbor

Michelle
Neighbor

Keith Kelleher
Volta Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Janet Hotch
Neighbor

Jeff Wyse
Volta Neighbors

Justin Valas
Haugan Parent, LSC member, and Neighbor

Lauren Kullman
Community Member

Anne Nolan - CPS
Teacher at Haugan

Laura Sáenz
CPS parent, neighbor and arts educator

Amanda Bevacqua
Neighbor

Tiffanie Tabrizi
Bateman Parent

Christian Fouche
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Jennifer Husbands
Community member and CPS parent

Kathleen Hayes
neighbor and CPS parent

Stephanie Meehan
Neighbor

Ryanne Laredo
Chappell parent

Carrie Lewis
Neighbor

Stefanie Epifanio
Resident and concerned community member

Maureen Ryan
Invested Neighborhood parent of 3 and 6 year old

Tess Golden
Neighbor, CPS parent

Mary Williams
Neighbor, CPS parent, CPS teacher

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Jim Vail/Second City Teachers
Neighbor/media

Sara Byerly
Neighbor

Mary Lee Aherne
Neighbor

Francine Greenberg-Reizen
Neighbor

Kaitlyn Zambrano
Community member & SECA

Sarah Herchuee
Community member

Mario Sánchez
Community

Kimberly Pecka
Haugan Parent

Annabelle wong
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Brayan zambrano
Community member

Amalia Harvey
Haugan student

Isabel Harvey
Albany Park Resident

Jessica Hess-Follander
Haugan neighbor

Raha Dempsey
Albany Park Parent

Mistie Johnson
Hibbard LSC member

Carrie Erk
Haugan Parent

Timm Erk
Haugan Parent

Julia Smalley
Haugan Grandparent

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Rachel Bennett
Neighbor

Rachel Cullerton
Neighboring community member

Claire Podulka
Albany Park resident and CPS parent

Alyssa May
Hibbard Parent, Neighbor

Lucia Mancini
Neighbor

Rachel Kasimer
Neighbor

Community Member
Parent

Megan Camacho
Neighbor

Elora Karim
Albany Park resident

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Alison DeRuiter-Blancaflor
Neighbor

Nat Steinsultz
Neighbor

Sydney Whittington
Albany Park Resident

Alison Shah
Neighbor

Anne Nolan
Teacher, Haugan Elementary

Personal
Neighbor

Alexandra Raj
Haugan Teacher

Lizet Gutierrez
Haugan Alumni/Neighbors

Vivi C.
Community Member (Social Work Student)

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Laney Alvarado
Albany Park Neighbor

Susan Kinst
Neighbor

Elizabeth Six
Neighbor

Ana Serrano
Neighbor

Melinda Martinez-Epperson The Play Lab
Advocate and Community Member

Franky Trupp
Neighbor

Allison DeBoer
CPS Parent and CPS teacher

Cindy Bermeo
Neighbor

Christina Gaytan
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Kim Smolen
Irving Park resident / neighbor

Lauren Wargaski
Neighbor

Emily Miguel
LSC Student Member

Volta
No

Vicky Chan
Neighbor

Kate Hemingway
Neighbor

Lindsey Fox
former Volta Parent

Ashley M
Former Haugan student

Self
Parent

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Laura E Saenz
Neighbor, Educator and CPS parent

Francine Greenberg-Reizen
Neighbor and Chicago Public Schools Teacher

Heather Hesiak
Haugan neighbor

Brenna Lemieux
CPS parent

Natalia Bautista
Neighbor

Anjali Bidani
vecino

Aleshia schiller
Neighbor

Monique Cuadros
CPS parent

Veena Villivalam
LSC Member (at a different school)

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Erykah Nava
CPS Parent, Lloyd LSC Member, and 31st Ward Constituent

Tara Karmin
Neighbor

Silvie Fankhauser
Neighbor and CPS parent

Karla Menendez
Former Haugan Parent, parent of CPS student, Albany Park Community Member, CPS educator

Rene Fernandez
Vecino

Gina Pfeiffer
Former Haugan Student, Haugan Parent, current Albany Park community member

Liza Shoemaker
Neighbor / Haugan Parent

Rachel Jacobs
Parent of three Chicago Public Schools kids

Martha Fernandez
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Brittany Zwicker
Neighbor

Community member
Community member

Justine Kavanaugh
Neighbor

Natalie Barton
Community Parent

Meghan Huschen
Community Member, Cps teacher

Barry Cabrera
Parent

Geri Newfry
Community member

Lisa Barcy
Neighbor and CPS parent

Mahli Wray
Cps parent

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Amy Schmaranzer O'Neill
Gompers Park Parent; my mom-Haugan Alum ('68)

Tammy Pham
Haugan Parent

Eric Dadosky
Haugan Parent

Erin Feldman
Neighbor

Natasha L. Carlsen
Neighbour in Albany Park (33rd Ward/60625 resident)

CPS let ICE do their dirty work, and they're still at it.

Maggie Cullerton Hooper is a member of 33rd Working Families, a trained rapid responder with NWS Defense, and formerly served as a Deputy Commissioner at DCASE and the Chief Philanthropy & Partnerships Officer for the City of Chicago. She is a person with disabilities, a CPS parent of children with disabilities, an LSC member, and an advocate for families of children with disabilities.

Haugan Elementary is an Albany Park neighborhood school facing an overcrowding crisis. As I write this, children with disabilities are learning in storage closets. Kids seeking mental health support meet with school counselors in hallways, under stairs, and in bathrooms. Steps away, the third floor of a CPS building - formerly occupied by Aspira Charter School - sits vacant.

In a November 2025 memo to the CEO, the CPS Office of Portfolio Management did not recommend Haugan's request for co-location. The memo is plagued by its own contradictions and conflicts with the Chicago Public Schools strategy approved by the Board of Education. In a chilling aside, when assessing enrollment growth, it states, "recent actions from the federal government may impact future growth within the community, which has a high percentage of Latino and immigrant families."

Let me tell you what "federal activity" feels like in our community. On Friday, October 28th, I sat in my local ward office sorting through Halloween candy bags for the 800+ Albany Park children using walking school bus programs (community members and parents walk children to school because their caregivers are terrified to leave their homes, regardless of their legal status). We wanted every student to celebrate the holiday with some sense of normalcy amid the months-long campaign of state-sanctioned terror.

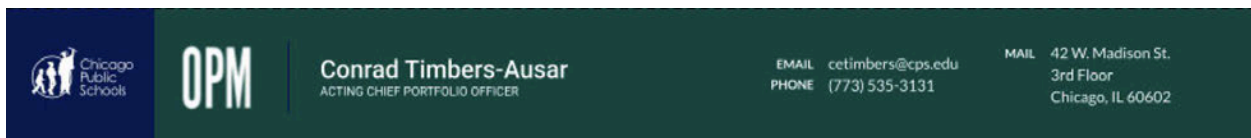
Moments later, the sharp shrill of nearby whistles sent everyone racing out the doors. Our Alderwoman, her staff, and regular citizens were immediately faced with the chaos and desperation of another confrontation with ICE as they ripped two young men from our community - pepper balls shot at us, chemical weapons deployed, all while being physically and verbally assaulted.

Less than a month later, CPS framed these experiences as a remedy. After all, they could avoid addressing the overcrowding crisis at one of our neighborhood schools if the "majority Latino and immigrant" population continued to be targeted; maybe it would mean fewer kids needing to get an education! Hooray for us, right?

We are not interested in overcrowding solutions that rely on families being taken, being too afraid to attend school, or being too afraid to live in our community. The same broad authority that allows CPS to secure modular classrooms (trailers) and lease spaces to address overcrowding, would allow them to provide relief by granting temporary, limited use of the space. Instead, the district has chosen to perpetuate the ongoing harm to its own students. CPS leadership has chosen to RELY on the violence of the federal government, to HOPE it will negatively impact the enrollment at a neighborhood school.

Our community continues to feel the devastation wrought by ICE on a daily basis - in the absence of our neighbors, in the faces of children whose parents are still being illegally detained, in the empty sidewalk where a grandmother sold our morning coffee. In the wake of our trauma, we have found strength and compassion and care.

Albany Park came together across languages, across schools, and we are the ones who will keep us safe. This Thursday, May 28, at the Chicago Board of Education meeting, we will submit a community letter, a Haugan parent letter, and offer public comment to demand that CPS use its authority to grant Haugan temporary, limited use of the vacant space for the upcoming school year (2026-27) while we pursue long-term solutions. We hope they will listen.



students. Additionally, recent actions from the federal government may impact future growth within the community, which has a high percentage of Latino and immigrant families.

Increases in enrollment for Haugan are additionally attributed to **an increase in students within the school's attendance boundary choosing to attend the school**, which rose to 59% of the attendance boundary population in SY25-26. The largest proportion of students zoned to Haugan who do not attend the school attend North River (9% of the Haugan boundary). **Notably, expanding Haugan's capacity could further increase within-boundary enrollment, causing additional constraints on both the Haugan and North River locations if the co-location were to move forward.**

In addition to the site visit, both T&L and OSD provided scheduling analyses to assist in determining if Haugan's need for additional space outside of its building. Their findings are as follows:

- Teaching and Learning determined that space was being used efficiently, but did not cite whether overcrowding was an issue. We recommend that the Bilingual/Monolingual classroom allocations be further reviewed by OMME/T&L to see if enrollment can be more balanced within individual grades.
- In summary, OSD found that Haugan **has taken a number of local scheduling approaches to meet student needs; however, these decisions have led to a greater number of smaller class sizes, which in turn increases the number of classrooms required compared with district scheduling guidance.** Moreover, their class size compliance review found that ten of forty-two K-8 classrooms are currently out of alignment with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) 70/30 rule. OSD's report recommends that the master schedule is revisited to ensure efficient use of instructional time and staffing and immediately addressing the issues with the ISBE 70/30 rule.

Albany Park Schools Community Letter to CPS | Carta de la comunidad escolar de Albany Park a las CPS

Dear CPS CEO Macquiline King, members of the Chicago Board of Education, and Chicago Public Schools Leadership:

We are members of the Albany Park community who are deeply committed to and engaged with our CPS schools. We have come together to support the best interests of all the children learning in our community and, specifically, to demand that students at Haugan Elementary (one of our neighborhood schools) and North River Elementary (a city-wide, lottery-based school), are treated with the dignity they deserve and have access to a learning space that encourages students and enables them to thrive.

