

Oct 23, 2025, Board Meeting Written Comments
Received between Tuesday, Oct 21st and Friday, Oct 24th Submitted via
Written Comments Form

1	First and foremost, thank you for the \$1.4 million in temporary relief that has allowed our scholar artists to continue their journey through School Year 2026. Your support means the world to our families, and we are deeply grateful for your commitment to our students' futures. As a proud ChiArts parent, I urge you to vote "yes" on October 23 to transition ChiArts into a fully district managed CPS school. This vote is not just about preserving a school, it is about protecting a unique, preprofessional arts conservatory model that serves as a vital asset to CPS and the city of Chicago. ChiArts offers something truly special, rigorous academic instruction paired with intensive arts training led by working artists. This dual focus empowers students to grow intellectually, creatively, and socially. My daughter, a sophomore in the Voice Conservatory, recently discovered a passion for Theater Arts, an opportunity she would not have had elsewhere. ChiArts has helped her find her voice, both literally and figuratively. Our journey to ChiArts was not easy. As a Christian family, we had initial reservations about certain aspects of the school environment. But our daughter's determination and thoughtful presentation to our family convinced us. She said, "There is no other school for me mom, no other school like ChiArts. It will challenge me academically and help me grow as an artist. The small class sizes and welcoming community feel like home." She embraced the long school days without hesitation, knowing the value of what she was gaining. My family has grown to deeply appreciate ChiArts, and I have personally learned to love in new and meaningful ways because of it. ChiArts does not just educate, it nurtures each student individually. The school remains strong in enrollment, academic performance, and collaborative operations. However, financial instability threatens its future. The abrupt withdrawal of support from the board of directors left families blindsided and heartbroken. Our children are vulnerable, and without CPS's continued support, their futures are at risk. We ask you to help us preserve this extraordinary conservatory model not just for current students, but for future CPS scholars across the district. Integrating ChiArts into CPS will enrich the entire system, offering access to high quality arts education as part of a robust STEAM framework. ChiArts provides: • Unique Educational Model • Access to Arts Education • Equity and Diversity • Academic and College Readiness • Cultural Contribution Thank you again for your support and for considering this critical vote. Our children are counting on you
2	Although I totally agree with ones right to protest 🇺🇸, children should know that they have a say, I believe public actions, acting like a human being that was assassinated, should NOT be tolerated, please ask yourself if you would want this person teaching your child
3	Good morning, President Harden and Chicago Public Schools Board of Education Members: I am writing again today to raise urgent concerns regarding the current Chief of the Office for Students with Disabilities, Joshua Long. There have been multiple reports and concerns that he has engaged and continues to engage in discriminatory hiring and firing practices, resulting in

EOCO filings that disproportionately impact African American women. These patterns are deeply troubling, considering that some occurred during his tenure as principal at Southside Occupational Academy.

During Joshua Long's tenure as OSD Chief, many African American women have been targeted and terminated at alarming rates, with many of them having more tenure and education than he does in the district. This continues to violate CPS's stated value of equity and inclusion, exposing the district to significant financial and legal liabilities due to these discriminatory practices.

How can we champion equity with and for our students when we fail to do so with our employees? I implore this Board to hold Joshua Long accountable for the reprehensible actions he has taken and make impacted individuals whole before additional damage is done.

Thank you

4

President Harden and Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

My name is Jim Poole. I am the father of a Kindergartener and 6th grader who attend Hibbard Elementary in Albany Park. I also serve as the Chair of our Local School Council. On Friday evening, via a general email sent out by CPS, we learned that the Albany Park Multicultural Academy (APMA) was not selected to implement the dual language program next year. This was confirmed to our LSC by Ms. Garza from APMA at the regular meeting on October 21. This is not only bad news, it is a violation of the trust that parents and our whole school community placed in CPS to deliver on dual language education for our children. It means that my child, a sixth grader at Hibbard, and their classmates will not be able to continue their dual language education next year. This is heartbreaking and unacceptable.

About 10 years ago, Hibbard began looking at the implementation of a dual language program. Meetings were held and Principal Ahlman and his team put in tremendous work to bring the program to the school. In 2019, my child was part of the first classes of dual language kindergarteners at Hibbard. Parents and the community were told that implementation of dual language would follow this group of children as they rose through the grade levels. We were assured that implementation would take place at APMA and then Roosevelt providing a pathway to bilingual certification by the end of high school. Now, to say that this process has been challenging would be an understatement. Through a pandemic, multiple strikes, and now a federal terror campaign, our kids have succeeded. Just last year, our kids earned their 5th grade seal of biliteracy, and we are so proud of what they have accomplished.

