

ORIGINAL

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE MIRIAM G. CANTER MIDDLE SCHOOL
AND WELCOME STUDENTS AT WILLIAM H. RAY ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL OR BRET HARTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Public Hearing

STENOGRAPHIC REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had in
the above-entitled matter held on April 17, 2013,
at Central Office, 125 South Clark Street, Room
1550, Chicago, Illinois, commencing at 5:30 p.m.,
before the Honorable Gilbert J. Grossi, Retired,
Independent Hearing Officer.

CPS STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

MS. WYNTER JACKSON, Law Department

MS. ASHLEY RICHARDSON, Portfolio
Planner

MR. JOHN PRICE, Chief of Schools, Burnham
Park Elementary Network

Reported by: Anna M. Morales, CSR, RMR

License No.: 084-002854

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10	of hearing.)	

11

12 *No Exhibit C was marked*

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1 (Whereupon, the following
2 proceedings commenced at
3 5:30 o'clock p.m.)

4 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Can everybody hear me
5 in the back? I guess we should get started. It's
6 5:30.

7 Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My
8 name is Gil Grossi. I am the Independent Hearing
9 Officer who will be presiding over this public
10 hearing on the proposed closure of Miriam Canter
11 Middle School. Since we have two hours allotted
12 for the meeting, the way I'm going to start this is
13 allot one hour -- wait a minute, it's not on again.
14 If you can't hear me, tell me. This silly device
15 has turned itself off for some reason. Can you
16 hear me without the device?

17 VOICES: Yes.

18 A VOICE: No.

19 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: All right. Let's try
20 this one.

21 Since we have two hours assigned for the
22 meeting, I'm going to start out by assigning an
23 hour to the Chicago Board of Education, an hour to
24 the public, but if the Board does not use their

1 full hour, I will let the public use the remaining
2 portion of their time.

3 The only rules I really have tonight are
4 that everyone be civil and respectful and abide by
5 the time limits. I was a judge for 23 years so I'm
6 used to listening to both sides of every issue
7 which is exactly what I intend to do tonight.

8 I'm going to turn the floor over to the
9 attorney for the Chicago Board of Education. Now
10 the reason why they get to go first is because
11 they're the ones who are proposing the closure.

12 So, at this time, counsel for the Board.

13 MS. JACKSON: Thank you. Your Honor, my name
14 is Wynter Jackson. That's spelled W-y-n-t-e-r.
15 Last name Jackson, J-a-c-k-s-o-n; and, as you
16 already stated, I am an attorney with the Chicago
17 Board of Education's Law Department.

18 I'm appearing before you this evening in
19 connection with the proposal of the Chief Executive
20 Officer, or the CEO, of the Chicago Public Schools
21 to close Miriam G. Canter Middle School, or Canter,
22 and welcome returning students at William H. Ray
23 Elementary School or Bret Harte Elementary School.

24 At this time, I would like to tender to

1 you and ask that you would enter into the record
2 the CEO's compiled Exhibit Number 1, a copy of
3 which I have already tendered to Madam Court
4 Reporter.

5 The CEO's compiled Exhibit Number 1 is a
6 binder of documents being submitted for your
7 consideration in support of the CEO's proposal. A
8 copy of this binder is also available for public
9 viewing on the podium to my left.

10 The binder consists of evidence in the
11 form of documents and written statements
12 demonstrating that the CEO's proposal complies with
13 the requirements of the Illinois School Code and
14 the CEO's Guidelines for School Actions.

15 Specifically, the written statements in
16 the documents demonstrate the following:

17 In Tab A, the binder includes notice
18 letters to the parents and guardians of students,
19 school staff members and Local School Council
20 members at Cantor, Ray, and Harte.

21 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Pardon me, can I have
22 the binder now?

23 MS. JACKSON: Sure. For the record, I have
24 tendered the CEO's compiled Exhibit Number 1 to the

1 Hearing Officer, and you'll notice that at Tab A
2 the binder includes notice letters to the parents
3 and guardians of students, school staff members,
4 and Local School Council members at Canter, Ray,
5 and Harte which all are accompanied by draft
6 transition plans. The notice letters and draft
7 transition plan describe the following:

8 Number 1, it describes the basis for the
9 proposal. Number 2, how the proposal meets the
10 criteria of the guidelines. Number 3, it
11 identifies supports for student safety and
12 security, academics, social and emotional needs,
13 and specific supports for students with
14 disabilities, students in temporary living
15 situations, and English-language learners. And
16 Number 4, it identifies the student's option to
17 enroll in a higher performing school, provides
18 information on choice of schools, and identifies
19 transportation.

20 Tab A also includes the notice of the
21 scheduled community meetings and hearings published
22 in the newspaper along with affidavits attesting to
23 the delivery of notice to Canter, Ray, and Harte,
24 parents or guardians, school staff, Local School

1 Council members, and elected officials.

2 Finally, Mr. Hearing Officer, Tab A
3 includes an affidavit attesting to proper
4 publication of the following: 1, the list of
5 qualified independent hearing officers and draft
6 Guidelines for School Actions before November 1st.
7 Number 2, the finalized Guidelines for School
8 Actions following a 21-day public comment period.
9 Number 3, the proposals before March 31st and at
10 least 15 calendar days before the first community
11 meeting. And Number 4, summaries from those
12 community meetings within five days after the
13 meeting.

14 At Tab E, Mr. Hearing Officer, the binder
15 includes the Illinois School Code provisions
16 designating the powers of the Board and outlines
17 the process for school actions. This tab also
18 includes the Board's Policy on School Performance,
19 Remediation, and Probation for the 2011 and 2012
20 school year and the Policy on the Review and
21 Establishment of School Attendance Boundaries.

22 Also at Tab E are the Chicago Public
23 Schools Space Utilization Standards and the CEO's
24 Guidelines for School Actions for the 2012 and 2013

1 school year. And, finally, Tab E includes the
2 CEO's Procedures for Public Hearings on Proposed
3 School Closings.

4 The final tab, Tab C, of the binder
5 includes written evidence in support of the CEO's
6 proposal. Tab C contains the transcripts and
7 summaries from the two community meetings to elicit
8 public comment held at a location that was
9 convenient to the Canter, Harte, and Ray Schools
10 communities. Tab C also includes the written
11 statement of witnesses you'll hear from this
12 evening, Ashley Richardson along with her
13 presentation demonstrating Canter's
14 underutilization and the space available at both
15 the Ray and Harte facilities to welcome students
16 without exceeding their individual enrollment
17 efficiency range. And it also includes a map of
18 the proposed attendance area boundary change.

19 And, finally, Tab C includes the written
20 statement of John Price, the CEO's second witness
21 along with documents demonstrating both Ray and
22 Harte status as higher performing schools and
23 outlines the supports that will be offered to
24 students as they transition.