For years, both Haugan Elementary and North River Elementary have faced ongoing instability and frequent changes in direction from the CPS central office that have negatively impacted students' sense of security, ability to learn, and ignored the needs and concerns of our community.

We are requesting that CPS take action using the broad capacity management systems and internal, unilateral authority to immediately relieve overcrowding at Haugan Elementary School by granting temporary, limited use of the currently vacant 3rd floor of the building at 3729 W Leland Avenue for SY 2026-27 (next year). We strongly support Haugan Elementary's pursuit of a permanent co-location to the now vacant 3rd floor of the building at 3729 W Leland Avenue beginning SY 2027-28, to be re-submitted through the formal co-location application process in the fall of SY 2026-27. Because of repeated threats by the district to deny Haugan's current programs, we want to emphasize that:

- Haugan's PreK is a part of their school, and strong PreK programs are essential to early education and childhood development.
- We also request that CPS grant Haugan the Dual Language designation, which they have been building towards for years.

Haugan Elementary, located at 4540 North Hamlin Avenue is currently overcrowded, with 1,074 students, and continues to grow. The current conditions at Haugan are egregious and unacceptable, with art and supplemental reading programming on carts, students meeting with social workers & counselors in hallways or under stairwells, and the school being forced to return STEM kits because storage closets are the only available space to accommodate learning services and supports for students with disabilities - to name a few. Requests from community have been ignored, CPS has provided inaccurate and conflicting information, and leadership has continued a decades long pattern of apathy and delay - actively perpetuating deep inequities in our kids' ability to access an equitable, quality public education.

North River Elementary School is located one block away on the 1st and 2nd floors of the building at 3729 W Leland Avenue. Prior to being located on Leland Avenue, North River was housed above a local church, which made learning unfairly difficult. We are happy that, after years of advocacy and being ignored by the CPS central office, North River has finally found a permanent home in Albany Park.

North River is also an important Albany Park CPS school and valuable member of our community. **We fully support and will protect North River's home, remaining on the 1st & 2nd floors of the building at 3729 W Leland.** Furthermore, we would like to continue the conversation with North River to determine how the community and local government officials can support their goals to continue to thrive as a school through a neighborhood subcommittee with participation from community stakeholders.

Albany Park Schools Community Letter to CPS | Carta de la comunidad escolar de Albany Park a las CPS

CPS central office continues to misinform our community and ignore the concerns and the needs of Albany Park schools. They have actively worked to pit these two schools against one-another to avoid their obligations to our children for two decades. We refuse to allow this practice to divide us.

We urge the members of the Chicago Board of Education and the newly confirmed, permanent CPS CEO, Macquiline King, to take action immediately - through any emergency or temporary authority available - by granting Haugan Elementary's request to utilize the now vacant third floor of the building at 3729 W Leland for the upcoming 2026-27 school year to relieve their overcrowding crisis.

—

Estimada Directora Ejecutiva de CPS, Macquiline King; miembros de la Junta de Educación de Chicago; y equipo directivo de las Escuelas Públicas de Chicago:

Somos miembros de la comunidad de Albany Park, profundamente comprometidos e involucrados con nuestras escuelas de CPS. Nos hemos unido para velar por los mejores intereses de todos los niños que reciben educación en nuestra comunidad y, específicamente, para exigir que los estudiantes de la Escuela Primaria Haugan (una de las escuelas de nuestro vecindario) y de la Escuela Primaria North River (una escuela de ámbito municipal con sistema de admisión por sorteo) sean tratados con la dignidad que merecen y tengan acceso a un entorno de aprendizaje que los estimule y les permita prosperar.

Durante años, tanto la Escuela Primaria Haugan como la Escuela Primaria North River han enfrentado una inestabilidad constante y frecuentes cambios de rumbo provenientes de la oficina central de CPS; situaciones que han afectado negativamente el sentido de seguridad y la capacidad de aprendizaje de los estudiantes, y que han ignorado las necesidades y preocupaciones de nuestra comunidad.

Solicitamos que las CPS tomen medidas, haciendo uso de sus amplios sistemas de gestión de capacidad y de su autoridad interna y unilateral, para aliviar de inmediato el hacinamiento en la Escuela Primaria Haugan, otorgando el uso temporal y limitado del tercer piso —actualmente desocupado— del edificio situado en el 3729 W Leland Avenue para el año escolar 2026-27 (el próximo año). Apoyamos firmemente la gestión de la Escuela Primaria Haugan para lograr una co-ubicación permanente en el tercer piso —ahora desocupado— del edificio en el 3729 W Leland Avenue, a partir del año escolar 2027-28; dicha solicitud se volverá a presentar a través del proceso formal de solicitud de co-ubicación en el otoño del año escolar 2026-27. Debido a las reiteradas amenazas por parte del distrito de suprimir los programas actuales de Haugan, deseamos enfatizar lo siguiente:

- El programa de PreK de Haugan forma parte de su escuela, y los programas sólidos de educación preescolar son fundamentales para la educación temprana y el desarrollo infantil.
- Asimismo, solicitamos que las CPS otorguen a Haugan la designación de Programa de Lenguaje Dual, objetivo para el cual han estado trabajando durante años.

La Escuela Primaria Haugan, ubicada en el 4540 de North Hamlin Avenue, se encuentra actualmente superpoblada, con 1.074 estudiantes, y sigue creciendo. Las condiciones actuales en Haugan son flagrantes e inaceptables: los programas de arte y lectura complementaria se imparten desde carritos móviles; los estudiantes se reúnen con trabajadores sociales y consejeros en los pasillos o bajo las escaleras; y la escuela se ha visto obligada a devolver los kits STEM debido a que los armarios de almacenamiento son el único espacio disponible para albergar los servicios de aprendizaje y apoyo para

Albany Park Schools Community Letter to CPS | Carta de la comunidad escolar de Albany Park a las CPS

estudiantes con discapacidades, por nombrar solo algunos ejemplos. Las solicitudes de la comunidad han sido ignoradas; las CPS (Escuelas Públicas de Chicago) han proporcionado información inexacta y contradictoria; y la dirección ha mantenido un patrón de apatía y dilación que se extiende por décadas, perpetuando activamente profundas inequidades en la capacidad de nuestros hijos para acceder a una educación pública equitativa y de calidad.

La Escuela Primaria North River está situada a una cuadra de distancia, ocupando el primer y segundo piso del edificio ubicado en el 3729 W Leland Avenue. Antes de establecerse en Leland Avenue, North River funcionaba en las plantas superiores de una iglesia local, lo cual dificultaba injustamente el proceso de aprendizaje. Nos complace saber que, tras años de defensa y de ser ignorada por la oficina central de las CPS, North River ha encontrado finalmente un hogar permanente en Albany Park.

North River es también una importante escuela de las CPS en Albany Park y un miembro valioso de nuestra comunidad. **Apoyamos plenamente y protegeremos el hogar de North River, garantizando su permanencia en el primer y segundo piso del edificio situado en el 3729 W Leland.** Además, nos gustaría continuar el diálogo con North River para determinar de qué manera la comunidad y los funcionarios del gobierno local pueden respaldar sus objetivos de seguir prosperando como institución educativa, a través de un subcomité vecinal que cuente con la participación de las partes interesadas de la comunidad.

La oficina central de las CPS continúa desinformando a nuestra comunidad e ignorando las inquietudes y necesidades de las escuelas de Albany Park. Durante dos décadas, han trabajado activamente para enfrentar a estas dos escuelas entre sí, con el fin de eludir las obligaciones que tienen para con nuestros hijos. Nos negamos a permitir que esta práctica nos divida.

Instamos a los miembros de la Junta de Educación de Chicago y a la recién confirmada Directora Ejecutiva permanente de las CPS, Macquiline King, a tomar medidas de inmediato —haciendo uso de cualquier autoridad de emergencia o temporal que tengan a su disposición—, concediendo la solicitud de la Escuela Primaria Haugan para utilizar el tercer piso del edificio situado en el 3729 W Leland —actualmente desocupado— durante el próximo año escolar 2026-27, con el fin de aliviar su crisis de superpoblación.

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

33rd Ward Working Families
Political & Community Organization

Ald. Rossana Rodriguez Sanchez
Aldersperson 33rd Ward

Maggie Cullerton Hooper
Albany Park Resident, Hibbard Parent, LSC Member

Tamara Fouche
Community member, 33rd Ward Working Families Member

Delaney Bonacquisti
Roosevelt High School LSC Community Representative

Meg White
Neighbor

Tiffany Harvey
Haugan parent/ LSC member, Albany Park resident

Robert L Stack
Albany Park Community member

Christina Pintado
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Billy Rivi
Neighbor

Polly Yukevich, 33rd Ward Working Families
Neighbor

Gabrielle Bienasz
Neighbor

Elizabeth Stone Albany Park community member
Neighbor

Monica Malate
Neighborhood School!

Ana Mercado, Public School Strong
Neighbor and voter within the school boundaries

Susan Freund
Haugan parent

Simon Crow
Neighbor

Jacob Dohm
Haugen Parent/Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Mike Chandler
Neighbor

Tara Donnelly
Community Member

Elizabeth A Rochford
District Councilor and community member

Julia Marselle
Neighbor

MacKenzie Bearley
Neighbor

Esther Pomranky
Haugan LSC Parent Representative

Kenneth Barrios
33rd Ward Working Families, Neighbor

Geri Newfry
Neighbor

Gabriela Naveda
Community resident

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Heather Fitch
Volta Volunteer

Michelle O'Neill
Volta neighbor

Mirella Gómez peña
Miembro de la comunidad

Hannah Bonifacius
Haugan Parent

Mary Clark
Haugan parent

Betsy Johnston, Gather Together
Community Member

Abigail Alvarez
Neighbor

Brooke Sinnen
Neighbor

Alison True
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Catherine Longkumer
Neighbor

Mackenzie Modrovsky
Neighbor

Cole Bonifacius
Haugen Parent

Jane Murtaugh
Albany Park community member

Heather Robarge
Community member and Haugan teacher

Janet Hotch
concerned Chicago resident

Lillian Carter
Neighbor

Raven
Haugan Parent

Community member and Henry parent
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Hans Devereaux
Neighbor

Linda Fleener
Neighbor and 2022-2024 LSC Community Representative for Roosevelt High School

Christine Tran
Neighbor

Madeline Brigell
Community member

Molly Simpson
Neighbor

Halley Gardner
Albany Park Resident

Elora Karim
Neighbor living between Haugan and North River

Peg Anderson / Self
Neighbor

Elizabeth Pearson, Albany Park Community Member
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Stephen Simpson
Neighbor

Andrea Macias
Haugan and North River community member

Jennie Thai
Neighbor

Lisa Lux
Hibbard LSC member, Hibbard parent, Albany Park resident

Angela Davis
Hibbard Teacher/LSC teacher Rep.