Now, after 7 years of hard work by administrators, kids, and caregivers, CPS is denying what was promised. Our kids will be left with no path to continue their dual language education because of a deeply flawed decision-making process at OMME. OMME should have never treated this as a new application. As far as I know, Hibbard and APMA are the ONLY CPS neighborhood elementary school where preK-6 and 7-8 are divided into two wholly separate buildings. I believe this was done back in the 2000s to facilitate the construction of the Edison Regional Gifted Center, a selective enrollment school. Many other schools have implemented dual language at the elementary level around the time we started. I would assert that none of them was subjected to a new application process when the kids reached the 7th grade. It is only equitable to acknowledge the unique circumstances here and not deny the continued implementation of a dual language program already in progress.

I wish I wasn't here making this last-ditch attempt to have someone help us, but here we are. I requested an appointment with a member of the board in November 2024 to discuss this issue. I followed up multiple times and was told I am in the queue, but a meeting never came. I have been in contact with OMME during this time as well, and rather than notify us directly, we learn of this denial via a district-wide email late on a Friday night. This kind of treatment is exactly why there is so little trust in CPS, and I hope that this board will make improvements so no one else has to feel ignored and disrespected like I have.

Please take immediate action to allow the continuation of the dual language at APMA. If this were any other CPS preK-8 elementary school, there would be no question about whether the

	program would continue into the 7th grade. Our kids have earned the opportunity to continue their dual language education, and CPS must deliver on its promises. Our families and APMA are ready. Staff are in place. OMME's decision is not only wrong, it violates the trust that families like mine place in CPS. Please reverse this decision and allow APMA to proceed with implementation as CPS promised. Thank you for your attention to this matter.
5	WE NEED CHIARTS! With everything that's going on in our beloved city, and our children feeling terrified and singled out, they need a place to feel safe and accepted. People of our demographic don't have many opportunities to thrive. As a single mother that has raised two children within the fine arts realm, my daughter's only chance for an arts education is ChiArts. My oldest went to Lincoln Park for vocals. Now my little one is following suite. She isn't academically inclined, smart but uninterested. But she's extremely talented. This is her ONLY chance at the education she deserves. Please please please save our school. It's the only thing many of us have right now.
6	I write in support of ChiArts becoming a district managed school while ensuring that the current conservatory model remains intact. Students at ChiArts attend an 8-5:00 day with academics from 8-1 and their conservatories from 2-5. As a result, each student receives 15 hours of pre-professional arts training WEEKLY. The conservatory is not an after-school program. Instead, it is taught by working artists who have valuable real world skills to impart to the students. Students DO receive course credits each semester through their conservatories. In addition, ChiArts is already a contract school through CPS meaning that ChiArts currently meets CPS academic credit hours taught by CPS certified teachers. The school model itself DOES NOT need to change to be managed by CPS. I implore the board and the office of I&I to think creatively in how to maintain the current conservatory model with the 15 hours of pre-professional training. I know that the board has questions about the student population, this information is included on the ChiArts HS page within the CPS website: - Student Racial Makeup - 45% of ChiArts students are Hispanic, 37% are African American, and 15% are white - Economic Disadvantage - 58.2% - IEP Specialized Services - 16.5% - English learners - 8.7% In addition, ChiArts includes students from all 50 wards. We are in the process of creating a map to show the board where all of our students come from - stay tuned! On average, 68% of ChiArts incoming classes are novices. Upon admission, the team evaluates potential and interest above training - recognizing the innate abilities of the students over technical training, thus providing more equitable access to the school. The ChiArts model has proven to be successful. Colleges seek out artists from ChiArts. Our artists CHOOSE to spend from 8-5 immersed in their community. Keeping them engaged keeps them off their phones and off the streets. We should be looking to expand this model to other schools - not change the model at THIS school. The main issue with ChiArts is the funding. By becoming a district managed school, the funding can be consistent and transparent. We have numerous ideas for additional streams of revenue (Friends of, local sports team donations, individual donations, foundation donations), but we have to have the chance to act. We have only known about the lack of funding through the foundation for less than a month. Let's work together as a community to determine how CPS can manage the school and keep the conservatory with the teaching artists intact. There are proven pathways within the CPS system for making this work - our artists deserve our effort. We cannot be the only major city without a performing arts high school! ChiArts is a true gem. Let's figure out how to repeat this model within the city - not take away something that a community loves and respects.
7	