1 And so as I've already tendered the CEO's
2 compiled Exhibit Number 1, I respectfully request
3 that it be admitted into the record.

4 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: It will be admitted.

5 MS. JACKSON: And, at this time, your Honor, I
6 would like to now introduce the CEO's
7 representative, Ashley Richardson, who will make a
8 statement in support of the proposal, and you can
9 find that statement at Tab 21 of the binder.

10 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Ashley Richardson.

11 MS. JACKSON: Before Ms. Richardson begins, we
12 would like to announce that we do have translation
13 services for anyone who needs those. If someone
14 needs a sign language interpreter, we ask that you
15 let a CPS employee know, over to my right with her
16 hand raised, and we can get someone for you. And
17 we also have Spanish interpretation here.

18 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Okay, thank you.

19 MS. RICHARDSON: Good evening, your Honor. My
20 name is Ashley Richardson, A-s-h-l-e-y,
21 R-i-c-h-a-r-d-s-o-n. I am a Portfolio Planner for
22 the Chicago Public Schools. I have been in this
23 position since June of 2012. As a Portfolio
24 Planner, I manage strategic planning to improve the

1 efficient utilization of CPS facilities.

2 Prior to joining CPS, I worked as an
3 analyst and manager at Kraft Foods before obtaining
4 my master's of education in education policy and
5 management at the Harvard Graduate School of
6 Education.

7 I have been asked to appear at this
8 hearing today to convey to you, the parents, and
9 the community as well as interested members of the
10 public in attendance information regarding the
11 space utilization of the Canter facility with
12 respect to the proposal to close Canter.

13 According to the Chief Executive Officer's
14 guidelines for the 2012-2013 school year, the CEO
15 may propose to close a school if it is
16 underutilized based on CPS's Space Utilization
17 Standards and student enrollment numbers recorded
18 on the 20th day of attendance for the 2012-2013
19 school year. The CEO may only propose a closure if
20 the impacted students have the option to enroll in
21 a higher performing school and the resulting space
22 utilization after the closure will not exceed the
23 facility's enrollment efficiency range as defined
24 by the CPS Space Utilization Standards.

1 I will discuss the details regarding the
2 space utilization of this proposal while my
3 colleague, John Price, will discuss the performance
4 of the welcoming schools and highlight the supports
5 being offered in the draft transition plan.

6 Canter is currently located at 4959 South
7 Blackstone Avenue. Canter is a middle school that
8 as of the 20th day of attendance for the 2012-2013
9 school year serves 228 students in 7th and 8th
10 grades.

11 To understand the enrollment efficiency
12 range of the facility, Chicago Public Schools
13 utilizes its Space Utilization Standards which are
14 located in your binder at Tab 14. The enrollment
15 efficiency range is plus or minus 20 percent of the
16 facility's ideal enrollment. For elementary school
17 facilities, the ideal enrollment is defined by the
18 number of allotted homerooms multiplied by 30. The
19 number of allotted homerooms is approximately 76 to
20 77 percent of the total classrooms available.

21 As an elementary school's enrollment
22 increases above the efficiency range, a school may
23 be considered overcrowded as programming options
24 are reduced or compromised. As an elementary

1 school's enrollment decreases below the efficiency
2 range, a school may be considered underutilized as
3 classrooms are unused or poorly programmed making
4 the use of limited resources less effective.

5 A typical elementary school facility has a
6 total of 39 classrooms. Therefore, the number of
7 allotted homerooms approximately 76 to 77 percent
8 of 39 is 30 classrooms. Multiplying 30 classrooms
9 by 30 equals the ideal enrollment number of 900.

10 Finally, the enrollment efficiency range
11 is plus or minus 20 percent of 900 which is 720 to
12 1,080. If a school in this typical elementary
13 school facility had an enrollment below 720, it
14 would be considered underutilized. Alternatively,
15 if the school's enrollment was above 1,080, it
16 would be overcrowded.

17 There are 17 total classrooms within the
18 Canter facility. Approximately 76 to 77 percent of
19 this number is 13, the number of allotted
20 homerooms. This number multiplied by 30 yields the
21 ideal enrollment of the facility which is 390. As
22 such, the enrollment efficiency range of the Canter
23 facility is between 312 and 468 students.

24 As I stated, the enrollment of Canter as

1 of the 20th day of attendance for the 2012-2013
2 school year is 228. This number is below the
3 enrollment efficiency range and, thus, the school
4 is underutilized.

5 The CEO has proposed that students from
6 Canter be welcomed at William H. Ray Elementary, or
7 Ray, and Bret Harte Elementary School, or Harte.
8 Because there are multiple welcoming schools
9 designated for Canter, as a guide to Canter
10 parents, I would like to explain the details of the
11 proposed student reassignment plan.

12 Parents of returning Canter students can
13 determine which of the two welcoming schools their
14 students are reassigned to in one of three ways:
15 First, by checking with the principal. The
16 principal of Canter has been provided a list of all
17 Canter students and their designated welcoming
18 school. Second, by checking with staff tonight.
19 Immediately following the conclusion of this
20 hearing, staff will share student specific
21 designated welcoming school assignments with
22 parents. Third, by mail. Letters to all Canter
23 parents will be sent to the student's home address
24 of record with the same information.

1 For Canter 7th grade students who
2 currently live within the Canter attendance area,
3 their assigned welcoming school is the school whose
4 future attendance area boundary they will reside
5 in, either Ray or Harte. I will describe the
6 proposed attendance area boundary adjustments in a
7 few moments.

8 For Canter 7th graders who currently live
9 outside of the Canter attendance area, their
10 assigned welcoming school was chosen based on
11 proximity to the student's home address and
12 availability of space.

13 If this proposal was approved by the Board
14 of Education for the City of Chicago, the resulting
15 space utilization will not exceed the enrollment
16 efficiency ranges of Ray or Harte as defined by the
17 CPS Space Utilization Standards.

18 Ray has 38.5 classrooms. Please note that
19 the 0.5 indicates the presence of one or more small
20 classrooms. Approximately 76 to 77 percent of this
21 number is 29, the number of allotted homerooms.
22 This number multiplied by 30 yields the ideal
23 enrollment of the facility which is 870. As such,
24 the enrollment efficiency range of the Ray facility

1 is between 696 and 1,044 students. Ray currently
2 has 676 students enrolled.

3 Harte has 16 classrooms. Approximately 76
4 to 77 percent of this number is 12, the number of
5 allotted homerooms. This number multiplied by 30
6 yields the ideal enrollment of the facility which
7 is 360. As such, the enrollment efficiency range
8 of the Harte facility is between 288 and 432
9 students. Harte currently has 328 students
10 enrolled.

11 To demonstrate that each of the two
12 welcoming schools will operate within the
13 enrollment efficiency range if the Board approves
14 the closure of Canter and to fully explain the
15 enrollment trends associated with these schools, I
16 would like to direct your attention to the screen.

