

October 27, 2021 Board Meeting Written Comments
Received between Monday, October 25th and Thursday, October 28th
Submitted via Written Comments Form

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|---|--|
| 1 | <p>HISTORY IS CHICAGO VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL</p> <p>This statement is for making Chicago Vocational High School historical. This institution has produced many prominent men and women. I myself attended this school in 1978, my sisters, nieces and children attended. It started us in our career fields and was the start of our success in life. In addition it was a Navy teaching school. It has many alumni that are famous and world changers. It not only taught academic subject material but discipline, respect and order. It should not only be put back to its original name, but put back to its intended use as a vocational and trade school for those that do not desire to go to a regular college. It is where I received my start in government. Began my career at the age of 13 through a young people work program and initiative and taking civil service exam. I was able to retire at the age of 45 in federal service as an expert in housing, development and collaborative partnership building. I now have two businesses that assist others to begin, sustain, and maintain their businesses. I also assist them in working with government on all levels and teaching strategies and techniques creating systemic change. As a retired Public Trust Officer and Enforcement Analyst, the public is owed a school such as what I have stated Chicago Vocational High School with funding to expand and give a needed fix-up with quality material. Some of the alumni should be reached out to such as myself and others to make this the state of art vocational school globally nationally and internationally. Give Us a Chance for the late Principal Reginald Brown, Music Director Harold Bray, they are deceased but great champions. Let the legacy live it is a lot of history. Humbly Submitted Ms. Freddie C Batchelor Retired Public Trust Officer (US Dept. HUD)/Enforcement Analyst Business Owner Enterprise of Destiny Let It Live</p> |
| 2 | <p>If a student needs to travel out of state for court ordered custody, please confirm CPS guidelines to exempt the kid from quarantine after travel, as indicated in the COVID-19 travel guidelines for families and CDPH COVID-19 Travel Advisory.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Board of Education Public Comment: ASL Interpreters for students</p> <p>As parents of a CPS 6th grader with profound deafness (and as a deaf father who has benefited from ASL interpreters and has personal experience with this particular issue), we petition the board to consider supporting deaf and hard of hearing diverse learners by ensuring that interpreters and/or substitute interpreters are available for instruction at all times. Speaking from experience, this has not always been the case. The most memorable incident was when our son attended summer school: his assigned teacher was not a teacher of the deaf nor was an ASL interpreter available to him. His teacher at the time actually told us that our son was teaching her sign language! Imagine our shock at learning that our son's teacher was not adequately trained or resourced to provide meaningful instruction. Since then, there have been random times that an ASL interpreter has not been available due to lack of substitutes/sub availability. This puts a considerable strain on his ability to learn as the teacher moves about the room, assists other students, has his/her back to the classroom (while speaking) when writing on the board. All of these seemingly insignificant components of teaching are magnified when a</p> |

deaf/hard of hearing child has no interpreter to communicate those instructions/lessons. As you know, most children will not advocate for themselves and request that the teacher repeat the instruction. This is why having interpreters and reliable substitute interpreters is crucial in the classroom. Often times, students are expected to just “get by” without an ASL interpreter in the classroom, especially when a substitute is needed. No other students are subjected to the absence of their primary communication methodology. Imagine if hearing students were guided to “get by” learning content without the benefit of verbal instruction. Inconceivable! We are simply asking that the board of education ensures that ASL interpreters and substitute interpreters are available at all times so that our diverse learners are treated equitably.

4

Dear Board Members,

I would like to make you aware of our Near North community's past 2 year efforts to ask CPS to extend Safe Passage routes for children north of Division street surrounding the Manierre school on Hudson street and down Sedgwick. A Safe Passage route that would connect with the Safe Passage routes south of Division street that surround Ogden-Jenner school.

This is an area north of Division street has 100's of CPS students walking to and from CPS schools in an area that has historically known gang violence that surrounds Marshall Field Garden Apartments. Violence that has exponentially increased over this past year. Here is an example of one weekend of violence in the area.

https://cwbchicago.com/2021/10/man-shot-in-old-town-on-sunday-evening-police-say.html?fbclid=IwAR127pZSxkrEMOf8d6rDD_kqng1WUzcPPWtZB4L2wI0Ytd0UmSpZZJJeCRQ

The Near North Unity Program, local residents, the 18th District Police, and the Alderman of the Ward support adding a Safe Passage routes to better support students in the area walking to and from schools like Salazar, Franklin, Manierre, and Ogden-Jenner. In Marshall Field Gardens alone there are over 2000 residents, with at least half of these households having children, many of whom attend CPS.