8	Why has Ms. Martinez not been terminated? I not only want to know but the entire country is waiting, and if you think this is going to go away, it's NOT! She's a psychological danger to children given her actions last weekend. It's now even more understandable why the majority of Chicago school kids FAIL! Our children deserve better, MUCH better! The CTU is nothing more than an organized crime syndicate and likely controlled by the same, and as corrupt as the day is long as are the politicians on the left mainly! Someone MUST BE BOLD and take a stand to terminate this alleged psychopath teacher NOW! It's way beyond time to clean up Chicago schools and it MUST begin with her! You all wonder why Chicago is so pathetic and such a crime ridden City?!? It starts here in the schools and this is what the kids are learning!!! Kids don't fall far from their educational tree or bad parenting! If you keep hiding your heads under a rock- the msg is clear If she can show thus behavior, so can the kids! The only difference is that they will emulate it with real weapons. When they do and you all fail to terminate her, the blood IS ON YOUR HANDS! The principle at that school equally should be terminated for her failure to act! No one really cares what this teachers reprimand is or was - IT'S NOT ENOUGH! There's already a copy cat Charlie Kirk assassin who's emulated and acted. There will be more, especially when grown adults and administrators FAIL TO ACT!
9	Dear Chicago Board of Education, Thank you for your ongoing efforts using your experience and best judgement to do what is best for our city and for our children. Your commitment to our great city is so impressive. I know your job is not easy. As a parent of a freshman at ChiArts, on her behalf, I plea with you to please vote "yes" to save ChiArts! My child has become so aspirational since attending ChiArts. She commutes an hour each way and is showing such dedication in her conservatory but also in her academics. She has found like-minded peers and inspiration from her teachers and instructors. My child's focus (obsession?!) on musical theater training is taken seriously at ChiArts, and not seen as a distraction, as it has been in the past at her previous schools. The teachers understand the passion my child feels and use it to drive her in academic assignments and her arts conservatory alike. ChiArts balances academic and arts training in such a unique way. Chicago is so lucky to have this school as an option. For many families who attend ChiArts, there would be no other way for their child to receive any level of arts instruction, let alone at a pre-professional level. I mean this because it is tuition-free, but also since the arts training is part of the school day so it helps with logistical burden that can come from extracurricular typically. This coupled with this sense of belonging and freedom of expression is what makes ChiArts such a special place. In fact, we have a vision of our two younger children (also arts-leaning and who don't quite "fit" at their current traditional school) also attending ChiArts, where being oneself is fostered and encouraged! That is my dream. Please vote "yes" to transition ChiArts to a fully District-managed school and to ensure the arts conservatory model with working artists as instructors!! Thank you!!
10	How would the Board feel about supporting a youth mentoring initiative — similar to Big Brothers Big Sisters — through the 999 Youth Foundation Center, a new program I'm working to bring into Chicago Public Schools? The goal is to create a safe, positive space where students can connect with mentors, build life skills, and find guidance after school. Programs like this could

	help reduce youth violence, improve attendance, and give students real-life role models who understand what they're going through.
11	My name is Chelsea Bashore, I am the middle school reading teacher at Esmerelda Santiago Elementary School in Humboldt Park. I implore you to consider purchasing our campus so we can remain in our home building. Our community has gone through the unbelievable. Between being told via social media that our building is closing, to have Acero heartlessly avoid confrontation and communication in clear reasoning for why this is happening. I can go on and on sharing how much of a high performing school we are, but I want to first share this. While I understand the turmoil CPS is facing with our budget and the impacts of our pathetic federal government, the impact of our building being sold will negatively ripple through the community. Gentrification has continued to push Humboldt residents out of the area. I have had numerous families leave to Indiana, not because they want to, but because they have to for survival. The cost of living and amount it takes to rent is astronomical. One of my families left and continues to come back and visit. For instance one of my students on his birthday asked to drive back into the city and see his classmates who he had been with since kindergarten. My class spent a week researching the history behind Puerto Ricans moving west in the city from Lincoln Park due to white, rich, developers. If my middle school students can identify the similarities and that history continues to repeat inequity, how can adults not connect the dots? We watched for the last two years as the first property the Diocese sold was ripped down (a former preschool, as well as a food pantry) and built into apartments whose modern style does not even consider the artistry that is all over the community. Each apartment costs 175,000 dollars. Due to the fact our students are incredibly intelligent, they worked it out that this is a little over a million dollars. Our building is currently up for 6.5 million, they are aware of the amount of money that could be made from this property and the impact of the high cost apartments that would take its place. Santiago has been a pillar in the community. We have families who not only have gone here for years, but also students who grew up and came back and enrolled their own children. We work with community members, leaders, organizations, artists to bring in connections and inspire our students. We lead with heart and constantly reflect on what our role is in Humboldt Park. Our students feel safe here. With the threat that we have actively faced from ICE, being a source of safety and sanctuary is of the utmost importance. Taking that away when we do not know yet what the future is feels cruel. While I do know those same community principals could exist in a combined school, our essence and spirit would not be the same. When schools are combined we take on their issues and lose focus on the goals and identity we have worked so hard to create. Not even beginning to mention that our new students we receive almost weekly come from the surrounding neighborhood schools, such as Diego, for fighting, low academic performance, bullying, and other inequities. Please don't take away our chance to keep creating a positive impact. Please don't continue the spread of inequity and gentrification. Please stop the stress and trauma of the unknown by purchasing our building. We will make it worthwhile. I have the privilege of teaching with the hardest working big hearted teachers and leadership, the most wonderful dedicated community, and brilliant students. We want to remain at 2150 W Cortez and do NOT want to merge with another school. Please honor the original promise of saving our building.
12	My son is a Freshman at ChiArts in the Visual Arts Conservatory. He first decided he wanted to go there in 6th grade, the first time her heard about it. We sent him for a one week summer camp, he loved it and got even more excited about going to high school there. We visited lots of schools and he worked hard to do well on the academic test, and still he wanted ChiArts. He never worked as hard at anything as he did his portfolio. I was so scared for his portfolio review and interview, but he came out beaming with pride. He was so proud of himself when he was selected to attend. Nothing has ever tested his resolve or built his confidence as much as getting into ChiArts, despite other wonderful options. It wasn't just that he always wanted to do art—he has a lot of passions. It was the environment, the opportunity to focus beyond academics, the rigger and seriousness of the conservatory model. It felt more important somehow, than just going to high school. The small cohort size, the safe space the school creates are so unique and it draws in the students who need and want that same thing. The school is majority Black and Brown, and a safe space for these student in particular, to be weird or different or uniquely talented or hyper focused is just so unique. We feel so blessed he found this space. Please keep