17 Projected is a slide which shows the
18 enrollment trend of Ray and Canter. Green hash
19 lines show the enrollment efficiency range of the
20 Ray facility and a circle representing the combined
21 projected enrollment for 2013-2014. As you can
22 see, the 2013-2014 projected enrollment of Ray
23 combined with Canter students projected to be
24 reassigned to Ray is 789. This projected combined

1 enrollment falls within the efficiency range of the
2 Ray facility.

3 Projected now is a slide that shows the
4 enrollment trend of Harte and Canter. Green hash
5 lines show the enrollment efficiency range of the
6 Harte facility and a circle representing the
7 combined projected enrollment for 2013-14. As you
8 can see, the 2013-2014 projected enrollment of
9 Harte combined with Canter students projected to be
10 reassigned to Harte is 391. This projected
11 combined enrollment falls within the efficiency
12 range of the Harte facility.

13 Students currently enrolled at Canter will
14 receive transportation in the form of shuttle buses
15 for all returning Canter students who are assigned
16 to Harte or to Ray. The shuttle bus will provide
17 transportation to Canter, to Ray, and to Harte
18 until all Canter students graduate from their
19 welcoming school of Harte or Ray.

20 If Canter is closed, the CEO is also
21 proposing that Canter's attendance area be
22 reassigned to Ray located at 5631 South Kimbark
23 Avenue and Harte located at 1556 East 56th Street
24 at the end of the current school year. A map

1 showing the proposed boundary change is located in
2 your binder at Tab 23.

3 Copies of this map were available tonight
4 at the registration desk.

5 In proposing this boundary change, several
6 factors were considered as outlined in the Review
7 and Establishment of School Attendance Boundaries
8 Policy including, but not limited to, the
9 capacities of Ray and Harte, geographic barriers,
10 travel time, distance traveled, and program
11 considerations.

12 Notwithstanding this boundary change, I
13 want to reiterate that all students enrolled
14 currently at Canter will be provided with their
15 designated welcoming school should the Board
16 approve this proposal.

17 You will next hear from my colleague,
18 John Price, who will discuss the performance of Ray
19 and Harte and highlight the proposed transition
20 efforts. Thank you, your Honor. This concludes my
21 statement.

22 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: All right. Thank you.

23 MS. JACKSON: Your Honor, at this time, the CEO
24 would like to introduce its second witness,

1 Mr. John Price, who will make a statement in
2 support of the proposal and you can find his
3 statement at Tab 24 of the binder.

4 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: John Price.

5 MR. PRICE: Good evening, your Honor.

6 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Good evening.

7 MR. PRICE: My name is John Price, J-o-h-n,
8 P-r-i-c-e. I am the Chief of Schools for the
9 Chicago Public Schools Burnham Park Elementary
10 Network.

11 Chicago Public Schools are divided up into
12 elementary and high school networks. Network
13 offices are run by a chief of schools, and we
14 provide support and oversight for the schools
15 assigned to us on behalf of the CEO. Canter,
16 Harte, and Ray are within the Burnham Park
17 Elementary Network, and I'm responsible for the
18 support and oversight of Harte and Ray on behalf of
19 the CEO. I have been the Chief of Schools for the
20 Burnham Park Elementary Network since February of
21 2012.

22 By way of background, I have been an
23 educator for approximately 18 years. I began
24 working as a teacher in 1995. I have taught at the

1 elementary, middle school, and college levels.
2 I've also worked as an assistant principal and a
3 principal where I led efforts to significantly
4 close the achievement gap for students. Currently,
5 I serve as the Chief of Elementary Schools for the
6 Burnham Park Network managing 35 schools with
7 approximately 13,000 students. I hold a bachelor's
8 degree from Stanford University and a master's of
9 education specializing in administration and
10 leadership from the University of Illinois at
11 Chicago.

12 As you have already heard, Canter fits the
13 criteria of the Chief Executive Officer's
14 Guidelines for School Actions because it is
15 underutilized based on CPS Space Utilization
16 Standards and student enrollment numbers recorded
17 on the 20th attendance day for the 2012-2013 school
18 year.

19 Canter students will be welcomed by Harte
20 located at 1556 East 56th Street and Ray located at
21 5631 South Kimbark Avenue. The Harte and Ray
22 facilities have enough space to welcome the Canter
23 students, and the resulting combined enrollment
24 will not exceed the facility's efficiency range.

1 As my colleague, Ashley Richardson,
2 testified, current Canter students will be
3 reassigned to either Harte or Ray depending on the
4 geographic boundary of their home address or for
5 out-of-area students, the proximity of their home
6 address to the school and the availability of
7 space.

8 If this proposal is approved, my staff and
9 I will work with families to ensure that all
10 current Canter students are prepared to start at
11 their new school on the first day this fall.

12 When Canter students are welcomed by the
13 Harte and Ray administrations, staff members and
14 students, they will be attending a higher
15 performing school based upon the CEO's Guidelines
16 for School Actions. One way that the CEO's
17 Guidelines for School Actions define a higher
18 performing school is if a school receives a higher
19 level on the Performance Policy for the 2011 and
20 2012 school year.

21 Under the CPS Performance Policy located
22 in your binder at Tab 12, each school receives an
23 annual rating based upon its performance on a
24 variety of student outcome measures including

1 standardized test scores and student attendance.
2 District wide, schools designated Level 1 are the
3 highest performing, and schools designated Level 3
4 are the lowest performing.

5 Canter received a Level 3 rating for the
6 2011-2012 school year while Harte and Ray both
7 received Level 2 ratings.

8 The Performance Policy reports reflecting
9 these levels are included in the binder of
10 documents that you have received at Tab 25.

11 The notices of Canter, Harte, and Ray's
12 Performance Policy status for the 2011-2012 school
13 year are included in the binder of documents that
14 you have received also at Tab 25. Please note that
15 the Performance Policy ratings for the 2011 and
16 2012 school year appear under the 2012 and 2013
17 header on these reports as these ratings are used
18 to determine each school's accountability status
19 for the 2012 and 2013 school year.

20 If this proposal is approved, students
21 will receive additional supports at Canter during
22 the remainder of this school year and at Harte and
23 Ray next year, and the Network will provide
24 assistance to ease the transition process as much

1 as possible. CPS has developed a plan dedicating
2 additional resources to address any safety concerns
3 and to fulfill students' academic, social and
4 emotional, and other individual needs.

5 The draft transition plan explaining these
6 additional resources was sent home to all families
7 affected by this proposal and is located in your
8 binder at Tab 1. CPS will publish final transition
9 plans if the Board approves this proposal which
10 will incorporate feedback from community meetings,
11 this hearing, and additional input received.

