

**August 19th 2025, FY25 Budget Hearings Written Comments
Received between Friday, August 15th and, August 20th Submitted via Written
Comments Form**

1	<p>I applaud the proposed reduction of \$50 million in central office spending, and urge the board to consider further cuts to central office rather than consider a loan. From first hand experience as an employee within the academic offices, there is rampant waste and inefficiencies. The number of employees in academic offices have ballooned since Covid, but the number of teachers they are serving has dropped dramatically. This will be the 5th year since the Skyline curriculum was first introduced, and there is simply no longer a need for so many employees to provide professional learning on this content. Attendance at professional learning sessions has fallen dramatically. It is the norm to have central office employees devote 50 hours to develop content that is delivered by 2+ employees in full-day sessions to an audience of 1-10 teachers or administrators. This is not a responsible use of taxpayer money. There is also little to no oversight or accountability for employees when they work from home 3+ days a week. Employees openly talk about doing housework, going to the beach, or watching TV during the work day. Managers frequently send employees home early from work. It's embarrassing to hear about the level of need facing our schools when there is this much waste in central office.</p>

****ATTACHMENTS****

PUBLIC COMMENT

August 19, 2025 FY26 Budget Hearing

I attended the Chicago Board of Education's scheduled Budget Hearing on Tuesday, August 19, 2025 at 4:30pm, for the purpose of addressing current "Budget Crisis" facing the Chicago Public Schools. I arrived at 3:25pm, so that I could sign up to speak. When I approached the sign-in table, I was told by the woman setting there, "The rules have changed!" Now, a person must sign up to speak 48 hours before the scheduled Board Meeting; their name will be placed in a "lottery;" afterwards, a *maximum* of fifteen (15) names will be selected. It should be noted if one hundred (100), fifty (50), twenty-five (25), or twenty (20) sign up, then only fifteen (15) will be given an opportunity to speak. Not first come, first serve!

I believe this is a *blatant* violation of the *Open Meetings Act (OMA)*. I plan to attend the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Education on Thursday August 28, 2025. If I don't speak on August 28, 2025, then I will file a formal complaint with the Attorney General's Office for violation of the Open Meetings Act (OMA). Specifically, Denying public comment: "Public bodies must allow for public comment at meetings, and policies that unduly limit or restrict comment can violate the OMA."

Dr. Angel Alvarez, CPS Board Budget Meeting 8/19/2025

Dear CPS Board,

I am writing to express concern regarding the FY2026 budget proposal and to urge the Board to provide greater transparency and contextualization around its long-term sustainability and the assumptions underlying its financial projections. I have shared these concerns with past boards and hope you will bring about the fiscal transparency and accountability needed. I previously warned that the previous assumptions were incorrect and would result in the higher deficits we face today.

I appreciate the efforts to protect school-level funding and avoid mid-year cuts. However, the current budget relies heavily on temporary measures and optimistic revenue assumptions. The projected budget deficits lack any proper context, including the assumptions on enrollment (which will likely decline), on rising labor costs, and increases in operating costs, including utilities.

To ensure fiscal responsibility and protect the long-term health of the District, I respectfully urge the Board to:

1. **Publish a multi-year financial outlook** that includes realistic revenue and expenditure projections through FY2030, accounting for the phase-out of one-time funds and the full cost of contractual obligations.
2. **Clarify the assumptions** behind projected revenues, especially those tied to state funding, TIF surpluses, and debt refinancing strategies.
3. **Develop contingency plans** for sustaining essential programs and staffing in the event that projected revenues do not materialize.
4. **Engage the public** in a transparent dialogue about trade-offs, priorities, and the need for sustainable revenue sources.

Chicago's students deserve a school system that is not only equitable and student-centered today, but also financially stable in the years to come. A budget that is grounded in realistic assumptions and long-term planning is essential to achieving that vision.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued service to the students and families of Chicago.

Sincerely,

Dr. Angel Alvarez