	it going, keep it rigorous, keep it unique—just like its students. PS. Privatization of schools is terrible (in my view) so a well done District take over of the school would be a huge win in standing up for keeping public education publicly run! We can have wonderful diverse schools in a public system, and we can have art!
13	I am writing in support of Haugan Elementary's hope to co-locate our 7th and 8th grades in the form Aspira Haugan building. The benefit would be sufficient space for students to have good educational environment, particularly students that get supportive services and confidential counseling services. We currently do not have enough spaces to provide this.
14	I strongly urge the board to push for the colocation of Haugan into the building at 3729 W Leland Ave, Chicago, IL 60625. This is the solution that is least disruptive for students, prioritizes neighborhood schools serving neighborhood students, and provides Haugan the space it needs to effectively serve their nearly 1100 students.
15	In 2019, Hibbard Elementary began its dual language program. Now, the students who started off back then are in the sixth grade and will be headed to the Albany Park Multicultural Academy next year. When the dual language program began, the community was promised that it would follow those 2019 kindergarteners as they rose through the grades. Now, CPS has denied APMA's application to be a dual language school and is stopping our children from continuing their dual language education. Please reconsider this denial because our program is not new and our children deserve to continue their progress towards biliteracy. CPS must deliver what is promised our community.
16	I am very grateful for the opportunity and the willingness to add me to be part of the opinions
17	Co- locating our 7th and 8th grade classroom would give a safe space for them to grow in there learning and still feel part of Haugan school.
18	I was privileged to be able to speak today at the board meeting to advocate for Haugan Schools' co-location request. I would like to place my remarks here in the comments as well. Thank you for your commitment to our students and families. I have been a preschool teacher at Haugan for 19 years. I was originally hired because there was a long wait list for preschool- in all of my years at Haugan, there has been a consistent and strong demand for preschool. Today, our program includes five classrooms that are fully enrolled, with the majority of our students living within our attendance area. While preschool is a citywide program, at Haugan it is truly an essential and integral part of our school community. In preschool, families build relationships with our teachers and staff, and choose to continue their child's education with us. Haugan has become a rapidly growing neighborhood school in part because of the positive experiences that they have in preschool. This growth has come with challenges. Homeroom classes are at full capacity. Space for specialized services is tight, forcing service providers to work in hallways and in converted storage closets. Having taught at Haugan for nearly 20 years, one thing is clear to me, we have run out of space. We are committed to helping all of our students learn and grow with the best resources available from preschool through 8th grade. We are asking for your support to co-locate our middle school students to the vacant third floor of a nearby school building on Leland Avenue. Colocation is a solution that uses available space in a nearby building to solve space issues at rapidly growing Haugan. This solution would unite our neighborhood at a time when communities need to come together. Co-location ensures that Haugan continues to grow as a neighborhood school that serves families from the very start—with preschool—through middle school.

Attention: Chicago School Board and Stacy Gates
Unanswered Follow up to Request of 8-24-2025

Re: 1-Million Letters Children's History Initiative

It's important to connect today's children with the Historic Goals of the American Civil Rights Renaissance of the 1960's, that lasted 11 years and the role they played.