12 The CPS Office of Safety and Security, or
13 OSS, has worked with the Chicago Police Department,
14 Department of Family and Support Services, local
15 community groups and faith partners, elected
16 officials, and other sister agencies to develop a
17 plan for the safe transition of students. If this
18 proposal is approved, OSS will take the following
19 steps:

20 First, OSS will receive and update school
21 safety audits, security personnel allocations, and
22 school safety technology systems to make
23 enhancements as appropriate. Second, OSS will be
24 available to address specific safety concerns

1 raised by students and staff. Third, OSS will
2 provide safe passage supports for students and
3 staff traveling to and from school. Safe passage
4 workers wear identifiable vests and stand on
5 designated street corners to monitor students'
6 safety during their travel to school in the morning
7 and home in the afternoon. Prior to the start of
8 the 2013-2014 school year, OSS will work with the
9 Harte and Ray administrations and the community to
10 designate specific intersections for safe passage
11 supports.

12 Additionally, students will receive
13 academic supports as they transition including the
14 following:

15 First, a principal transition coordinator,
16 or PTC, has been assigned to help the principal of
17 Canter maintain academic rigor for the remainder of
18 the school year and ensure a smooth transition to
19 Harte and Ray. PTCs are former principals or other
20 administrators of significant experience who will
21 be a resource for the administration and ensure
22 continuity of support for faculty and students.

23 Second, the Harte and Ray administrations
24 will receive comprehensive student specific data on

1 all transitioning students to allow staff to
2 proactively identify individual student needs and
3 to prepare to meet those needs.

4 Third, I will set aside dedicated time to
5 hold office hours and will welcome families and
6 students affected by this action to discuss
7 concerns and educational options. My office hours
8 would be Tuesday mornings from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.,
9 and Friday afternoons from 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. I
10 will hold my office hours in the Colman office
11 building located at 4655 South Dearborn beginning
12 Tuesday, the 23rd of April.

13 Fourth, principals will receive
14 discretionary resources to provide direct academic
15 support to students. For example, these funds may
16 be used to provide an instructional coach, teacher
17 leader, or to obtain an academic tutoring position
18 or program for students in either reading or math.
19 I will support and approve the principals as they
20 consider how to use these resources and approve
21 their selections once the decisions are made.

22 Students will also receive social and
23 emotional supports to help them adjust to a new
24 school environment including the following: First,

1 CPS will help school staff members facilitate
2 intervention groups or Peace Circles and to helping
3 students work through concerns associated with the
4 transition.

5 Second, CPS will help staff members
6 implement restorative practices such as peer
7 circles or peer juries to encourage peer-to-peer
8 problem-solving and resolution.

9 Third, groups of students in need of more
10 individualized attention will be provided with
11 access to highly structured interventions.

12 And fourth, to foster an environment that
13 is both supportive and inclusive for all students,
14 CPS will provide resources to the Harte and Ray
15 leadership to implement culture-building activities
16 such as staff luncheons and team-building
17 activities. Resources will also be provided to
18 sponsor activities such as school visits for
19 families, coffee chats with the principal, picnics,
20 field trips or other parent meetings to help
21 transitioning families get to know their new
22 school.

23 Students currently enrolled at Canter will
24 receive transportation in the form of shuttle buses

1 for all returning Canter students who are assigned
2 to Harte or to Ray. The shuttle bus will provide
3 transportation from Canter to Harte and to Ray and
4 back to Canter at the end of the day. The shuttle
5 bus will continue until all current Canter students
6 graduate from their welcoming school of Harte or
7 Ray.

8 Finally, additional transition supports
9 will be provided to ensure that Canter students who
10 have unique needs or circumstances are adequately
11 supported in this transition including students
12 with diverse learning needs, students in temporary
13 living situations, English-language learners, and
14 early childhood participants. These additional
15 supports are described in more detail in the draft
16 transition plan located in your binder at Tab 1.

17 In conclusion, Canter is underutilized.
18 The combined enrollment of students at the Harte
19 and Ray facilities will not exceed the facilities'
20 enrollment efficiency range, and Harte and Ray are
21 higher performing schools. The CEO believes this
22 proposed school closure will help the district
23 better serve all students and is prepared to assist
24 students with additional supports as they

1 transition.

2 Thank you for your time and attendance.

3 This concludes my statement.

4 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I just have one
5 question for Mr. Price. What about the teachers?
6 Is there any plan for the teachers in terms of
7 where the teachers from Canter will be going? Are
8 any of them going to Ray or Harte?

9 MR. PRICE: Your Honor, we can provide a more
10 comprehensive answer, but my understanding of the
11 union contract is that current teachers at Canter
12 who are tenured who receive the two highest
13 performance ratings, superior and excellent, will
14 be able to follow students according to the numbers
15 of students that enroll at Harte and Ray.

16 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Okay. Thank you.

17 MR. PRICE: Any other questions?

18 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: No.

19 MS. JACKSON: Thank you, your Honor. At this
20 time, that concludes -- that concludes the CEO's
21 presentation of support of the proposal. If you
22 have any additional questions, we would be happy to
23 answer them now. At this time, we conclude. Thank
24 you.

1 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: No, I don't. All
2 right. Well, since the Board of Education took
3 only one-half hour, that leaves an hour and a half
4 left for public which is good. I know this is an
5 emotional issue, and I'm trying to get as many of
6 you to have your say as we can.

7 Just as you did at the community meetings,
8 unfortunately, we have to have a two-minute limit.
9 There's a timekeeper over there. I would ask you
10 to honor that as much as you can so that everybody
11 here who wants to say something will have a right
12 to say that and have an opportunity to do that.

13 We have the sign-in sheets. So I guess
14 what I'm going to do is I'm going to go down the
15 sign-in sheet and get to as many as we can get to
16 within the remaining allotted time.

17 So I understand we have two aldermen
18 present and certainly if they wish to speak at any
19 time they wish to, let me know, if you want to
20 speak now or you want to wait. Alderman Burns and
21 Alderman Hairston. I will leave that up to you.
22 Let me know. Whenever you want to speak.

23 ALDERMAN HAIRSTON: I wasn't going to go ahead.
24 I was going to cede to the community.

1 This was a really interesting
2 presentation. I didn't realize that this was about
3 children. I thought this was about numbers. And I
4 really don't understand who is paying for these
5 newly created positions. I do not understand how
6 you can just decide that we're going to send kids
7 to either Ray or Harte, not having any formula
8 since you're so fond of these formulas and how you
9 make the parents choose which school. I don't know
10 that.

11 Mr. Price, office hours downtown? Really?
12 You haven't even been effective at communicating
13 with the community or me and, thus far, I do not
14 believe that you intend to do so.