Colleen Kehoe
neighbor & Edison RGC Parent

Emily Tamblyn
Albany Park resident, Hibbard LSC Community member

Emily Kuhn
Neighbor

Peggy Cushing
Neighbor and parent and work at local clinic Tapestry 360

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Phil Robarge Tabor Church
Haugan LSC Community Rep

Breana Ferguson
Neighbor

Kelly Connolly
Albany Park neighbor

Colin Theis
Community member

Maegan Rodovich
Haugan Elementary Parent & Albany Park resident

Mary Rodovich
Haugan student caregiver

Rachael Goins
Neighbor

Lauren Wozniak
Neighbor

Gerald Muñoz
Haugan Parent and community member

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Jennifer Nguyen
Albany Park Resident, neighbor, and former student of Volta

David Amato
Neighbor

Liz Bynum Sorrell
Neighbor

María Callan
Neighbor

James Rodovich
Haugan parent

Claire Oliver
Neighbor

C Coleman
Neighbor

Allie Peluso
Neighbor in 60625

Daniel Hudson
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Brandon Blessman - Pastor at Missio Dei Albany Park
Pastor

Christine Dussault
Neighbor

Keith Friedlander
Neighbor

Drew Orosz
Neighbor

Whitney Renfro
Neighbor and community member

Hannah Chandler
neighbor

peter dorman - parks for all
community member

Pastor Tomas Sanabria, M.Div, Iglesia del Pacto Evangelico de Albany Park
Senior Pastor

Sarah Rahman
LSC Member, Parent, Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Ana Suarez
Haugans Teacher

Marni Willenson
Haugan LSC Member, community resident

Jessica Shrewsbury
Hibbard Parent

Max Epps
Hibbard Parent/community member

Samantha Estacion
Future Haugan parent

Brigette Atcheson-Demke
Neighbor and future Haugan parent

Meradey Tim
Neighbor

Deanne Puloka
Hibbard LSC parent representative

Megan Backes
Volta Community Member and CPS Parent

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Cassandra Kaczocho
Parent, Raise Your Hand President

Merita Bushi
Roosevelt LSC

Vanessa Hernández
Neighbor

Christine Tvedt
Neighbor

Jeannette Wider
Neighbor with children who will attend Haugan

Jessica Wood
Haugan parent

Anabelle Obregon Fajardo
Parent of future Haugan student /neighbor/ currently parent of Hibbard student

María Boyzo
Patente Hibbard

Joanna Nieves Bosque
Neighborhood parent

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Alison Shah
Neighbor

Alicia Gabriel
Haugan Parent

Courtney Phelan
Albany Park resident

Bridget Murphy
Volta Parent and incoming LSC member

Georgette Foss
Neighbor

Susana Baca
Neighbor

Lindsey Fox
former Volta Parent

Gabriela Naveda
Neighbor

Jennifer Nguyen
Haugan volunteer and Albany Park resident

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Liz Krause
Teacher

Katherine Aviles Lopez
Haugan parent

Madeline Talbott
Neighbor

Allison mckinnon
Neighbor

Sara Herman
Neighbor

Volta Neighbors
Neighbor

Sumie Song, Ph.D.
Neighbor

Michelle
Neighbor

Keith Kelleher
Volta Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Janet Hotch
Neighbor

Jeff Wyse
Volta Neighbors

Justin Valas
Haugan Parent, LSC member, and Neighbor

Lauren Kullman
Community Member

Anne Nolan - CPS
Teacher at Haugan

Laura Sáenz
CPS parent, neighbor and arts educator

Amanda Bevacqua
Neighbor

Tiffanie Tabrizi
Bateman Parent

Christian Fouche
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Jennifer Husbands
Community member and CPS parent

Kathleen Hayes
neighbor and CPS parent

Stephanie Meehan
Neighbor

Ryanne Laredo
Chappell parent

Carrie Lewis
Neighbor

Stefanie Epifanio
Resident and concerned community member

Maureen Ryan
Invested Neighborhood parent of 3 and 6 year old

Tess Golden
Neighbor, CPS parent

Mary Williams
Neighbor, CPS parent, CPS teacher

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Jim Vail/Second City Teachers
Neighbor/media

Sara Byerly
Neighbor

Mary Lee Aherne
Neighbor

Francine Greenberg-Reizen
Neighbor

Kaitlyn Zambrano
Community member & SECA

Sarah Herchuee
Community member

Mario Sánchez
Community

Kimberly Pecka
Haugan Parent

Annabelle wong
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Brayan zambrano
Community member

Amalia Harvey
Haugan student

Isabel Harvey
Albany Park Resident

Jessica Hess-Follander
Haugan neighbor

Raha Dempsey
Albany Park Parent

Mistie Johnson
Hibbard LSC member

Carrie Erk
Haugan Parent

Timm Erk
Haugan Parent

Julia Smalley
Haugan Grandparent

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Rachel Bennett
Neighbor

Rachel Cullerton
Neighboring community member

Claire Podulka
Albany Park resident and CPS parent

Alyssa May
Hibbard Parent, Neighbor

Lucia Mancini
Neighbor

Rachel Kasimer
Neighbor

Community Member
Parent

Megan Camacho
Neighbor

Elora Karim
Albany Park resident

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Alison DeRuiter-Blancaflor
Neighbor

Nat Steinsultz
Neighbor

Sydney Whittington
Albany Park Resident

Alison Shah
Neighbor

Anne Nolan
Teacher, Haugan Elementary

Personal
Neighbor

Alexandra Raj
Haugan Teacher

Lizet Gutierrez
Haugan Alumni/Neighbors

Vivi C.
Community Member (Social Work Student)

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Laney Alvarado
Albany Park Neighbor

Susan Kinst
Neighbor

Elizabeth Six
Neighbor

Ana Serrano
Neighbor

Melinda Martinez-Epperson The Play Lab
Advocate and Community Member

Franky Trupp
Neighbor

Allison DeBoer
CPS Parent and CPS teacher

Cindy Bermeo
Neighbor

Christina Gaytan
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Kim Smolen
Irving Park resident / neighbor

Lauren Wargaski
Neighbor

E ■ M ■
LSC Student Member

Volta
No

Vicky Chan
Neighbor

Kate Hemingway
Neighbor

Lindsey Fox
former Volta Parent

Ashley M
Former Haugan student

Self
Parent

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Laura E Saenz
Neighbor, Educator and CPS parent

Francine Greenberg-Reizen
Neighbor and Chicago Public Schools Teacher

Heather Hesiak
Haugan neighbor

Brenna Lemieux
CPS parent

Natalia Bautista
Neighbor

Anjali Bidani
vecino

Aleshia schiller
Neighbor

Monique Cuadros
CPS parent

Veena Villivalam
LSC Member (at a different school)

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Erykah Nava
CPS Parent, Lloyd LSC Member, and 31st Ward Constituent

Tara Karmin
Neighbor

Silvie Fankhauser
Neighbor and CPS parent

Karla Menendez
Former Haugan Parent, parent of CPS student, Albany Park Community Member, CPS educator

Rene Fernandez
Vecino

Gina Pfeiffer
Former Haugan Student, Haugan Parent, current Albany Park community member

Liza Shoemaker
Neighbor / Haugan Parent

Rachel Jacobs
Parent of three Chicago Public Schools kids

Martha Fernandez
Neighbor

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Brittany Zwicker
Neighbor

Community member
Community member

Justine Kavanaugh
Neighbor

Natalie Barton
Community Parent

Meghan Huschen
Community Member, Cps teacher

Barry Cabrera
Parent

Geri Newfry
Community member

Lisa Barcy
Neighbor and CPS parent

Mahli Wray
Cps parent

Albany Park Schools Community Letter Signatories
(as of 5/29/2026 8:50 AM)

Amy Schmaranzer O'Neill
Gompers Park Parent; my mom-Haugan Alum ('68)

Tammy Pham
Haugan Parent

Eric Dadosky
Haugan Parent

Erin Feldman
Neighbor

Natasha L. Carlsen
Neighbour in Albany Park (33rd Ward/60625 resident)

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Macquiline King, Interim CEO and Superintendent, and Dr. Alfonso Carmona, Acting CEO
From: Conrad Timbers, Acting Chief Portfolio Officer
CC: Charles Mayfield, COO
Ivan Hansen, Chief Facilities Officer
Gabriela Brizuela, Deputy General Counsel
Re: Colocation Proposals for the CEO's Consideration
Date: November 20, 2025

I. Purpose and Background

The purpose of this memo is to provide the CEO with information to make an informed recommendation regarding the co-location of **Haugan ES at North River ES and Cisneros ES at Shields ES**. This memo begins with background information and a SB630 timeline, and then will include the following sections for each proposal:

- Background
- Data, Space Analysis and Space Consideration
- Community Feedback
- Options for consideration

Additionally, as noted above, this memo provides a set of options with the benefits and potential risks with any decision, acknowledging that co-location is both a space solution, but also involves two distinct school communities that become inherently linked requiring collaboration and cooperation, as they are using the same school building.

Decisions from the CEO will need to be communicated to OPM no later than the morning of November 28, 2025 to ensure notification letters are prepared and hand-delivered to schools by the morning of December 1, 2025, as notification on this date is legally required.

Below you will find additional background information regarding the SB630 process as a review:

- CPS officially initiated the SB630 Process by posting [Draft Guidelines and Final Guidelines for School Actions 2025-2026](#), which include criteria for co-locating schools.
- At the start of the SB630 Process, OPM sent a memo to the [CEO](#) and the [Board](#) outlining the high-level process and any interest from schools regarding co-location requests received up to that point.