It began with one of the most significant rulings of the 20th Century, the Brown vs. Board of Education Supreme Court Decision; which ended 58 years of Segregation Laws. It took effect 21 years after the December 18, 1865 Certification of the 13th Amendment that abolished 246 years of Chattel, a moveable property thing, Slavery. The United Nations called Chattel Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, "the greatest Holocaust in the History of Humankind."

The Supreme Court ruled that Segregation Laws caused heart and mind damage to Negro Black Children and was doubtful they would ever overcome it. They were too young to express their feelings in words, so dolls were used to prove the damage. **Today, they are 75 to 84 year old Heart and Mind Damage Survivors.** However, after their parents were bullied into silence for resisting the non compliance of the Brown vs. Board of Education Decision, the children became Freedom Fighters. **They were called the Children's Crusade, consisting of over 1,000: they marched, were jailed, beaten, firehosed, bitten by police dogs** and a 14 year old, Chicagoan, Emmett Till was kidnapped and lynched in a barn and 4 girls, ages 11 to 14, were murdered in a Baptist Church Bombing on September 15, 1963.

The American Civil Rights Renaissance of the 1960's was coined "the Movement" by Mrs. Mamie Till Mobley, the Mother of Emmett Till; who was a Chicago Public School Teacher. **The Heart and Mind Damage Survivors believe the Children Murdered in the Movement have earned a Children's History Category.** Their sacrifices should be honored and putting them on a U.S. Postage Stamp will serve as a lasting memorial.

Therefore, as Chicago Public Schools Officials, **we are requesting a follow up to the request presented on July 24, 2025 by EvAngel Mamadee YHWHnewBN, as promised.** In addition, we would like your support and participation in the 1-Million Letters Children's History Initiative, before December 18, 2025; the 160th Anniversary of the Certifying of the 13th Amendment. **We want students to use their writing skills and tell why the children should have a U.S. Postage Stamp as a lasting memorial.**

EvAngel Mamadee YHWHnewBN
Email: yhwhnewbn@aol.com
PO Box 21050, Chicago, IL 60621
Phone: (773) 436-YHWH/9494
Date: October 23, 2025

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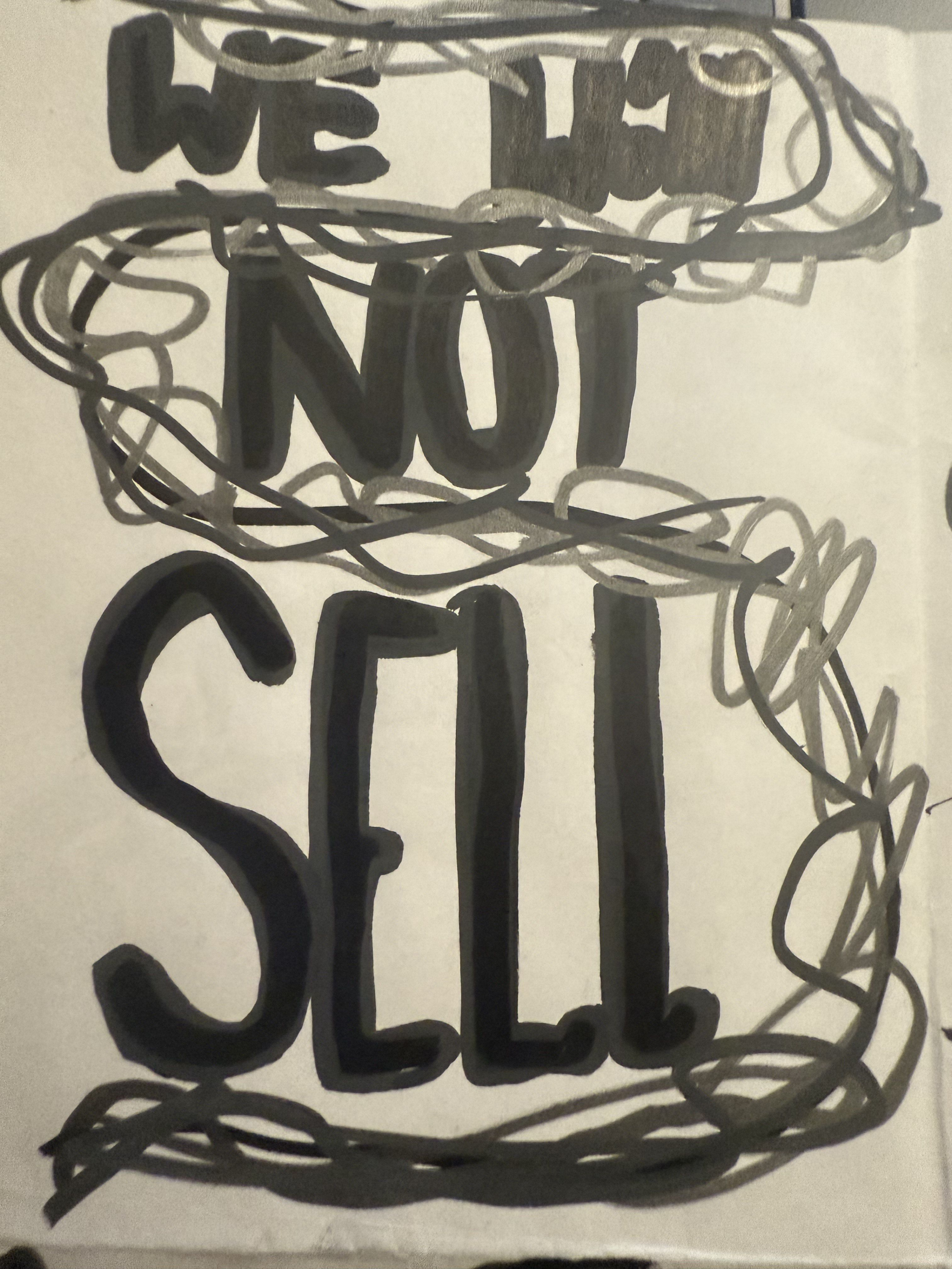
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THIS IS