15 Over the past two weeks, I have attended
16 eight CPS community meetings, two concerning
17 Bret Harte, Ray, and Canter. I have listened to
18 the parents, staff, and students of these schools
19 talk about the reasons that Canter should stay open
20 with Bret Harte and Ray remaining as it is.

21 But as I was listening to their heartfelt
22 remarks, I couldn't help but feel that all of these
23 meetings were an absolute farce. It was a sham.
24 You've been holding these meetings in here merely

1 because legally you all have to.

2 Clearly, there is no real concern for the
3 children because if you were concerned about the
4 children, you would not have children traveling
5 over a mile outside of their community leaving
6 teachers where they had established viable
7 relationships, relationships that have produced
8 students truly interested in learning, students
9 whose grades and social skills have been greatly
10 augmented by those relationships.

11 And how are the receiving schools to
12 improve their educational future with an additional
13 200 students? This is in addition to the children
14 who will be leaving Shoemith which, by the way, is
15 just a block away from Canter, and also attending
16 Ray and Bret Harte.

17 Students will also have to pass Kozminski
18 and, of course, beloved Murray.

19 All of these omissions were glaring.
20 You're going to integrate two different cultures.
21 How are you prepared to handle that? I haven't
22 heard that. There are already existing safety and
23 security concerns at both Ray and Harte. Parents
24 are illegally parking cars, blocking traffic,

1 bringing things to a halt, preventing neighbors
2 from getting in and out of their homes, people are
3 in their backyards, the kids are throwing the
4 trash, blocking up lanes on Stony Island. I see no
5 plan. As a matter of fact, Ray didn't even have a
6 plan and still today does not have a plan.

7 Oh, but, wait, they got -- they've had two
8 principals within one week.

9 CPS pulled the crossing guards from Ray
10 and from Bret Harte. When are those coming back?
11 I didn't see that. I didn't hear that.

12 So all of these existing problems will
13 just be exacerbated by admitting additional
14 students. That's the plan that I need to see from
15 CPS. Those are the numbers that I need to have.

16 Have we even talked about the kids
17 congregating on 57th Street which is only two ways
18 and dismissal of Ray, Bret Harte, and the Raab
19 (phonetic) School, K through high school, all at
20 the same time? CPS has said that is not their job
21 to do, and the University of Chicago has said it is
22 not their job to do. I would like to know what
23 plan CPS has for making sure that all of our
24 children are safe. Who's going to control and

1 monitor?

2 All CPS appears to be concerned about is
3 the bottom line, not the children. As I've said
4 before, this transition plan is moving far too
5 fast. You have insulted the students, parents, and
6 staff by trying to rush this through.
7 Life-altering decisions were made without their
8 impact or knowledge and without the impact -- or
9 without the knowledge of communicating with the
10 local elected officials.

11 You are not going to be able to play with
12 the lives of our children. I'm going to continue
13 to stand and fight with the people against this
14 action plan, and I will represent their concerns
15 with the utmost of my ability. The fight is not
16 over.

17 You all created a criteria to meet your
18 needs and to close schools. The boundary changes
19 that you have are to meet your needs, not about
20 educating the children. The travel times that you
21 have, I don't know what they are because I didn't
22 hear them in your report. You're just bussing
23 children to other areas.

24 And the two principals in Ray in one week,

1 which is supposed to be a welcoming school, what
2 kind of welcome is that?

3 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: All right. Thank you,
4 Alderman. Is there a second alderman who wishes to
5 speak at this time?

6 ALDERMAN BURNS: Yes. Good evening. Thank
7 you, your Honor. My name is William Burns,
8 W-i-l-l-i-a-m, last name, B-u-r-n-s. I am the
9 Alderman of the 4th Ward. Shoesmith and Canter are
10 both located in the 4th Ward.

11 Let me, first of all, state there is
12 nothing more traumatic and unsettling to a
13 community than to lose a school. There are several
14 feeder schools that are impacted by this decision.
15 I have had the opportunity to meet with the Hyde
16 Park Harris group. I met with every principal in
17 the 4th Ward that is impacted by these changes in
18 terms of Shoesmith, Reavis, and Robinson Elementary
19 Schools. I've also had the opportunity to work
20 closely with the Bronzeville Community Action
21 Council, CPS Network Chief and Intergovernmental
22 Affairs on a number of concerns the community has.

23 There are still questions as my colleague
24 of the 5th Ward pointed out that need to be

1 answered. I am concerned greatly about the
2 immediate closure of Canter School. I believe the
3 7th graders who are currently attending Canter
4 School should be allowed to graduate from Canter
5 School for 8th grade. I believe it's a very
6 difficult challenge to figure out what school your
7 child should attend in 8th grade and then make
8 another decision about what high school they should
9 be attending. So that's one thing.

10 The second thing is I think Shoesmith
11 needs the time to adequately plan for 7th grade and
12 8th grade being added to the school, and also, as
13 we deal with Reavis and Robinson Elementary School,
14 to figure out the kinds of services and the kind of
15 programming at the school that will be attractive
16 to the parents who have children who live in the
17 attendance boundary for Shoesmith. Because right
18 now, the challenges that the children who are going
19 to Shoesmith are children who live in the Reavis
20 and Robinson attendance boundaries, and the
21 children who do live in the Shoesmith boundary opt
22 not to attend that school.

23 So we have to figure out how to create
24 high quality neighborhood schools for Kenwood, West

1 Kenwood, and North Kenwood/Oakland. And that's
2 going to take some time.

3 Last, but not least, I look forward to
4 working with all interested parties in working
5 together to change the way we fund public schools
6 in the State of Illinois. We cannot continue to
7 rely on the local property tax in Chicago as the
8 major source of revenue for public schools. For
9 too long, Springfield has not done its job to fund
10 our public schools and neither has the federal
11 government. And those are facts that cannot be
12 ignored.

13 As we deal with these -- because we're
14 making these decisions as a consequence of a failed
15 system of public school finance. Until we change
16 that, we're going to be right back in this spot
17 year after year after year. And we will not have
18 the high quality schools that the people of the
19 City of Chicago deserve just as much as the folks
20 at New Trier, just as much as the folks in the
21 western suburbs.

22 So with that, I thank you for your time.

23 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you. At this
24 point, we're going to start with Number 1 on the

1 list then, Howard Fishbein.

2 MR. FISHBEIN: Yes. Good evening, ladies and
3 gentlemen, Mr. Hearing Officer. My name is
4 Howard Fishbein, H-o-w-a-r-d, F-i-s-h-b-e-i-n. I
5 am a teacher at Canter Middle School. I've worked
6 there for nine years. I've taught in the field of
7 education for 20 years. I have a bachelor's from
8 the University of Illinois, a master's of education
9 from the University of Illinois, Urbana, and I did
10 Ph.D. work at Michigan State university.

11 At this time, I would like to submit, if I
12 could, Exhibit A.

13 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I will accept any
14 document anybody wants to give me.