II. SB630 Timeline

Item	Date	Specific Deliverables (if applicable)
OPM Recommendation to CEO	November 20, 2025	(this memo)
<i>CEO Recommendation Needed</i>	<i>November 28, 2025</i>	<i>Notify Chief Timbers via email</i>
CEO sends memo to the Board with recommendations	December 1, 2025	Memo to be drafted by OPM depending on CEO recommendations
CPS Notifies Stakeholders via letter and Publishes Draft Transition Plan (LSC, Principals and Staff, and Parent/Guardians, and emails to Elected Officials)*	December 1, 2025	Notification Letters and Draft Transition Plans and Emails to Electeds
Community Meetings* (In-Person and Virtual)	January 7, 12, 13 and 15, 2026	
Public Hearing* at CPS Board Chambers	Tentatively scheduled for January 20 and January 21, 2026	
Board receives meeting and hearing materials and meeting and hearing materials are posted online*	Early February 2026	
Board Vote**	February or March 2026	

****Legally required per SB630 or the School Actions Guidelines***

*****Legally required if the CEO advances the recommendation to the Board***

III. Haugan with North River

A. Background

In April 2025, OPM sent a [memo to Board President Harden](#) providing a status update and historical context for Haugan’s early inquiry regarding co-location. Since that time, the following has occurred:

- Principal Yutzy, with the support of her school community, submitted a request to co-locate on behalf of the Haugan school community in September 2025.
- OPM with Facilities has conducted school visits to Haugan and North River
- OSD and T&L have conducted a space use analysis of Haugan’s Space Usage and Scheduling

- OPM has held a total of four community meetings in October and November (one in-person and one virtual), two for each school, released staff and community surveys, and held a student focus group for each school. These materials are available at the request of the CEO.
- Network Chiefs (ISP and N1) have also been engaged throughout this process and have attended various meetings to support.
- Elected Officials have not demonstrated interest or concern regarding this proposal, at this time, but will be notified should the CEO recommend advancing the proposal.

B. Space Analysis and Site Visit Evaluation

To fully understand if additional space is necessary for Haugan to provide a high-quality education to students, OPM considered Space Utilization, Enrollment, Programs, Space Use, and feedback from the school community regarding their experiences in the school facility.

North River Current Enrollment and Capacity

North River's enrollment for SY25-26 is 330 students. After North River moved into the current facility in SY22-23, enrollment increased by 56% (+118 students). Enrollment at the school has been stable in the last year (+12 students, Chart 1).

The North River facility has 33 full-size classrooms and an ideal permanent capacity of 700 students (490-777 is considered Efficient). The facility's preliminary unadjusted status for SY25-26 is Underutilized at 47%. Currently, the facility's third floor, which includes 16 full-size classrooms, remains unoccupied (as advised by CPS). A breakdown of classroom space usage is summarized in Table 1 of the Appendix. The school has a PK cluster program.

The North River facility does have sufficient classroom space to accommodate Haugan's classroom request. However, this would limit the ability of North River to expand beyond one classroom per grade.

Haugan Current Enrollment and Capacity

Haugan's enrollment for SY25-26 is 1,086 students. The school expanded to serve PK-8th grade beginning in SY19-20. After expansion, the school's enrollment declined to 845 students in SY21-22, but has increased by 28% since then. Similar to North River, enrollment at the school has been stable in the last year (+8 students, Chart 2).

The Haugan facility has 56 full-size classrooms and an ideal permanent capacity of 1,204 students (843-1,324 is considered Efficient). The facility's preliminary unadjusted status for **SY25-26 is Efficient at 90%**. A breakdown of classroom space usage is summarized in Table 2 of the Appendix. Should the co-location be approved, the school would free up at least 9 additional classrooms currently used as homerooms for holistic use. Current programs at the school include a PK program as well as a K-8 cluster program, which enroll the majority of students who are not zoned to the school.

Albany Park Community and Haugan Attendance Boundary

For both schools, increases in enrollment in recent years follow demographic trends within the Albany Park community, which show an increase in the student population between SY22-23 to SY24-25. **We do not expect continued growth for the community, given the 4.3% decrease in the PK-8 population in Albany Park in the last year and two years of consecutive decreases of more than 5% for kindergarten**

students. Additionally, recent actions from the federal government may impact future growth within the community, which has a high percentage of Latino and immigrant families.

Increases in enrollment for Haugan are additionally attributed **to an increase in students within the school's attendance boundary choosing to attend the school**, which rose to 59% of the attendance boundary population in SY25-26. The largest proportion of students zoned to Haugan who do not attend the school attend North River (9% of the Haugan boundary). **Notably, expanding Haugan's capacity could further increase within-boundary enrollment, causing additional constraints on both the Haugan and North River locations if the co-location were to move forward.**

In addition to the site visit, both T&L and OSD provided scheduling analyses to assist in determining if Haugan's need for additional space outside of its building. Their findings are as follows:

- Teaching and Learning determined that space was being used efficiently, but did not cite whether overcrowding was an issue. We recommend that the Bilingual/Monolingual classroom allocations be further reviewed by OMME/T&L to see if enrollment can be more balanced within individual grades.
- In summary, OSD found that Haugan **has taken a number of local scheduling approaches to meet student needs; however, these decisions have led to a greater number of smaller class sizes, which in turn increases the number of classrooms required compared with district scheduling guidance.** Moreover, their class size compliance review found that ten of forty-two K-8 classrooms are currently out of alignment with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) 70/30 rule. OSD's report recommends that the master schedule is revisited to ensure efficient use of instructional time and staffing and immediately addressing the issues with the ISBE 70/30 rule.

Shared Spaces and Constraints for both schools

While utilization and enrollment is one factor, we also need to consider the shared use of common spaces. In this case, the colocation of the two schools would require that the schools share common spaces, including the gymnasium for P.E. and Recess and the Cafeteria for lunch. While we do not have the schedules for Haugan and North River, we do know that when Aspira Haugan and North River shared the facility, lunch and gym scheduling presented challenges, particularly during the winter months, that required North River to utilize the library for recess. In addition, based on community feedback, lunch lines were long and impacted student lunchtimes.

Finally, the schools would also need to share entrances and have staggered start time and end times to prevent overflow of traffic and unintentional intermingling of students before and after school. At this site, there is only one entrance to the school that would need to be shared. This also requires CPS to allocate additional security or similar personnel to ensure supervision and that guests are promptly greeted for Haugan.

C. Community Feedback

North River

Survey data for **North River parents and staff show strong negative reactions to the proposal, with 86% perceiving it as negative; 100% of staff members, and 82% of parents responded negatively to the proposal, with no positive responses (Appendix Table 3).**

Responses from the survey, as well as community meetings, indicate that the North River community shows an overwhelming concern and opposition regarding the proposed co-location. They **perceive the co-location to benefit Haugan at the expense of North River students**. There is significant concern over **reduced access to space and scheduling barriers based on previous experience with Aspira-Haugan, as well as tensions arising with co-location due to a lack of equity in resource allocation**. Previous issues include a limited availability to use the gym, playground, and recess areas year-round, as well as limited cafeteria availability. **There is also a fear of an out-of-balance ratio of age ranges due to the addition of 200-250 middle school students**. There is worry that the school's positive culture and identity would be lost or severely compromised due to the negative perceptions of co-locations. **Finally, a co-location would limit the school's ability to expand beyond one classroom per grade. Should Haugan or neighboring schools experience overcrowding, the ability of CPS to implement controlled enrollment procedures (ie. assigning students to North River) would not be available. With the exception of Henry, all other nearby schools are rated efficient or above based on CPS' space utilization formula.**

Haugan

Survey data for **Haugan parents, students, and staff show support for the co-location, with 59% of responses indicating positive reactions. Staff members had the most positive responses at 95%, followed by parents at 74%. Responses from students were mixed, with 36% of students being in support, 32% negative, and 32% unsure (Appendix Table 4).**

Responses from the survey, as well as community meetings, **indicate that the Haugan community views the co-location as a critical, immediate solution to the overcrowding. The perceived benefits include immediate relief of spaces and adequate space for Arts, counseling, and special education services.** They also see separating the **7th and 8th graders into a distinct building as helping them in the transition to high school**, and as a way for the local neighborhood school to have the resources it needs. **Concerns are highest for students who may be separated from their siblings, and logistics around picking up younger siblings from a different location, which was a concern for parents as well.**

D. Options for Consideration

Option 1: Approve the proposal for Haugan to co-locate its 7th and 8th grade and 6th-8th cluster program, with North River at 3729 W. Leland on the third floor (1-2 spaces for North River's use on floor 3)

Benefits

Educational Experience & Student Support

- **Preserves specialized programming:** Students will maintain access to dedicated classrooms specifically designed for Arts, STEM, Dance, and Music.
- **Facilitates private intervention:** Allows teachers to connect with students individually and support their specific needs with greater discretion.

Community & Logistics

- **Responsive to stakeholder advocacy:** This option directly addresses the requests of the Haugan community, which has actively campaigned for this co-location.
- **No disruption to commute:** Student travel distances remain unchanged.

Concerns

Strategic & Capacity Concerns

- **Contradicts standard procedure and data:** According to the CPS utilization formula, facility walk-throughs, and OSD analysis, Haugan is **not** currently overcrowded. Typically, CPS explores root causes and non-co-location options before proposing such measures.
- **Eliminates future safety valves:** Using space at North River now removes the only nearby option for relief should Haugan face genuine overcrowding in the future.
- **Creates negative enrollment cycles:** Co-location status may hinder North River's ability to recruit from the Albany Park community. This creates a vicious cycle that hurts North River's enrollment while potentially driving more growth to Haugan and other surrounding schools that lack capacity.

Operational & Logistical Challenges

- **Increases staffing and financial burdens:** Haugan will likely require increased funding to duplicate support staff (security, custodial, aides) across two campuses. It is unlikely staffing at the main facility can be reduced, as those vacated spaces will be repurposed.
- **Creates scheduling and facility conflicts:** Shared facilities will force "creative scheduling," likely limiting student access to P.E., recess, extended lunch, and specialized spaces on the 3rd floor.
- **Complicates transportation and family logistics:** Haugan may be forced to change start and end times. This makes it difficult for older students to pick up younger siblings and creates traffic congestion as families travel between two closely situated schools.

Community & Cultural Impact

- **Fractures the school culture:** Separating the upper-grade cluster (6th–8th) from the primary grades disconnects older students and teachers from Haugan's culture. These students would effectively form a separate culture while still being required to walk back to the main campus for all assemblies and activities.
- **Ignores North River community concerns:** The proposal is unresponsive to the North River community, which has explicitly objected to hosting a larger number of students with a high proportion of older age groups compared to previous co-locations (such as Aspira Haugan).

Financial Implications

Facilities completed preliminary analysis on the costs of co-locating Haugan at North River and provided early estimates at \$11.3M. This includes:

- \$1.4M in the first year to convert a classroom into an admin suite, a gym divider track and curtain, AI phone/PA system, moves, and select upgrades to the finishes.
- The additional \$9.9M is for critical facility needs including roof replacement and chiller and BAS upgrades/replacement.
- These values do not include costs for furniture, IT upgrades or equipment, or Safety and Security upgrades or equipment.