Please ask the 18th District about the shootings here and the gang war that borders Division street and you can see why NNUP has continued to advocate for bringing the successful Safe Passage to this area. Please don't wait until a student is harmed before CPS considers extending Safe Passage north of Division street in our Near North area.

Thank you for considering this information.

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Dear Members of the Chicago Board of Education,

I am submitting these written comments because I am unable to share Healthy Schools Campaign's perspective during the public participation segment of today's board meeting.

In a previous communication (attached) we shared detailed comments and concerns about the policy that you are considering today. We were able to discuss these concerns with Katie Ellis, Chief of Staff to the Board of Education. In a follow-up email to us, she

shared additional information about the Office of Teaching and Learning's plans and intentions. We particularly appreciate the clarification of the new approach to waivers. We have great confidence in the commitment of Eileen Hare, Director of Health and Physical Education, and can only hope that the permanent Chief Education Officer will be committed to the plans that have been laid out to support PE.

Nevertheless, our experience working with CPS and national stakeholders on a variety of wellness-related policies has taught us that the written language of policies matters, and that the support of district and school level staff, partners and others is not a substitute for clear, transparent, accountable policy language. With that in mind, we continue to have some concerns in two major areas:

First, our experience with the CPS Wellness Policy has shown that a clearly defined review process that compares the policy against current best practice, collects implementation data and raises up the voices of parents and school staff can be invaluable. HSC has helped CPS with this triennial review process twice, and because it is clearly laid out in the Wellness Policy, the process does not have to be reinvented each time. The results are available to the public as a matter of policy.

The proposed PE policy relies on the board to request this type of review, and does not lay out any requirements for its timing or the public reporting of results. While it may be true that the required reporting process in the previous policy was not followed with fidelity, that is not an argument against clear policy language that demands transparency and accountability; rather it is an argument for better implementation of the policy.

Second, we have seen first-hand the power of setting out ambitious targets, rather than settling for easier-to-meet minimums. In the years after the USDA set out new sodium guidelines for school meals, for example, districts worked hard to meet the targets, and many of them had met the second level of sodium reduction even before those targets were rolled back during the Trump Administration.

The proposed PE policy actively reduces the number of minutes required for middle school students, moving away from the CDC's guidelines. At a time when the health and well-being of CPS students is as critical as it has ever been, and CPS is making other significant investments to support student mental and physical health and wellness, CPS should be reinforcing these efforts by layering its investments, rather than weakening the PE policy.

Thanks for your consideration of concerns. We look forward to continuing to work with CPS in a strong implementation of PE and position CPS for bringing PE policy and practice into alignment with health promoting practices.

Sincerely,

Rochelle Davis
President and CEO
Healthy Schools Campaign

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STATEMENT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION 10/27/2021

We are here today to bring attention to a persistent problem in CPS that many of you may be unaware of. As you may know, the educational field is experiencing a nationwide substitute shortage. Most publicized is the shortage of substitute teachers, but you should be aware that there is a dire shortage for support staff as well. One particular shortage is that of substitute American Sign Language interpreters. This statement was prepared by CPS sign language interpreters who were unable to be here because of their inability to secure a substitute for this time, despite attempting to do so more than a week in advance.

Many students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing rely on sign language to communicate, and therefore have sign language interpreter services written into their Individualized Education Plans. Once in their IEP, these services are guaranteed to them by federal law. Unfortunately, the lack of qualified and available substitute interpreters means that when a school-based interpreter is absent without a substitute, this puts significant stress on their team members who often give up preps and lunches to cover classes. If classes are unable to be subbed for at all, this means that their students attend classes or even face whole days sitting in a classroom with little or no ability to understand the content or to communicate with their teachers and peers.

Currently, there are over 30 full-time sign language interpreters in the district, and CPS enlists only five substitute interpreters to cover them all. Many of these substitutes work other part-time jobs, are only available a few days a week, or are already covering long-term leaves of absence in the district. The number of available substitute interpreters has been a problem for many years, but it is particularly dire now as interpreters are having to take more time off for reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

What we ask you today is to increase the number of substitute interpreter positions in CPS, and to increase efforts to procure more substitutes who are properly qualified and consistently available to do this important work. We urge the members of the board to prioritize this issue and provide CPS's deaf and hard-of-hearing students the services and equal access they deserve.

Respectfully,

Kelsey Cavanaugh, Kathryn Schmidt, and CPS's Educational Sign Language Interpreters

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Camielle J Jefferson

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(This document available online at: bit.ly/cpsfixsoppa)

My name is Dale Reed. I am here today to draw attention to an inequity issue caused by the CPS implementation of the Student Online Personal Protection Act (SOPPA). My 3 kids went to CPS, I was an LSC member for 10 years, I'm a Computer Science professor at UIC, and I'm a founding member of the Chicago Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA).