15 MR. FISHBEIN: I would say you are about to
16 hear a very compelling case to keep open Canter
17 Middle School, a wonderful school that really
18 works.

19 But before we begin our presentation, we
20 must issue a formal protest. The representatives
21 of CPS just spoke for about 30 minutes
22 uninterrupted to lay out their case beautifully
23 with PowerPoint and everything. By contrast,
24 Canter Middle School and its community supporters

1 will not be afforded that same opportunity.
2 Instead, we will be forced to plead our case in
3 two-minute sound bites. Just think about it. Is
4 that fair? Is that legitimate? Does that even
5 meet the spirit of the law?

6 The intention of a law must be to gather
7 all the pertinent data and the best proposals
8 regarding this school action. Most precisely, this
9 process must move us to do the very best we can for
10 the children of Chicago and the children of our
11 community.

12 With that in mind, one can see that there
13 are three distinct parties which must be heard
14 from: CPS, Canter and its community, and the
15 general public. The first two, CPS and Canter, are
16 coherent entities, each with specialized
17 information the other does not have. The third
18 party, the public, is individualized.

19 It makes sense that the individualized
20 entity receives individualized chunks of time to
21 speak perhaps two minutes per person. But that
22 treatment simply does not make sense for a coherent
23 entity with specialized information.

24 If we are serious about doing the best we

1 can for our children, we need to hear fully, not
2 only from CPS but also from Canter. Therefore, we
3 strongly request that you, sir, immediately change
4 the procedures for this hearing. Allow Canter and
5 its community to speak uninterrupted for the same
6 amount of time as CPS. In other words, equal time
7 in an equal manner. If we make this change right
8 now, all parties including --

9 TIMEKEEPER: Can you please conclude?

10 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Hold on a second.

11 MR. FISHBEIN: -- all parties including the
12 public will receive their due process.

13 Mr. Hearing Officer, we await your
14 response.

15 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: The rules have not
16 been set by me. The rules are preset. So I'm
17 abiding by the same rules as any hearing that's
18 going on for all 54 schools, the same. I'm not
19 going to make an exception for one school.

20 MR. FISHBEIN: Sir, may I ask, who set these
21 rules?

22 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: They're set by the
23 proposed rules by the Board. So that's -- all
24 right. I'm going to have to ask you to yield the

1 floor at this point. I'm going to deny your
2 request respectfully. There's 101 people here. So
3 even at 2 minutes, that would be 220 minutes,
4 whatever it is.

5 MR. FISHBEIN: Thank you, sir.

6 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you for your
7 suggestion, though.

8 John Paranjape.

9 MR. PARANJAPE: Good evening, your Honor. My
10 name is John Paranjape. I have been a teacher at
11 Canter for 21 years. I went to Ray School and have
12 basically been either in, attending or teaching in
13 the public schools for 32 of my 45 -- public
14 schools in Hyde Park for the 32 of my 45 years.

15 So given that we must proceed with this
16 unjust framework, let me lay out another injustice.

17 There's no reason for us to be here today
18 because CPS did not comply with the law when
19 proposing to close Canter Middle School. The law
20 states that on or before March 31, 2013, the Chief
21 Executive Officer shall announce all proposed
22 school actions to be taken at the close of the
23 current academic year consistent with the
24 guidelines published under Section 34-230 of this

1 code.

2 On or before March 31, 2013, the Chief
3 Executive Officer shall publish notice of the
4 proposed school actions. Now going to
5 Section 34-230, which it refers to in the above
6 paragraph, notice of the proposal for a school
7 action shall include a written statement on the
8 basis of the school action, an explanation of how
9 the school action meets the criteria set forth in
10 the guidelines, and a draft transition plan
11 identifying the items required in Section 34-225 of
12 this code for all schools affected by the school
13 action. The notice shall state the date, time, and
14 place of the hearing or meeting.

15 As the Alderman who just spoke, both, have
16 noted, Shoesmith Elementary School is affected by
17 the school action to close Canter and did not
18 receive a written plan for its students or its
19 parents by March 31, 2013.

20 For at least 40 years, students who have
21 attended Shoesmith Elementary have matriculated
22 into Canter which was formerly known as Louis Wirth
23 for the upper grades. The question, where will the
24 Shoesmith sixth graders go was asked by several

1 people at the community meetings that went
2 unanswered like all other important questions.

3 There was no plan submitted to Shoesmith
4 School. The Shoesmith School community was not
5 properly notified of the meeting and hearing
6 schedule, and parents of 6th graders from Shoesmith
7 do not know as of two days ago where their children
8 are to attend 7th grade.

9 TIMEKEEPER: Sir, can you please conclude?

10 MR. PARANJAPE: CPS did not comply with the
11 law. That alone should nullify the decision to
12 close Canter.

13 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

14 Diana Nicole Hamm.

15 MS. HAMM: Good evening, your Honor. My name
16 is Diana Hamm, H-a-m-m. I did my undergraduate
17 degree in alternative education and community
18 studies at UW Milwaukee and Ph.D., ABD from
19 Michigan State University.

20 CPS did submit a plan to communities of
21 Canter, Ray, and Harte. However, that plan was
22 incomplete. Parents of Canter's 7th graders still
23 do not know where their individual children are
24 going to attend the 8th grade.

1 CPS has no business closing a safe,
2 vibrant neighborhood middle school serving
3 primarily African-American families on the south
4 side of Chicago if there is not a plan for these
5 children. If CPS does have a plan, they have no
6 business keeping it from us. In fact, CPS had the
7 obligation to share it by March 31st, and they did
8 not.

9 Therefore, this is an illegal school
10 action and must be terminated. If you agree, as
11 you should, we can all stop now and go home. I
12 guess not.

13 Burden of proof. Let us move on to
14 another point. According to CPS Board and Mayor
15 Rahm Emanuel, the primary goal of CPS is to prepare
16 students for college and careers. This is a great
17 and laudable goal upon which we can all agree.
18 This goal perfectly links to CPS's adoption of the
19 common core state standards.

20 Canter is one of a handful of schools that
21 was chosen to be an early adopter of the common
22 core. We have done much work in this area, and we
23 are better situated than most schools to move
24 forward with this agenda.

1 If college and career readiness really are
2 the ultimate goals, then surely CPS would have
3 presented compelling and relevant data showing that
4 Canter is failing in this mission. Well, as you
5 heard moments ago, during their lengthy and
6 uninterrupted opportunity to present, CPS presented
7 no such data. Absolutely none on college
8 preparedness. Not one single data point related to
9 college or careers.

10 They could have presented data that show
11 the percentage of former Canter students that
12 graduate high school on time and how that compares
13 to other schools. They did not. What percent of
14 former Canter students make the high school honor
15 roll?

