

## Community Meeting for the Proposal to Close Granville T. Woods Elementary School

April 9, 2013 5:00---7:00 p.m.

Location: Harper High School, 6520 S. Wood

### **CPS Facilitators:**

Melinda Gildart, Controller

Jack Elsey, Chief Officer of Innovation and Incubation

### **CPS Presentation**

Melinda Gildart, Controller, introduced the meeting. She presented an overview of the materials available to meeting attendees, and provided information about subsequent meetings. Ms. Gildart introduced Jack Elsey, the Chief Officer of Innovation and Incubation. Mr. Elsey reviewed the meeting's purpose, rules and procedures. He introduced the court reporter and note taker and time keeper, and ensured that all public comments would become part of the public record. The meeting was then opened for public comment.

### **Brief Summary**

The purpose of the meeting was to receive public comments on the proposal to close Granville T. Woods Elementary School in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-230. There were about 100 community members in attendance and about 29 speakers and presenters. The speakers ranged from parents, teachers, community members, representatives from local organizations and students from Woods Elementary. The speaker comments focused on a variety of topics including the following:

- Presentation on student performance data in Reading, Math and across subgroups of students; school culture and climate; school report cards; comparisons to other neighborhood schools
- Challenges of Woods' status as "underutilized," claims that the school is utilizing its space efficiently
- Demands to keep Woods open
- Concerns about student safety in Englewood community
- Concerns about CPS's role in destabilizing communities
- Woods' relationships with community groups and local community organizations and external partnerships
- The establishment of a student committee at Woods to keep the school open
- The role of the school in community
- Anger and disappointment that the city is attempting to restore its finances by disinvesting in local schools.
- Concern about the well-being of the teachers and staff
- Testimonials about the commitment and dedication of the staff

- The importance of Woods Elementary to the community and neighborhood; the historical significance of the school
- Presentation by students about Woods' performance on ISAT testing and student attendance
- Concerns about why CPS would elect to close schools with science labs, art and music rooms and multiple media centers