For computer science education, non-CPS schools in Illinois and across the country use popular, well supported software developed by leaders in the field (e.g. MIT's Scratch, Berkeley's Snap, the non-profit Code.org) that is not approved for use in CPS. Code.org "has provided courses at no cost to CPS since 2014... and has served ~800 CPS teachers and over 163,000 students at 388 schools. [The CPS] application process

contains onerous requirements unrelated to student privacy that make it prohibitive for organizations like Code.org [to operate].”⁴

Illinois Families for Public Schools (IL-FPS at ilfps.org) were the primary advocates who worked to pass SOPPA.⁷ The director, Cassie Creswell, is deeply concerned about the CPS rollout. The CPS interpretation bars teachers from using software SOPPA doesn't apply to, while the district's Student Information System (Aspen) -- in use in every school in the district -- is not even on the list of approved software. (See the ILFPS letter and the CPS response.)

Right now teachers are blocked from using the best available tools and curriculum for reasons that simply do not make sense, putting our students at a competitive disadvantage.

We're asking CPS to stop depriving students of access to much-needed software. Our two actionable requests to that end are:

Decouple the CPS SOPPA compliance process from the vendor approval process.

Nonprofits that provide free software are not selling anything, and so do not fit into the CPS vendor requirements.

Join the Illinois Student Privacy Alliance (ISPA), a consortium that is free for districts to join and allows access to existing SOPPA compliant contracts.

Links and References:

1. The Learning Technology Center (LTC) is an Illinois State Board of Education program that supports all public PK-12 districts, schools, and educators. See its description of SOPPA at: https://ltcillinois.org/blog/soppa_for_teachers/

2. 'Overkill' – In CPS, student protection act hinders teachers, curriculum. Aiden Sadovi, 9/24/21 Lane Tech Champion. Accessed 10/24/2021 at bit.ly/lanepapernice

3. Lane Tech journalism students can no longer use Student Newspapers Online (SNO) or Adobe's InDesign, even though SOPPA should not apply to InDesign. bit.ly/lanepaper

4. According to Code.org Outreach Manager Jared Fritz, and Research and Evaluation manager Baker Franke.

5. The Illinois Student Privacy Alliance (ISPA)

https://sdpc.a4l.org/view_alliance.php?state=IL has sample contracts with scores of ed tech operators and represents 92% of all Illinois school districts. Districts like Rockford, Aurora, Barrington, Hinsdale, Kenilworth, and Naperville are all a part. Notably absent is CPS.

6. The description of the process Ed Tech vendors need to go through is at:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/154U1uGvabRaVDsAwathS4fSbAeMICdlfh_ncJgYkwp1

7. In August, 2019, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker signed House Bill 3606, the Student Online Personal Protection Act of 2019, (SOPPA), which replaced the original law signed in 2017. It goes into effect on July 1, 2021.

8. CPS SOPPA info is at <https://www.cps.edu/about/policies/student-online-personal-protection-act/>

9. CPS' SOPPA policy manual is at: <https://policy.cps.edu/download.aspx?ID=1284>

10. CPS approved and pending tools listed at:

<https://cps.app.learnplatform.com/new/public/tools>

The above document was originally put together to fit within the two minute constraint required of public comment for a CPS Board meeting. Other important points did not fit within those two minutes:

- A. Because of the CPS implementation of SOPPA, all CPS students have lost access to high-quality free educational resources that are currently available to most other districts in the state. For instance CPS school newspapers can no longer use the standard publishing software that non-CPS schools continue to use (bit.ly/lanepaper).
- B. Other software (e.g. Adobe InDesign) which should still be available because it is not primarily K-12 software that is subject to the law -- is now banned for students.
- C. Our students are paying the price for the CPS SOPPA policy as CPS teachers are being forced to use software that could be firewalled at any moment, or are scrambling to replace curriculum. Students are being taught with materials and tools that do not reflect best teaching practices developed over time.

Follow-up on these issues with:

CSTA president and CPS teacher Faythe Brannon <fmbrannon@gmail.com>

Code.org's Baker Franke <baker@code.org>

CPS teacher "Solin, Jeff" <jeff@solinsystems.com>

CPS teacher john.perryman@gmail.com

Illinois Families for Public Schools director Cassie Creswell <cassie@ilfps.org>

UIC's Dale Reed reed@uic.edu

ATTACHMENTS

Board of Education Public Comment: ASL Interpreters for students

As parents of a CPS 6th grader with profound deafness (and as a deaf father who has benefited from ASL interpreters and has personal experience with this particular issue), we petition the board to consider supporting deaf and hard of hearing diverse learners by ensuring that interpreters and/or substitute interpreters are available for instruction at all times. Speaking from experience, this has not always been the case. The most memorable incident was when our son attended summer school: his assigned teacher was not a teacher of the deaf nor was an ASL interpreter available to him. His teacher at the time actually told us that our son was teaching her sign language! Imagine our shock at learning that our son's teacher was not adequately trained or resourced to provide meaningful instruction. Since then, there have been random times that an ASL interpreter has not been available due to lack of substitutes/sub availability. This puts a considerable strain on his ability to learn as the teacher moves about the room, assists other students, has his/her back to the classroom (while speaking) when writing on the board. All of these seemingly insignificant components of teaching are magnified when a deaf/hard of hearing child has no interpreter to communicate those instructions/lessons. As you know, most children will not advocate for themselves and request that the teacher repeat the instruction. This is why having interpreters and reliable substitute interpreters is crucial in the classroom. Often times, students are expected to just "get by" without an ASL interpreter in the classroom, especially when a substitute is needed. No other students are subjected to the absence of their primary communication methodology. Imagine if hearing students were guided to "get by" learning content without the benefit of verbal instruction. Inconceivable! We are simply asking that the board of education ensures that ASL interpreters and substitute interpreters are available at all times so that our diverse learners are treated equitably.

October 26, 2021

President del Valle and Members of the Board
Chicago Board of Education
42 W. Madison Street
Chicago, IL 60602



As you consider the proposed update to the district's physical education policy, we urge you to prioritize health and equity for all CPS students. The American Heart Association (AHA) believes that physical education is an important part of a student's comprehensive, well-rounded education program and a means of positively affecting life-long health and well-being. Optimally, physical education will engage students in health-promoting physical activity for at least half of class time and teach them the knowledge and skills necessary for lifelong physical activity. The AHA recommends 150 minutes of physical education each week for children in elementary school and 225 minutes per week for middle school and high school. The AHA also believes that physical education should be supplemented, but not replaced, by additional physical activity opportunities including classroom physical activity breaks, active learning, intramurals, afterschool programs, and recess.

With these and other goals in mind, we are gratified to see many positive proposed changes within the CPS PE policy, including proposals to:

- Protect PE class time by specifying that health education and sexual health education cannot be taught in lieu of physical education in grades K-4 and by eliminating the requirement that high schools be required to integrate driver education into physical education.
- Ensure more consistent and equitable implementation of PE across CPS through the inclusion of an equity statement and a process for evaluating the equity impact of the policy.
- Place PE under the purview of the Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL), which also oversees all other core subjects. This will give PE much more access at the table especially when the district is making decisions around investing in curriculum and allocating resources for student learning and professional development.
- Invest in PE by prioritizing PE spaces and equipment, and ensuring that PE teachers have access to support and professional learning opportunities.
- Increase transparency and accountability by publicly disclosing information about PE programming.

We must also however urge that some proposed changes be strengthened prior to adoption to be brought into closer alignment with national best practice. Areas of concern include:

- **Waivers:** The misuse and overuse of waivers was identified during the stakeholder engagement process undertaken by the CPS task force as a significant barrier to effective PE implementation. IAPO recommends strengthening the language to emphasize that waivers should be kept to a minimum and by requiring the Office of Teaching and Learning to establish a transparent monitoring plan that includes a data collection process, details a timeframe for reporting data

and makes the data available to the public.

- Minutes: The proposed policy will provide less PE for students in the 5th through 8th grade by requiring PE for a minimum of 3 days per 5-day week for a minimum of 120 minutes per week. While we applaud the inclusion of the recommendation to provide the national evidenced-based practice of 225 minutes per week for students in the middle grades, in practice the stated minimum of 120 minutes of PE is likely to result in students receiving less than the recommended amount of PE.
- Accountability: The proposed policy weakens the Board's oversight role in monitoring district and individual school compliance with the PE policy. We encourage the new language to set a regular timetable for a policy review and to make data collected will be available to the public. We suggest that CPS follow a review process similar to the federally required triennial review process for the district's wellness policy.

Additionally, it is critical that any new PE policy be closely followed by an appropriations package in the FY22/23 budget that would provide sufficient funding for technical assistance, dedicated equipment, student instruction, and facilities improvement to enhance physical education programs in high-needs schools. As the Board considers this new proposed PE policy and begins its work on the FY22/23 budget, we stand ready to assist in your good work of helping to build a better future for all CPS students.

Thank you for your consideration.

Alex Meixner

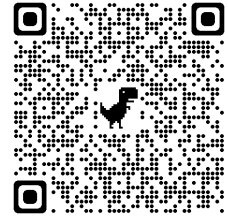
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