Option 2: Deny Haugan’s proposal to co-locate with North River and begin developing potential solutions to prevent overcrowding at Haugan

Benefits

Strategic Planning & Space Optimization

- **Prioritizes internal solutions first:** This provides an opportunity for CPS and Haugan to collaborate on optimizing space within the main facility—including assessments by OSD and T&L—before resorting to measures that impact a second school.
- **Enables comprehensive neighborhood planning:** It allows OPM to develop a holistic strategy to alleviate or prevent overcrowding across all of Albany Park—a community with high student population—rather than applying a piecemeal fix.
- **Allows for thorough due diligence:** It ensures that root causes and potential cost implications of maximizing current spaces are fully assessed before permanent changes are made.

Community Stability & Student Well-being

Protects vulnerable student populations: This option addresses concerns from parents of students with disabilities by maintaining a stable environment and consistent staffing levels, which is critical for students sensitive to environmental changes.

Responsive to family logistics: It accommodates families who rely on older siblings to pick up younger students by maintaining aligned schedules and locations.

Aligned with North River stakeholders: This approach respects the specific concerns raised by the North River community regarding density and school culture.

Concerns

Instructional & Capacity Risks

- **Risk of losing specialized programming:** If Haugan experiences additional growth, the school may be forced to convert dedicated STEM or Dance rooms into general classrooms to accommodate students. Should sudden overcrowding occur, alternative CPS solutions may not be implemented quickly enough to prevent immediate instructional disruption.
- **Operational friction:** Despite official "Efficient" status, the school environment currently lacks private spaces for sensitive adult-student meetings and suffers from hallway congestion.

Community Relations & Perception

- **Persisting advocacy:** The Haugan community has launched a concerted campaign for this space; denying the proposal will likely result in continued and intensified advocacy efforts.
- **Disconnect between data and experience:** There is a gap between CPS data and community sentiment. While the utilization formula places Haugan at 93% (Efficient) for SY24-25, stakeholders strongly feel this metric fails to capture the daily reality of insufficient specialized space. Note that changes in the space utilization methodology for SY25-26, will result in a higher utilization rate for Haugan, but still within the Efficient range.

IV. Cisneros with Shields

A. Background

The Office of Portfolio Management and Innovation & Incubation have met with the Acero Cisneros Advisory Council (Council) regularly to plan for the transition of the school to CPS management. Due to the serious facility issues, which continue to mount, at the current facility, CPS advised that the Council begin to discuss facility needs and contingency plans for the school that provides stability to the school community.

During these discussions, the Council has stated their preferences in the following order:

- 1) CPS gradually repairs the current Cisneros facility, which is located at 2744 W. Pershing Road in the Brighton Park Community
- 2) CPS identifies and purchases or leases a new facility within a 1 mile radius of their current school with enough space to accommodate 235+ students and staff that has a gym
- 3) CPS co-locates Cisneros to an existing CPS school within a 1 mile radius of the current facility and provides sufficient space for 235+ students and staff with a gym and outdoor space for students to play.

On October 31, 2025 to initiate the co-location process for their school, the Principal and the Advisory Council sent a formal letter requesting for CPS to consider co-location as required by the Guidelines, but did not specify a school. Since then OPM has done the following, sometimes in collaboration with other departments:

- Identified Shields as an appropriate option for co-location with Cisneros due to utilization, historical enrollment trends, potential availability of classroom space, the proximity to Cisneros (within 1.5 miles from the current facility), and proximity to existing Cisneros students.
- Met with both Principals of Shields and Cisneros along with Network Chiefs Piedrahita and Acevedo to share this information and discuss the overall process
- Held 2 community meetings on 11/18 and 11/19; sharing invites a week before the meeting date to inform the school community
- Discussed the SB630 Process and Background with Elected Alderperson of the 12th ward, Julia Ramirez, and Board Representative Yesenia Lopez, at their request on 11/18
- Facilities has conducted a preliminary analysis of the data to develop potential plans; however, information from Principals regarding space usage has not been collected, which will be critical.

CPS believes it is essential to provide community with opportunities to provide feedback via surveys and focus groups, in addition to the legally required community meetings and public hearing. The CEO will take this information as well as the hearing officer's report into consideration in deciding whether to submit the proposal to the Board in February 2026.

B. Space Analysis

Cisneros Current Enrollment and Capacity

Cisneros currently enrolls **233 students**, with grade sizes ranging from 9 in entry grades to 45 in 8th grade. Enrollment has declined significantly: 29% (-94 students) in the last year and 57% (-312 students) over the past decade (Appendix, Chart 3). The facility has approximately 20 classrooms, 12 of which are likely used as homerooms. Based on enrollment trends, the school is projected to require only one classroom per grade (nine total) in the future. With a capacity of 420, the building is classified as Underutilized by CPS standards.

Shields Current Enrollment and Capacity

Shields is a PK-4 attendance area school located 0.8 miles from Cisneros. Over the past decade, enrollment dropped by 59% (-564 students) due to local demographic shifts, though declines have slowed in the last three years (Appendix, Chart 4). The campus comprises a main building, annex, and two modulars, totaling 46 full-size classrooms. Currently, only 21 are used as homerooms. With an ideal capacity of 980 and an efficiency range of 656–1,078, the school's utilization rate for SY24-25 is 40%.

Shields vs. Other Schools Close to Acero Cisneros

CPS explored 9 other CPS schools that are within 1.5 miles of Cisneros. Shields presented the largest number of potential classrooms available for a co-location that maximizes classroom space for both schools. Additional data regarding classroom spaces is included in Table 5 of the Appendix.

C. Community Feedback

Acero Cisneros Community early feedback noted that the community wants the other options explored, and the feedback was negative; however, many participants cited the potential of co-location with other nearby CPS and Acero schools. There was not a significant representation from students or parents at the meeting, but staff were present at the meeting. Low attendance of parents was likely driven by the short notice of the meeting.

Shields Community Feedback

During the Shields community meeting, the Shields community composed of staff, parents, students, community organizations (i.e. Brighton Park Neighborhood Council) and a CTU representative were **vehemently against co-location with Shields**. Alderwoman Ramirez and Board Member Lopez attended both meetings. Additionally, the Shields meeting was attended by State Representative Theresa Mah and Board Member Cydney Wallace. Several student representatives delivered statements regarding the challenges co-location would present for the school community. Specifically, participants expressed concern around enrollment in their school, the belief that Acero Cisneros families, despite living in the community, chose to attend another school, and because this is the second time being identified as a potential co-location site, the community feels targeted by the District. 285 signatures were collected

from the community against the co-location proposal, which are available at the request of the CEO. The community did not cite any potential benefits of the proposal and shared the following concerns.

Feedback from both meetings is summarized below:

Host School Concerns (Shields)

Focus: Protecting existing resources, enrollment stability, and staff.

- **Critical Shortages:** States that sufficient space is *not* available, citing a lack of bathrooms (specifically for primary grades) and no space for large events.
- **Enrollment Strategy:** Stakeholders question why CPS is moving students into Shields when district-wide enrollment is declining. There is a specific fear that this move will destabilize Shields, causing its enrollment to decline further.
- **Historical Context:** There is frustration that Acero families originally *chose* to leave the neighborhood school system; current stakeholders question the fairness of merging them back in now that the charter is closing.
- **Staffing & Credentials:** Concerns regarding whether incoming charter school teachers possess the correct credentials to transition to CPS roles. Also cited recent budget cuts (SECA positions) as evidence that the school cannot handle more strain.
- **Due Diligence:** Feels CPS did not fully understand the existing issues at the Cisneros location before deciding to transition the school to CPS management.
- **Resource Strain:** Fears gym time, playground access, and lunch periods will be negatively impacted by the increased population.

Incoming School Concerns (Cisneros/Acero)

Focus: The trauma of school closure, transition logistics, and safety.

- **Disruption:** Families are distressed by the "drastic change" of school closing and moving. They want to ensure the transition improves learning outcomes and isn't just a logistical shuffle.
- **Safety & Commute:** Major concerns about changing travel routes, specifically the need for crossing guards on busy streets, and fears regarding gang activity in the area.
- **Staffing Security:** Specifically concerned about layoffs and the retention of their current staff.

Shared Concerns (Systemic Issues)

Areas where both communities agree or face similar risks.

- **Process & Trust:** Both groups expressed disappointment in the process, specifically the short notice for meetings, lack of meaningful stakeholder involvement, and questions regarding the legitimacy of the legal timeline (SB630).
- **Operational Clarity:** Both groups lack clarity on how the co-location will be managed daily.
 - *Shields:* Worried about bathroom/facility overlap.

- *Cisneros*: Worried about drop-off procedures, start times, and oversight of shared staff (lunchroom/maintenance).

D. Options for Consideration

For this proposal, the primary reason for considering co-location is the **condition of the Cisneros facility and the need to provide stability to the Cisneros’ students and families**, who have endured uncertainty regarding the future of their school. Additionally, the information and options provided considers the potential impact on the District, its students and its facilities, broadly.

Option 1: Deny the co-location proposal and enter into a lease with the Archdiocese for the current Cisneros Facility (a rider of the master lease between CPS and the Archdiocese) and gradually address the facility repairs
Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is responsive to the Acero Cisneros community and does not require the school, its students, and staff to re-locate to another school ● Does not impact another school community
Concerns

When considering the concerns of the Council's first preference to keep the school where it is and address the repairs gradually, we will provide information regarding Cisneros' current facility, which is leased by the Archdiocese. CPS is currently in discussions with the Archdiocese to amend our CPS Lease Agreement with the Archdiocese and enter into lease agreements, with the Board voting in February 2026.

- The facility, as shared publicly and internally, has major facility issues that need to be further investigated, but at this time, all do not immediately need to be addressed. Additionally, the issues may extend to the city of Chicago infrastructure, but internal building issues must be rectified before the City investigates.
- Currently, CPS is aware of the following issues; however, new issues have arisen since the Board has directed CPS to transition the schools so the list is likely to expand due to the age of the facility (~70 years old):
 - The most significant issue is the severe water infiltration and drainage issue that have led to substantial flooding and failure of the gymnasium floor, **leaving Cisneros without a functional gym space.**
 - Additionally, CPS, Acero and the Archdiocese have identified concerns with the gas and water discharge from the vertical stacks and odor emissions from the Underground Storage Tank near the boiler room.