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APARTMENTS



SANTIAGO
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Hello Board members and community members,

My name is Jill Freimuth, and I've had the honor of teaching first grade at Tamayo for the past fifteen years. In that time, Tamayo has become more than just a school, it's a family built on trust, love, and commitment to our students and their success.

Over the years, I've had the privilege of teaching generations of Tamayo families. Former students still reach out to share their accomplishments and milestones, and now I'm teaching the siblings and cousins of those very same children. Our families know who their first-grade teacher will be because they know us. They trust us. That sense of belonging and trust is what makes Tamayo special.

When Tamayo first began the transition to CPS, we fought to keep our school community intact, to make sure the change was smooth and supportive for our students, families, and staff. That same fight continues today. To truly honor our students and families, we must keep the staff who built this foundation. We are the heart of Tamayo, the people who know these children, their stories, and their needs.

Keeping the same staff means protecting the relationships and routines that allow our students to thrive. These children walk into our classrooms each day knowing they are safe, cared for, and understood. They see familiar faces that have guided them, comforted them, and celebrated their growth. A sudden change in the teachers they've come to trust would not only disrupt learning but also shake the sense of security that helps them succeed. Our staff knows the culture of Tamayo, the expectations of our families, and the unique strengths of our students. That knowledge cannot be replaced overnight, it has been built through years of dedication and connection.

I'm asking CPS leadership to stand with us and support the hiring and retention of our current Tamayo staff. Keeping our teachers in their classrooms isn't just a staffing decision, it's a commitment to the families who have trusted us for years. Our students deserve to see the same caring faces that greet them each morning, the teachers who know them by name and by heart.

Please help us protect what makes Tamayo strong. Support our teachers. Support our students. And let's move forward together, with the same staff, the same dedication, and the same love that has guided this community for the past fifteen years.

Thank you,

Jill Freimuth

1st Grade Teacher

Acero Rufino Tamayo

**FAR SOUTH COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL (FSCAC)
STRATEGIC EDUCATION PLAN (SEP) COMMITTEE**

Prepared by Dr. Carmen L. C. Palmer, SEP-Committee Chair

Educational Village Keepers, Founding President

Committee Members: Dr. Gueno-Co-Chair, Chicago Region Director of Illinois PTA

Deacon Samuels-Repurposing of Shuttered Schools

Mrs. Pincham- West Chesterfield Community Association (WCCA) President

Ms. Sherri Miles- Parent Leadership Training Coordinator & Mr. Mordecai Funches, Sr.- Haley School Advocate

FSCAC POSITION STATEMENT

CPS PUBLIC HEARING ON WAIVER APPLICATION AT BOARD MEETING- 10/23/2025 AT 10:30 AM

CPS WAIVER OF SECTION 27-6 OF THE ILLINOIS SCHOOL CODE

TO REDUCE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION FROM 3 DAYS PER 5-DAY WEEK TO 2 DAYS

PREPARED: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2025

Dear CPS Board of Education,

I am Dr. Carmen Palmer. On behalf of the Far South Community Action Council as chair of the FSCAC Strategic Education Plan Committee, I present the following Position Statement on behalf of our CAC in response to the CPS Waiver Application of Section 27-6 of the Illinois School Code.