16 TIMEKEEPER: Ma'am, can you please conclude?

17 MS. HAMM: Yes, I will. They don't say. What
18 percent matriculates into selective enrollment high
19 schools? They don't say. What percent go to two-
20 to four-year colleges? They don't say. You see
21 the pattern.

22 CPS presenters did not tell us how Canter
23 performs on the most critical mission of all.

24 Thank you.

1 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

2 Jill Petty.

3 MS. PETTY: My name is Jill Petty, P-e-t-t-y.

4 I'm a community member, a graduate of Shoesmith,
5 Louis Wirth, Kenwood, Grinnell College and Duke
6 University. I'm really happy to be here.

7 Simply put, I want to pick up here, simply
8 put, the most important data we need to make a
9 thoughtful and appropriate decision for our
10 children is missing. CPS did not present it.

11 Either they do not have the data, which is a clear
12 abrogation of their responsibility, or they have
13 buried it because it does not support their case.

14 Bottom line, CPS clearly has not met the
15 burden of proof. In a civil proceeding, the burden
16 of proof falls squarely on the complainant, the
17 party bringing the action. Here, the complainant
18 is CPS and the action is closing Canter. CPS has
19 not met its burden of proof based on insufficiency
20 of data; therefore, their action must be denied.
21 The case must be thrown out.

22 We suspected that this meeting would
23 differ a little from the others. Adam Anderson
24 from CPS will tell you that there has been a

1 rigorous engagement process of community dialogue
2 and conversation. We have attended the utilization
3 commission hearings, the network meetings, the
4 legally mandated meetings, and this hearing. No
5 dialogue took place at any of these meetings
6 either.

7 The process seem designed to discourage
8 rather than encourage input. Questions go
9 unanswered and remain unanswered. Perhaps this
10 shouldn't be a surprise given that early in the
11 school year, an offer to engage in discussion with
12 CPS staff and increase community involvement
13 through a community action council was met with the
14 response, that's not a model CPS supports anymore.

15 Tonight, we are going to give you the
16 input CPS never bothered to seek about what the
17 community wants in its schools. We're going to
18 tell you why Canter should stay open.

19 We come to you together. We are CPS
20 parents. We are parents of infants and toddlers.
21 We are already engaged in promoting a system that
22 will work for our children, our families, and our
23 neighborhood. We are CPS teachers, current
24 students, and alumni of Canter. We are members of

1 the Hyde Park/Kenwood Academy who care about strong
2 neighborhood schools.

3 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I would ask you to
4 wrap up.

5 MS. PETTY: We stand before you to support all
6 our schools, but especially Canter and our
7 elementary schools, Ray, Bret Harte, and the school
8 left out of the action, Shoesmith, that all send
9 children to Canter.

10 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

11 Bessie Tsitsopoulos.

12 MS. TSITSOPOULOS: Good evening. My name is
13 Bessie Tsitsopoulos, T-s-i-t-s-o-p-o-u-l-o-s. I am
14 the social worker at Canter Middle School. I have
15 a master's degree in social work and a master's
16 degree in education administration.

17 In fact, many of the Ray and Bret Harte
18 communities do not have access to this hearing.
19 Rather, they are required to be at their schools
20 for report card pick-up, and they are not allowed
21 in this hearing after the first hour making the
22 timing impossible. CPS scheduled this
23 all-important hearing at a time when many
24 stakeholders could not be present. This quite

1 possibly violates the law.

2 We ask you, Hearing Officer, to consider
3 this point very deeply. If necessary, please refer
4 this matter to a judge.

5 Those of us who could attend stand before
6 you on behalf of all the children on the south side
7 who benefit from Canter's excellent program and
8 teachers. We are proud that families choose to
9 send their children to Canter. They do this in the
10 motto of school choice that CPS has championed for
11 a decade or more.

12 Canter is too rare a phenomenon in Chicago
13 Public Schools, a safe school in a safe
14 neighborhood on the south side of Chicago. More
15 importantly, Canter is a middle school that works,
16 a good school, doing good things for CPS students.

17 Tonight, we're going to tell you just how
18 good it is. First, however, we're going to address
19 what CPS asserts is its reason for proposing to
20 close Canter. Utilization. The building is
21 structurally sound and received some TIF funds and
22 CPS funds for upgrades during the past decade.

23 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I'm going to ask you
24 to wrap it up.

1 MS. TSITSOPOULOS: It, like many other good
2 neighborhood schools in the city, draws students
3 from various neighborhoods because their families
4 choose for them to attend a good school.

5 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.
6 Neda Yazdy.

7 MS. YAZDY: Good evening. I'm a Canter parent
8 -- sorry. Good evening. My name is Neda Yazdy,
9 Y-a-z-d-y. I'm a Canter parent.

10 In determining utilization this year, CPS
11 is using a flawed formula which requires
12 30 students in a classroom. We should be planning
13 space utilization of our buildings based on the
14 class size we want, not the maximum we can pack in,
15 especially when talking about middle school age
16 students who have bigger bodies.

17 CPS claims that Canter would be fully
18 utilized with a student population of 390. That
19 assumes 13 classrooms with 30 students each.
20 Actually, if we follow federal law governing
21 special education and counseling services, there
22 are 12 classrooms available.

23 If we put the right number of students in
24 a room, 25, then we have full utilization of 300

1 students. Therefore, with 228 students, Canter is
2 currently 76 percent utilized, not 58 as CPS
3 claims. The safe harbor target for utilization is
4 80 percent. Canter is very close to this target.

5 At Canter, 25 students fit in a classroom
6 due to the size of the classrooms and due to the
7 size of the kids. This is more appropriate for
8 adolescents. Research indicates that low-income
9 African-American and urban students benefit most
10 from smaller class size. Canter's population is
11 83.3 percent low-income and 91.4 percent
12 African-American.

13 At Canter, we can arrange desks in a
14 circle with up to 25 desks to conduct the kind of
15 instructional model that works best for student
16 learning.

17 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Ma'am, I'm going to
18 ask you to wrap up.

19 MS. YAZDY: Sure. As you will see in our
20 discussion of performance coming up soon, our
21 results show this model works.

22 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

23 JB.

24 STUDENT JB: Hello. My name is JB. Picking up
50

1 on what the lady just said, based on the ideal
2 middle school class size of up to 25 students in
3 classroom, Canter can fit 300 students in the
4 building and would be happy to provide its
5 outstanding learning experience to more students
6 than are currently enrolled.

7 Canter is a wonderful old building which
8 could be well-utilized by 300 students. In fact,
9 when Canter had more than 300 students enrolled,
10 visitors commented on how crowded it felt in the
11 classrooms and the hallways. Again, we are talking
12 about large adolescent bodies.