Financial Implications

The estimated costs of this option are as follows, but are limited to the **known issues**:

- We do not currently have an estimate for addressing the gym floor issue; however, the scope is not fully known and is expected to be significant. Further, this would not be addressed by SY26-27.
- Annual lease cost as of FY25: ~\$505K
- Facility Needs are estimated at: 0-2 years are \$4.3M and 2-5 years are \$5.6M, and for a total of about \$9.9M in immediate critical need and Long Term critical needs are about \$3.2M (**these costs do not include the water infiltration/gym floor issue**)
- **There will be a need for additional funding for custodial, engineering, and security staffing at the Cisneros building.**

Option 2: Deny the co-location proposal and identify a non-CPS facility within 1 mile for Cisneros; sole use (there are not any additional nearby CPS facilities, as such this would have to be privately owned)

The Council’s secondary preference was for CPS to identify a nearby facility within a 1 mile radius of the school that can support the 235 Acero Cisneros students and staff with a gymnasium.

Benefits

- This is the second preferred choice of the Council and is responsive to their feedback, and does not impact another school community, similar to the option above

Concerns

- Requires that students and staff relocate
- Due to time constraints associated with transitioning the schools, CPS has not researched nearby Facilities with the Archdiocese or other owners, as it is probable any nearby facilities that meet the criteria of the council also have critical needs that need to be addressed and importantly, **CPS does have space within our current facilities.**
- In addition, any facility exploration will take time, potentially removing the possibility of exploring co-location, which has strict legal timelines that must be followed.
- Due to resources, if this option is explored, due to capacity constraints, it will take time and resources from existing projects to pursue.
- This is the highest risk option as the outcome is highly uncertain: we do not know if any facilities exist that are turnkey ready for SY26-27.
- We would need Board approval to enter into leases and allocate funds.
- Significant effort has been made over the years to end leases with the Archdiocese/private owners due to these same reasons: having space available within CPS facilities and CPS having to repair non-CPS/Archdiocese owned buildings that require repair, which further delays addressing critical needs in our own facilities.
- While we want Cisneros’ students to be supported and provided with a high-quality learning environment, we assert that it is also important to consider equity across the District.
- Contrary to communications with other schools that have formerly advocated for the District and Board to purchase new facilities.
- Inconsistent with the Facilities process of first exploring availability within the current portfolio and purchasing, leasing or building new as a last resort.

Financial Implications

Cost estimates for this option are currently unknown and if pursued, would take time to assess, mainly because it would involve identifying a facility and subsequently conducting facility assessments.

Option 3: Advance the co-location proposal and approve Cisneros to co-locate with Shields, limiting Cisneros enrollment to 1 classroom per grade level or about 235 students total

Benefits

- This option provides students with access to a gymnasium, outdoor playground, and is ~1 mile away from the current location
- Gives CPS additional time to continue to meet with the school communities and staff and families can continue to provide feedback in meetings, focus groups, etc. held in December and January and develop a better understanding of the co-location proposal
- Moves a CPS-managed school into a CPS-owned facility
- The current layout provided by Facilities does allow for separation between the two schools, including facility entrances and classrooms, limiting unwanted intermingling of upper grades and primary grades
- Shields ES is the best option due to space not being available in other nearby CPS schools

Concerns

- At this time, **this option is not well-received among the communities due to the perceived risks of co-location and can significantly erode trust.**
- This would require students and staff to relocate
- **Shields ES has stated its clear and vocal opposition to the co-location proposal with the support of the Brighton Park and school community.**
- Shields ES would be moved to the older of the two facilities, with Cisneros in the annex building
- At this time, a safety assessment has not been completed at Shields ES
- Shields ES families stated that there aren't enough bathrooms, and the spaces that are likely to be shared are too small to accommodate two separate schools
- Student matriculation to Shields MS (which is ~1 mile away) could be disrupted due to Acero Cisneros being a K-8 school and would eliminate the need for students to travel to another school (making Cisneros a more attractive option for MS).
- If this is advanced by the CEO, the timeline to make necessary year 1 renovations is condensed; Facilities would require approval from the CEO to begin designs for Shields' bathrooms as this would be an immediate need if the Board approved the co-location; Shields main building (which is connected to the annex) only has a set of bathrooms in the basement.

Financial Implications

Preliminary Cost Estimates for co-locating Acero Cisneros at Shields would be about \$5.4M. This includes:

- \$3.4M in the first year to create new restrooms in the main building, a new admin suite, a gym divider curtain, AI phone/PA system, moves and select upgrades to the corridor finishes.
- The additional \$2M is for targeted finish upgrades in classrooms, lunchroom, and teachers lounge as well as upgrades to convert spaces to Pre-K, science/art classroom, a music room, and library/media center.
- These values do not include costs for furniture, IT upgrades or equipment, or Safety and Security upgrades or equipment.

Appendix

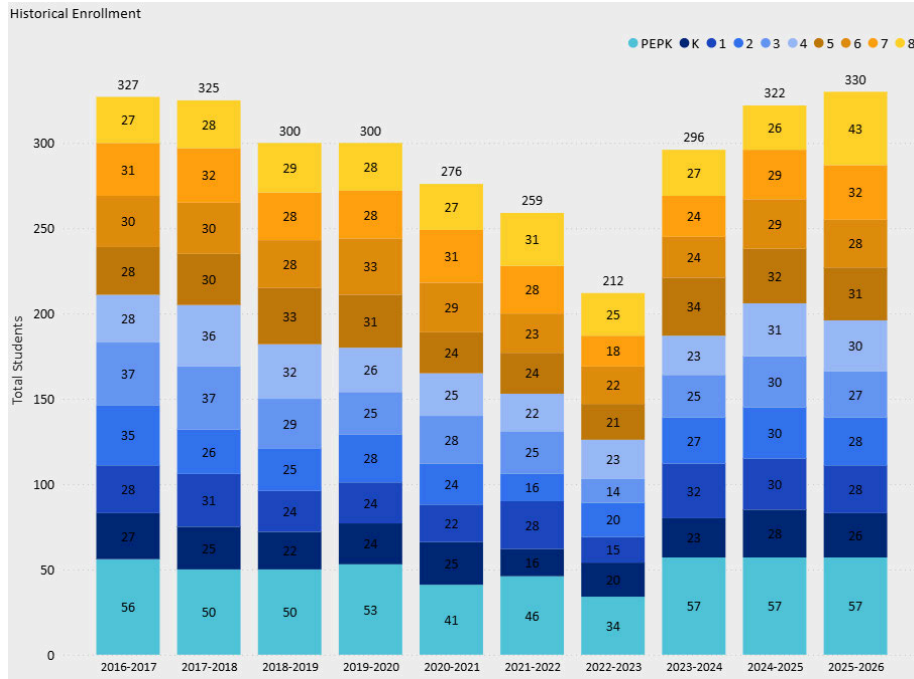


Chart 1: Historical Enrollment for North River. SY21-22 was the first year the school was in the current facility.

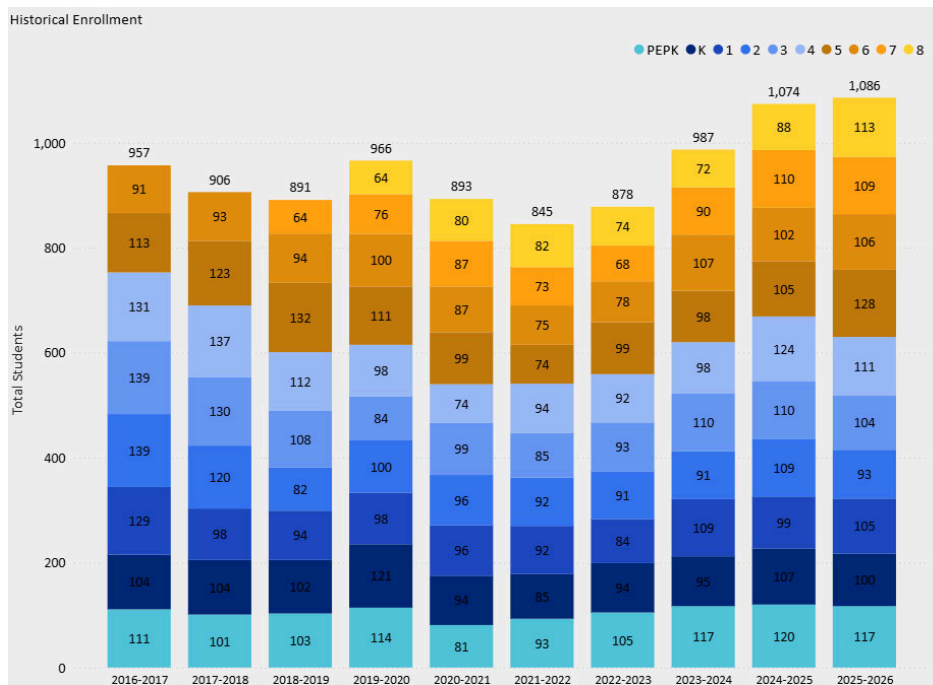


Chart 2: Historical Enrollment for Haugan Elementary. The school served PK-8th grade beginning in SY19-20.

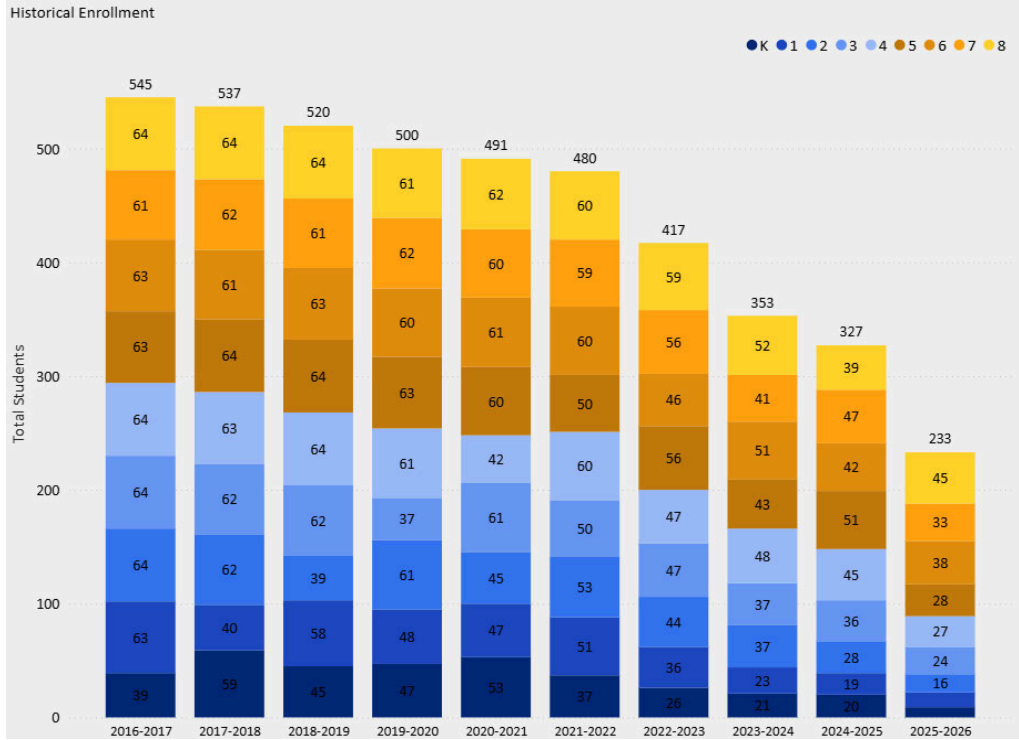


Chart 3: Historical Enrollment for Acero-Cisneros Elementary.

