

Community Meeting for the Proposal to Close Pope Elementary School

April 13, 2013 10:00am-12:00pm

Location: Manley High School 2935 W. Polk Street

CPS Staff in Attendance

Mr. Robert Boik, Chief of Staff Operations

Ms. Susan Kajiwaru-Ansai, Officer of Professional Learning

Ms. Chandra James, Network Chief of Proposed Action

Ms. Shonta Muhammad

Ms. Lorena Montenegro

Mr. Lionel Smith

Mr. Warren Morgan, II, Principal of Manley HS

Also Present:

Mr. Matt Ginsberg-Jaeckle, interpreter

Mr. Enrique Ortiz, interpreter

CPS Presentation

Bob Boik introduced himself and stated that the meeting is the second community meeting on the proposed closing of Pope Elementary School. He introduced Susan Kajiwaru-Ansai and the Spanish interpreter. He stated that April 19th is the Public Hearing at 125 S. Clark Street from 5:30pm-7:30pm. He stated that he and other CPS officials were representing the CEO of Chicago Public Schools. He said that questions will be catalogued and answered on cps website: cps.edu/qualityschools. He emphasized that every receiving school will have safe passage in place and the department will be working with the Chicago Police Department. He said every welcoming school will receive additional security and updated safety & security equipment to provide students with a safe transition. He briefly went over a handout given to the participants at the registration table titled, *Providing a Better Education for All Students: Pope and Johnson Elementary School*. He reviewed the handouts provided to community members which included more detailed information about the action, boundary changes, and transitional supports.

Brief Summary

The Purpose of the community meeting was to hear public comments on the proposed closing of Nathaniel Pope Elementary into James Weldon Johnson Elementary School in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-230. The meeting was held at Manley High School and there were 28 community members present at the meeting. The speakers' comments focused on a variety of topics including:

- Concern that students from Pope and Johnson would not get along
- Concern for student safety regarding the commute to the new school
- Claim that the school is not underutilized and that CPS needs to provide accurate data

- The administration and staff at the school deserve a second chance
- Claim that it costs 9 million to keep the school open and 8 million to build safe passage
- Alderman stated that he corrected information on the CPS handouts and stated that Pope has a science lab and that it is ADA approved
- Questions around why the school is closing if it is performing well
- Questions why schools on the north side that are underutilized yet are not part of the list of actions
- Pope's ISAT scores have been rising
- Pope is a community school and is integral to keep open for the community