The FSCAC is very much AGAINST the CPS Waiver Application that proposes that the CPS students in kindergarten through 8th grade engage in 120 minutes of physical education over TWO (2) DAYS PER 5-day week. The present minimum of THREE (3) days per 5-day week for a minimum of 120 minutes per week is already an inadequate number of minutes of weekly physical education engagement for our children. Our children need and deserve, in exchange for our taxes, a minimum of FIVE (5) days per 5-day week of physical education engagement in our Chicago Public Schools.

The following research supports our FSCAC Position Statement. Research states that DAILY PHYSICAL EDUCATION is crucial for school age children as it improves physical health, boosts academic performance, and enhances social emotional development. DAILY activity leads to: 1) better concentration; 2) reduced stress; 3) stronger bones and muscles; and 4) healthier weight. It also teaches valuable life skills like discipline, teamwork, and self-confidence. It foster habits that lead to a healthier life style in adulthood. Please review the attached research findings that further help to explain the benefits of DAILY physical education as it pertains to Academic performance; Physical health; Social-emotional development, and Long-term benefits.

In closing, the FSCAC is OPPOSED to the CPS waiver on Section 27-6 of the Illinois School Code that would reduce student engagement in Physical Education from 3 days per 5-day week to 2 days per 5-day week. In addition, the FSCAC request that CPS instead request to INCREASE student engagement in Physical Education from 3 days per 5-day week to 5 days per 5-day week in order to assure that ALL CPS STUDENTS get the research supported improvements in physical health, academic performance, and social emotional development that comes from DAILY PHYSICAL EDUCATION ENGAGEMENT. It is imperative that we provide our children of CPS with the educational support that they need to be viable citizens of this great democratic society in our city, state, and country.

Yours in education,

Dr. Carmen L. C. Palmer

FSCAC Strategic Education Committee

FSCAC SEP Committee Chair &

Educational Village Keepers, Founder

Ms. Donna Meade Jones

Far South Community Action Council

FSCAC Chair

Far South Community Coalition Ed Chair

October 22, 2025

Chicago Board of Education
1 North Dearborn, Suite 950
Chicago, IL 60602
(delivered via written comment submittal for 10-23-25 Board Meeting)

RE: Albany Park Multicultural Academy (APMA) Dual Language Program Denial

Dear President Harden and Members of the Board,

At the regular meeting of Hibbard's Local School Council on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, we were informed that the application to implement a dual language program at the Albany Park Multicultural Academy was denied by the Office of Multilingual - Multicultural Education at Chicago Public Schools. This denial will mean that our current 6th graders at Hibbard Elementary will not be able to continue their dual language education and will lose all their progress towards the seal of biliteracy when they move to APMA next year. This denial is heartbreaking for our community, and we ask that you act so our children can continue their dual language education and deliver what was promised to our school community.

About a decade ago, the Hibbard school community learned about dual language education and over the course of a few years decided together it was the best option for our school. At the time of the decision, we were told by Principal Ahlman and district leadership that this implementation would follow the first class all the way through high school with the goal of building a true preK-12 track for dual language education in Albany Park. We were thrilled with the idea that our kids could graduate with their seal of biliteracy and take the love and knowledge of language with them into adulthood. The first dual language Kindergarteners arrived at Hibbard in the fall of 2019. Needless to say, a lot has happened since then. Despite all the challenges, our kids are doing well and earned their 5th Grade certifications on the path to biliteracy just last year. Now, if OMME's decision stands, they will be denied the opportunity to continue this program.

To our knowledge, Hibbard Elementary is the only neighborhood elementary school in Chicago where preK-6 and 7-8 are divided into two wholly separate schools. This is because years ago the priority was placed on the construction of the Edison Regional Gifted Center rather than ensuring sufficient space at Hibbard. Because of this separation, OMME considered APMA to be placing a "new" application for dual language. We vehemently disagree that this program is "new." At any other CPS elementary school, the decision to implement dual language would be preK-8.

Treating this application as “new” is a disservice to the students, teachers, and administrators at Hibbard who have worked so hard. It also does not recognize the challenges we navigate in Albany Park by having two schools where in any other neighborhood there would be only one.

We are appealing to the Board in hopes that you will recognize that denying our children the opportunity to continue their dual language education is plainly wrong and is a violation of the trust our community places in CPS. Families enrolled their children in the dual language program at Hibbard with the promise that it would be available for the students through high school. This is not a new program and should never have been treated as such. We ask that CPS deliver what was promised and provide our children with the opportunity to continue their dual language education at APMA next year.