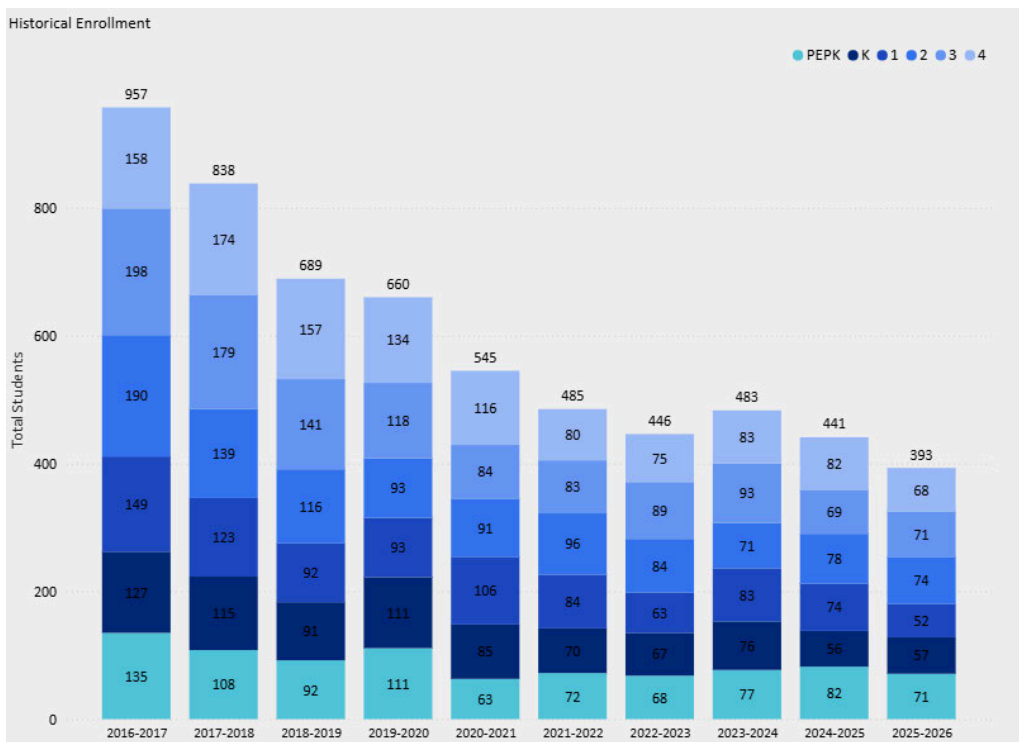


Chart 4: Historical enrollment for Shields Elementary

Table 1. Current Classroom Allocation at North River facility

Type of Classroom	Number of Classrooms	Details
Homerooms	12	PK: 2 classrooms K-7th: 1 classroom per grade 8th: 2 classrooms per grade
Holistic Instruction	2	1 Art, 1 Music Room
SPED/ESL Resource rooms (Pull-out instruction)	3	Bilingual/Special Education
Exclusive Use by Outside Organization	1	Park District Classroom
Not in use (3rd Floor)	16	Previously Aspira-Haugan. Includes specialized STEM, Music and Choir Rooms, outdoor space for gardening
Total Instructional Spaces	34	

Table 2. Current Classroom Allocation at Haugan facility

Type of Classroom	Number of Classrooms	Details
Homerooms	46	PK: 5 classrooms K-8: 4 per grade, 3rd/5th have 5 per grade Cluster: 3 classrooms
Holistic Instruction	6	2 Dance, 2 Music, 2 STEM
SPED/ESL Resource rooms (Pull-out instruction)	4	Bilingual/Special Education
Total Instructional Spaces	56	

Table 3: North River Survey Responses: What are your initial feelings about the two schools co-locating?

Role	Total Responses	Positive	Negative	Neutral Unsure Need More Info
Parent/Guardian/Family	33	–	82%	18%
Staff Member	20	–	100%	0%
Student (estudiante)	–	–	–	–
Community Resident	4	–	50%	50%
Total	57		86%	14%

Table 4: Haugan Survey Responses: What are your initial feelings about the two schools co-locating?

Role	Total Responses	Positive	Negative	Neutral Unsure Need More Info
Parent/Guardian/Family	117	74%	15%	11%
Staff Member	58	95%	–	5%
Student	171	36%	32%	32%
Community Resident	7	100%	–	–
Total	353	59%	21%	20%

Table 5. Space Availability within 1.5 miles of Cisneros

School Name	Distance from Cisneros (in miles)	Total Full-Size Classrooms (SY24-25)	Total Homerooms (Host School) (SY25-26)	Number of "Available" Ancillary Classroom Spaces*
Brighton Park	.3	24	14	1 **
Davis N	.4	43	23	11
Burroughs	.6	15 (+4 small)	17	None - Not enough classrooms to host another school.
Shields	.8	46	21	16
Gunsaulus	.8	33	29	None - Not enough classrooms to host another school.
Calmecca	1	36	28	None - Not enough classrooms to host another school.
Columbia Explorers	1.1	48	32	7
Everett	1.2	20	7	4
Shields Middle	1.4	34	13	12
Greene	1.5	30	16	5

* Indicates the maximum number of "Available" classrooms that could be used as holistic classroom spaces (non-homerooms) across the two schools, after taking into account necessary classrooms for homerooms. A higher number indicates a larger likelihood that the facility will be able to support holistic classroom use (ie. Arts, Dance, Music, SPED/Bilingual resource rooms, etc). A full walk-through of the facility is needed to understand how the current space is used at the potential host school, to accurately determine available classrooms.

** Not enough classrooms to support Cisneros until the 2 classrooms per grade in 7th/8th are reduced to 1 classroom per grade.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Chicago Board of Education

DATE: May 28, 2026

SUBJECT: Written Testimony in Support of the 10-Year Grant Renewal and High School Expansion of the Academy for Global Citizenship (AGC)

Executive Summary

I am writing to urge your full approval for a **ten-year grant renewal** for the Academy for Global Citizenship (AGC). As an AGC parent, a published author, a lifelong advocate for dual-language education, and a former professor of Spanish at **Northwestern University, Loyola University Chicago, and the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC)**, I have dedicated my career to understanding how language and culture shape cognitive development. Having taught at Chicago's premier higher education institutions, I can state with academic certainty that AGC's immersive model builds the exact linguistic fluency, critical thinking, and global competence that universities prize.

My daughter enrolled at AGC in January 2026 and has already experienced a profound evolution. Her self-confidence has soared, and her academic skills have flourished within a school culture where she feels genuinely supported, seen, and guided. AGC provides world-class educational resources to a predominantly Latino community that historically lacks access to such opportunities due to systemic neighborhood funding inequities in Chicago.

AGC represents the pinnacle of educational equity, social-emotional excellence, and holistic health. This report outlines the critical impact areas that justify a long-term investment in this institution, alongside a strategic proposal for its future growth into a pure International Baccalaureate (IB) track high school.

1. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) through Collaborative Pods

AGC's architectural and pedagogical design breaks away from the rigid, authoritarian classrooms of the past to foster true community.

- **Open-Space Pods:** Students learn in open environments structured around collaborative pods.
- **Peer-to-Peer Teaching:** Children teach and support one another, building leadership and communication skills daily.
- **Teachers as Resources:** Educators act as facilitators and guides rather than authoritative figures, creating a safe space for intellectual curiosity.

2. Real-World Entrepreneurship: The Little Leaf Market

The curriculum seamlessly connects classroom learning with economic and social responsibility through practical internships.

- **Vocational Training:** My daughter participates in an internship where she learns the ropes of teamwork by juicing fresh vegetables.
- **Micro-Enterprise:** Students manage production and sales at the school's Little Leaf Market.
- **Global Immersion:** Proceeds from these sales fund the 8th-grade end-of-the-year trip to Costa Rica. This immersion experience brings the dual-language classroom to life in a real-world context, cementing the linguistic skills necessary for future academic success.
- **Empathy and Service:** The entire business model teaches students the value of community support, charity, and social empathy.

3. Holistic Nutrition and Environmental Stewardship

In an era where children are constantly exposed to harmful preservatives, antibiotics, and contaminants in processed meats, AGC prioritizes the physical fuel required for brain development.

- **Seed-to-Table Education:** Students work in the campus greenhouse, planting and harvesting vegetables.
- **In-House Chefs:** Professional school chefs use this fresh produce to prepare nutrient-dense, scratch-made meals.
- **Balanced Menu:** The school serves organic, vegetarian meals four days a week, and a culturally relevant chicken pozole once a week, ensuring healthy growth and optimal learning readiness.

4. Systemic Advocacy and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

AGC's mission aligns directly with the vital work of community leaders like **Emma Lozano and Yesenia Lopez**, who have fought tirelessly for resource equality and Latino community empowerment in Chicago. Having taught at institutions like UIC, which serves as a major engine of opportunity for Chicago's diverse student body, I know how vital early-childhood and K-8 pipelines are. AGC serves as a concrete manifestation of that fight, proving that high-quality, dual-language, holistic education should not be exclusive to wealthy neighborhoods.

5. Strategic Proposal: Expansion into a Pure IB Track High School

As a parent, I carry a deep and urgent worry that I will not encounter such a wonderful, transformative schooling opportunity for my daughter anywhere else in the city once she completes the 8th grade. To preserve this ecosystem, I strongly advocate that the Board supports the evolution of AGC into a full High School.

