

Community Meeting for the Proposal to Close Nathan R Goldblatt Elementary School

April 15, 2013; 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Location: Al Raby High School, 3545 W. Fulton Boulevard

CPS Facilitators:

Myetie Hamilton, School Support Center Officer

Steve Gering, School Leadership Development Officer

Also in Attendance:

Wanda Washington, Chief of Garfield Humboldt Network

Herald Johnson, Deputy Chief of Garfield Humboldt Network

Tracey Ginwright, Assistant Deputy Chief of Schools

CPS Presentation

Ms. Hamilton opened the meeting by welcoming audience. She introduced herself, as well as her co-facilitator, Mr. Gering. She provided a brief overview of the proposed transition plan, highlighting technology upgrades and other key benefits. She then transitioned to Mr. Gering, who facilitated public comments. Mr. Gering added at one point that answers to frequently asked questions will be posted online.

Brief Summary

The purpose of the meeting was to receive public comments on the proposal to close Nathan R. Goldblatt Elementary School and welcome students at Helen M. Hefferan Elementary School, in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-230. Alderman Ervin voiced his opposition to the action due to safety concerns. The speaker comments focused on a number of topics, summarized below:

- Concern was raised about Goldblatt students not feeling comfortable at Hefferan.
- Concern was raised about gangs and drugs in the area by multiple speakers.
- Multiple speakers commented on Goldblatt's improving performance.
- One speaker requested answers to questions previously asked. She questioned CPS's fiscal allocation with regard to school actions.
- One speaker asked CPS to make sure all students are accounted for in the transition.
- One speaker said that Hefferan's lack of school uniforms caused chaos.
- One speaker said some of Goldblatt's teachers should move to Hefferan so that children could see familiar faces.
- One speaker cited the disparity between schools that receive STEM programs and those that don't.
- One speaker described the Goldblatt staff as a family.