Sincerely,

Hibbard Elementary Local School Council

Jim Poole, Chair
Maggie Cullerton-Hooper, Vice Chair
Rachel Bennett, Secretary
Deanne Puloka
Lisa Ann Lux
Marly Lopez
Herve Zille
Dulce Jimenez
Angela Davis
Emily Tamblyn

cc:

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Office of Multilingual-Multicultural Education (omme@cps.edu)
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Why is Acero Charter Schools closing their most high performing school? That's the question my colleagues and I at Rufino Tamayo School kept asking ourselves last year. We were so relieved and excited when the board said that our school would be transitioned to CPS. We thought this meant that our school community would still be together. We thought that we could continue our work that has led to the highest Language Arts scores in the neighborhood of Gage Park. We thought that we could continue our work that has led to 90% of our 8th graders receiving the seal of biliteracy.

Now we're not sure. Our students, families and staff continue to live in uncertainty. We can't make plans for next year because we don't know if we have jobs next year.

It reminds me of an old Sunday school song: "A church is not the building, a church is not the steeple, a church is the people". In our case, Rufino Tamayo School is the people. Fulfill the promise you made to our school community- keep our teachers at our school. Help us fulfill our promise to our families: Tamayo School is a safe place for students to become "Civic Citizens, Community Leaders, College and Career Ready."

I am a proud Haugan parent and LSC Chairperson. I implore you to grant our request to colocate our 7th and 8th grade students in the vacant space in the school building at 3729 W. Leland starting next fall. We are extremely overcrowded, as a neighborhood school we take all comers, and we anticipate significant additional enrollment in coming years for several reasons. Specifically, both because there is strong word of mouth about our wonderful school and due to the new CPS policy whereby Haugan students can remain until graduation even if they move elsewhere in the city.

Any proposal other than co-location, or an addition to our school, will disrupt and harm our students and families. Removing or turning away families who want to attend Haugan is akin to controlled enrollment, punishes us for our success, and is not a solution at all.

Haugan is very special to me. I believe it epitomizes the dream and ideal of an excellent public education for every child, no matter where they come from. Over the years as a parent of 4 I have been involved in 7 high quality CPS schools. But Haugan, my neighborhood school, is the one that will live in our hearts forever. And when I meet other Haugan parents, and alumni of all ages, we are not alone in this.

I am very worried about what will happen if our request to co-locate is not granted. We are out of space, and we thank board members Rivas, Rios-Sierra, and Pope for visiting our school and seeing our space issues first hand. If our request to co-locate is not granted, what will be done instead? We are a united, beautiful, diverse school community with students from PK 3 through 8th grade. But, we are told, our core grades are K-8, and thus one potential "solution" is to take away our PK program.

As a former Haugan PK parent, this idea personally strikes me with fear, dread, and perhaps regret for ever promoting our fantastic school or speaking up about our crowding at all. As a journalist said about our school in 2005 after we initially lost the new school building at 3729 W. Leland, built to relieve our overcrowding, to a charter school, "Be Careful What You Ask For." Once again, we are out of space, and asking for help, and in this case our reward may be to lose our phenomenal PK program, leaving us as the only CPS school in or near Albany Park without one.

I have been a parent since 1999 and lived a block away from Haugan since 2000 but did not try Haugan until 2018, when free PK for all came online for my youngest. My older kids attended a private PK which we liked a lot, and then CPS magnet or gifted schools outside Albany Park.

Haugan PK blew the private PK out of the water. My child's teacher, who is speaking before you this month, was kind, creative, and talented, and focused on providing an enriched and supportive experience for all students. My child loved Haugan from day one and still does, several years later.

I was amazed that Haugan did so much with so little and with no recognition. And with the diversity - at least 8 languages were spoken by my child's classmates' parents. And with the

loveliness of walking to school. I am so thankful to be part of this beautiful community, all the more so during these difficult times.

Absent Haugan PK, my youngest likely would have ended up, like her siblings, in Go CPS school outside Albany Park, and I would not not be fighting for Haugan today and likely would not 100% believe - as I now do because of of our time at Haugan - that a public school can really do it all, no matter what he challenges.

Haugan PK is undeniably a factor in our school's growth. Demand for our program is high.

Life-changing as Haugan PK was for us, it is much more so for families with fewer options, who cannot drive or pay for private PK or manage multiple dropoffs if our PK is taken away. The vast majority of Haugan students are still low-income, English language learners, or both.

If we lose our PK these students will likely lose access to PK entirely and the critical benefits of early education for disadvantaged children. This would be tragic, directly undermine the goals of PK for all, and put our students behind.

Once again, we implore you not to solve our space issue by taking away our students including our most vulnerable students, our PK and cluster special education children. PK is our foundation, our building block, and is critical to the success of our educational mission. Our PK students are an important part of our community, for instance our older kids, including mine, are reading buddies with our littles. PK is an essential part of who we are.

Please move forward with the only real solution on the table, co-location of our 7th and 8th graders in the building at 3729 W. Leland.