Because AGC has successfully incorporated the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework into its foundational curriculum, expanding upward is a natural pedagogical step. I propose that AGC continues to foster this gold standard of global education by adding a high school division dedicated exclusively to an **IB program track**. A pure IB high school on Chicago's southwest side would

provide a seamless, rigorous academic pipeline, ensuring our students transition directly from culturally responsive dual-language elementary pods into top-tier global university candidates.

Empirical Impact of the IB Diploma Track for Latino Students

Data strictly demonstrates that the full IB Diploma framework closes equity gaps and directly elevates postsecondary outcomes for minority and low-income students:

Metric Category	National / Standard Track	Full IB Diploma Track	Source
Immediate College Enrollment Rate (Hispanic/Latino Students)	59%	83%	International Baccalaureate Research Summary
First-Generation & Low-Income College Baseline	High enrollment gaps based on socioeconomic status	Eliminates disparities; low-income IB students enroll at identical rates to high-income peers	University of Chicago Consortium / IB Research
Postsecondary Academic Performance	Standard baseline first-year GPA	Significantly higher first-year & graduation GPAs for Chicano/Latino IB cohorts	University of California System Research Report
Elite University Acceptance Rates	Total population average	Up to 18% higher acceptance rates at top-tier US institutions for IB Diploma holders	The Global College / University Access Data

Conclusion

The only flaw in AGC’s model is its scarcity. We need this framework scaled and extended, not limited. Securing a 10-year grant renewal guarantees stability for these students and serves as a blueprint for the future of public education. From my perspective as both a parent and a university educator, I urge the Board to approve this renewal, support our expansion vision, and continue championing true educational justice.

Thursday, May 28, 2026

To the Chicago Board of Education and CPS Office of Early Childhood,

My name is Katherine Best, and I am a current Talcott parent of a child in Kindergarten with another entering PreK in the fall, writing to urgently ask CPS to reconsider the proposed closure of one of Talcott Fine Arts & Museum Academy's Pre-K classrooms.

I am deeply concerned that this closure appears tied to Talcott's commitment to maintaining a multilingual learning environment rather than converting the classroom into a monolingual English-only program.

At a time when Chicago should be investing in and protecting multilingual education, this decision sends the wrong message to families and communities who value language diversity, inclusion, and equitable access to high-quality early childhood education.

Talcott's Pre-K program is highly sought after because of its unique strengths:

- A warm, community-centered environment
- Strong early childhood education rooted in creativity and care
- Meaningful multilingual learning opportunities
- Diverse classrooms that reflect the reality and richness of Chicago families

Research consistently shows that multilingual education benefits young learners academically, socially, and cognitively. These programs help children develop stronger communication skills, cultural awareness, empathy, and long-term academic success.

As a family who specifically chose Talcott because of its multilingual and community-focused approach, I strongly believe reducing access to this program would negatively impact both current and future students.

This is not the time to reduce multilingual opportunities in CPS schools. It is a time to protect and expand them.

I respectfully urge CPS and the Board of Education to:

- Reconsider the closure of the Talcott Pre-K classroom
- Preserve multilingual early childhood education at Talcott
- Listen to the voices of Talcott families and the broader community
- Support continued investment in equitable and inclusive public education

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to Chicago students and families.

Sincerely,
Katherine Best
Talcott Parent
West town

May 28, 2026

Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education and CPS Leadership,

We are parents and caregivers of students at Whittier Dual Language School, writing to express our deep concern regarding the proposed elimination of our assistant principal position for the 2026–2027 school year.

We recognize that Chicago Public Schools is facing serious financial pressures and difficult budget decisions. We appreciate the complexity of balancing district-wide needs while striving to serve students equitably across Chicago. We write with respect for those challenges and with gratitude for the work being done on behalf of CPS students.

At the same time, we respectfully urge CPS to reconsider the elimination of the assistant principal position at Whittier. As a small dual language school community, Whittier depends heavily on strong, accessible school leadership to support students, staff, and families across two language communities and a wide range of student needs. In a smaller school environment, the loss of even one administrator represents a substantial reduction in the school's capacity to respond effectively to the daily academic, social-emotional, operational, and safety needs of students.

Our school community has experienced firsthand the difference that a two-administrator leadership structure makes in a small school setting. Since adding an assistant principal position in recent years, Whittier has experienced meaningful growth in school culture, instructional support, and student relationships. Dividing leadership responsibilities between two administrators has allowed school leadership to better support students, teachers, and families in ways that directly strengthen the daily life of the school.

With the support of an assistant principal, our principal has had greater capacity to focus on instructional leadership, teacher coaching, relationship-building with students and families, and strengthening school culture. At the same time, the assistant principal has played a critical role in supporting student behavior, responding to disciplinary situations, and helping ensure that students receive consistent support and accountability.

This shared leadership structure has helped create a school environment where students feel known and supported, teachers feel professionally valued, and families experience strong communication and responsiveness from school leadership.

Whittier's school community includes many newly arrived immigrant students alongside second-generation multilingual learners and families with a wide range of educational backgrounds and experiences. This diversity is one of our school's greatest strengths, but it also requires significant coordination, relationship-building, and instructional support to ensure all students can thrive.

Having both a principal and assistant principal has allowed school leadership to better support teachers in meeting the varied academic, linguistic, social-emotional, and cultural needs within our classrooms while also helping sustain staff stability and a positive, supportive learning environment for students.

We understand that CPS must make difficult tradeoffs, and we are not asking lightly. However, we respectfully ask the Board and CPS leadership to consider whether the savings achieved by eliminating this position outweigh the potential impact on student support, school climate, family communication, and staff sustainability at Whittier.

We kindly ask CPS to restore funding for the assistant principal position at Whittier Dual Language School for the 2026–2027 school year.

Thank you for your time, your leadership, and your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Emily Cortina, LSC Chairperson
and the Parents and Caregivers of Whittier Dual Language School (signatures attached)

**Signatures in Support of Letter Regarding Assistant Principal Position
at Whittier Dual Language School**

*Firmas en apoyo de la carta sobre el puesto de subdirectora
en Whittier Dual Language School*

We, the undersigned parents, caregivers, and community members of Whittier Dual Language School, support the letter requesting the restoration of the assistant principal position for the 2026–2027 school year.

Nosotros, los abajo firmantes, padres, madres, cuidadores y miembros de la comunidad de Whittier Dual Language School, apoyamos la carta que solicita la restauración del puesto de subdirector(a) para el año escolar 2026–2027.


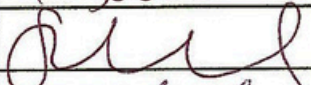
Nombre / Name	Firma / Signature	Relación con la escuela / Role
Juana Gomez	Juana Gomez	
Yadira Alvarez	[Signature]	madre de escuela
Alex Gomez	[Signature]	Mom.
Lupita Amayo	[Signature]	Madre de familia
Marjama Wong	[Signature]	Mom of Eric
Dalila Viramontes	[Signature]	Mom of Santiago Corona
Juan Gabriel	[Signature]	Dad
Willie Ardeaga	[Signature]	Dad
José Quare	[Signature]	Dad
Nicolas Castro	[Signature]	papa
Alex Gomez	[Signature]	papa
Roberto Guzman	[Signature]	Uncle
Gaby Casado	[Signature]	Aunt
Juan Casado	[Signature]	Uncle
Esperanza Diaz	[Signature]	Abuela
Liliana Tameso	[Signature]	Aunt

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Nombre / Name	Firma / Signature	Relación con la escuela / Role
Veronica Brito		Padre mentor
Ana Maria León	Ana Maria León	Padre mentor
Fabiola Torres	Fabiola Torres	mama
Mara D. Arzaga Senter	Mara Polaris A	mamá
EMETERIO M. FLORES	Emeterio M. Flores	Papá
Katherine Tulloch	Kate Tulloch	Mama
Carmina Taffia	Carmina Taffia	MOM
Rebecca Morisco	Rebecca Morisco	MOM
MARTINA H	Martina H.	Mama
Jenny Cruz	Jenny Cruz	Mother
Joannifer Romero	Dana	Mom
Rosio Cruz Castellanos	Rosio Cruz	Mom
Moncela Roldes	Moncela Roldes	Mamá
JOSE COIS	FIGUERAS	PAPA
Enika Jimeno		mama
Fabiola Contreras	Fabiola Contreras	mamá
Anahi Hernandez	Anahi Hernandez	mamá
Marta R.G.	Marta Ramirez	mamá

Dr. Angel Alvarez CPS Board of Education Written Public Comments 5/28/2026

Dear CEO/Superintendent King and Members of the CPS Board of Education,

I hope you are doing well. As President of the Office for Students with Disabilities Family Advisory Board (OSD FAB), I am pleased to share that our survey has been successfully completed. This survey was intentionally designed with input from parents, educators, and staff to better understand areas of strength and identify opportunities to more effectively support students with disabilities across CPS.

The survey reflects a broad range of stakeholder experiences, including perspectives on IEP/504 team engagement, clarity of communication, service delivery, and access to inclusive, high-quality education. In addition to quantitative results, the open-ended responses provide particularly valuable, experience-based insights that can inform meaningful improvements at both the system and school levels.

To fully realize the value of this work, I look forward to receiving access to the raw survey results, with only essential redactions, in a timely manner so that I can compile a comprehensive report on the state of support services for our students. This will also allow me to fulfill commitments made to participants, including distributing financial incentives to randomly selected respondents and recognizing the school with the highest response rate. These incentives were provided specifically to encourage broad and meaningful participation, and it is important that we follow through on those commitments.

By way of background, my experience in developing and analyzing survey instruments is extensive. While leading the teaching evaluation program at UIC, I collected and analyzed thousands of student responses evaluating faculty and courses, generating actionable feedback for both instructors and the institution. Building on that experience, I have independently reviewed the Illinois State Board of Education's survey results and identified areas where the validity and interpretation of certain measures may benefit from further examination. My intent is to incorporate these observations into a balanced, solutions-oriented analysis that complements the OSD FAB findings. By thoughtfully comparing these data sources, we have an opportunity to strengthen how CPS captures, interprets, and responds to stakeholder feedback.

Thank you for your leadership and continued commitment to students and families. I look forward to partnering with you to ensure these insights are meaningfully elevated and used to drive improvement.

Warm regards,

Dr. Angel Alvarez

President, Office for Students with Disabilities Family Advisory Board