13 The building is also already utilized in
14 other ways not quantified by the CPS utilization
15 formula. For example, a community group uses the
16 building one evening a week. Canter's central
17 location means it could be a valuable community
18 resource. CPS has talked about using the building
19 to generate revenue by leasing it to a third party.
20 Our question is, why can't we reorganize the Canter
21 space in order to rent out a certain number of
22 rooms to community partners who need meeting,
23 office or event space that would also provide a
24 mutually beneficial partnership with the school?

1 Our students, families, and communities
2 should not be punished because we have had so many
3 CEOs at CPS for over the past five years or because
4 the state legislature blindly extended the deadline
5 so that now CPS is considering the largest number
6 of closings ever in a time frame shorter than ever.

7 The win-win way to ensure Canter is fully
8 utilized would be to have Shoesmith become K to 5,
9 not overcrowded school, and have Canter be a 6, 7,
10 8 middle school. When Canter was Louis Wirth, it
11 was 6, 7, 8 and that made it easier to maintain
12 enrollment. This would solve a problem for
13 Shoesmith well. Please note, we are making a
14 concrete proposal here for Shoesmith to be K to 5
15 school which feeds to Canter as a 6, 7, 8 school.

16 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I am going to ask you
17 to wrap up.

18 STUDENT JB: It would allow Shoesmith to have
19 two kindergarten classes instead of just one
20 kindergarten class and two classes at all other
21 grade levels.

22 This year, Shoesmith had over 40
23 kindergartners enroll at the school which forced
24 the school to have one kindergarten class and two

1 split K-1 classes to accommodate for the large
2 number. If Shoesmith could become a K-5 school, it
3 would become a more well-balanced school with the
4 same number of classes in each grade level.

5 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

6 STUDENT JB: Also, I'd like to mention that I
7 was a Canter alumni Class of 2012. I graduated
8 honor roll four quarters and was also Canter Middle
9 School salutatorian.

10 MS. JACKSON: Mr. Hearing Officer, I don't mean
11 to interrupt the public comments, but for the
12 record we need to omit all the last names to
13 protect the confidentiality. So Mr. J's name
14 should not be reflected in the record.

15 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I have to use their
16 initials. I'm ordering the court reporter to
17 strike the student's actual name and just insert
18 initials JB. Okay.

19 Sharece Johnson.

20 MS. JOHNSON: Good evening. My name is
21 Sharece Johnson. I'm a teacher at Canter Middle
22 School. I have a bachelor's degree in middle level
23 education which is what our children need. They do
24 not need to be pushed into K through 8; and also a

1 master's degree in counseling development in higher
2 education.

3 Canter's enrollment would increase.
4 Families would have access to schools for children
5 at every grade level within a three-block academic
6 campus. Children could continue to benefit from
7 the Shoesmith/Canter/Kenwood continuum that has
8 served the community well for generations.

9 Community and process. Speaking of the
10 community, as mentioned earlier, the CPS school
11 closing process was disempowering. CPS did not
12 engage this community. CPS did this without asking
13 us. They didn't ask the people who send their
14 children to the schools in our community. They
15 didn't ask the people who work in and dedicate
16 their lives to the schools in our community. They
17 didn't ask the leaders in LSCs, PTAs or PACs. They
18 didn't ask the people who live in our community.

19 Among us are people who grew up in Hyde
20 Park, a teacher who has attended or taught in
21 neighborhood schools for 32 of his 45 years, people
22 who have or who plan to send multiple generations
23 of their family's children to local schools. We
24 are people who choose to make Hyde Park and Kenwood

1 home, and we never intend to live anywhere else.
2 We volunteer in schools to keep them strong, not
3 just for our own children, but for all the future
4 citizens CPS schools are educating.

5 If CPS had asked us, if they had been
6 willing to have a real conversation, to listen in
7 no longer increments, and respond to our questions,
8 they would have understood that we are a community
9 capable of making good decisions for our children.
10 All we want is what our children deserve, no more
11 and no less.

12 There are many possibilities for CPS to
13 work with us to improve Canter, and we want this.
14 For instance, we could help CPS design a
15 recruitment and enrollment plan to increase our
16 enrollment. Canter has impressive ISAT results,
17 impressive ISAT results, passionate teachers,
18 motivated students. Passionate teachers, motivated
19 students. And some excellent academic programs.

20 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I am going to ask you
21 to wrap up.

22 MS. JOHNSON: CPS needs to get the word out
23 about the great things that Canter is doing. Make
24 it known that Canter is a strong and viable

1 neighborhood option and actively recruit families
2 to increase enrollment.

3 There is an active community in Hyde Park
4 who has vested an interest in lifting up
5 neighborhood schools. Tap into this group, engage
6 us in the work of transformation, and we will roll
7 up our sleeves and help Canter become a school that
8 fits snugly into the K-12 academic campus that
9 stretches these three Hyde Park/Kenwood blocks.
10 Thank you.

11 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

12 Emily Fong.

13 MS. FONG: My name is Emily Fong, E-m-i-l-y,
14 F-o-n-g.

15 We want schools like Canter that work, and
16 we are here to engage with CPS to make that happen.
17 Let's take a look at why Canter -- why keeping
18 Canter open is so important.

19 Canter's committed principal, staff, and
20 teaching team help students achieve critical
21 development outcomes and increase performance. CPS
22 will try to lead you to believe otherwise. Its
23 Performance Policy report identifies Canter as a
24 Level 3 school on probation. However, there are

1 significant flaws in that assessment.

2 First, it relies almost exclusively on
3 ISAT scores which look at the number of students
4 who reach a specific threshold regardless of
5 whether they came to a school with significant
6 delays. Only 14.3 percent of the standard is based
7 on student growth.

8 But everyone knows that the whole process
9 of education is to help students grow. Therefore,
10 CPS Performance Policy is standing on its head,
11 completely upside down. Special education students
12 comprise 15.7 percent of Canter's population. The
13 ISAT test it relies on does not capture the growth
14 of students who start with the lowest performance
15 and improve multiple grade levels because, though
16 Canter teachers -- though Canter teachers may help
17 them advance two, three or even four grade levels
18 from where they came in, some don't quite make it
19 to the 7th grade level.

20 The charts we attach here use the ISAT
21 numbers more appropriately, and they show a
22 dramatically different performance picture. Using
23 cohort data for the most recent three consecutive
24 years and following 7th graders to 8th grade, the

1 percent of Canter students meeting or exceeding
2 grade level requirements on the ISAT increased. It
3 increased in both reading and math. It increased
4 in all three years. Overall, on the ISAT, Canter's
5 composite scores outpace the CPS average.

6 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Ma'am, I am going to
7 ask you to wrap up.

8 MS. FONG: Canter is not an underperforming
9 school. It is better than many CPS schools.

10 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you. When it
11 says community's member child, so should I just say
12 KF? Is your child a minor, KF?

13 MS. FONG: Yes.

14 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Okay. So KF.

15 MS. FONG: This is KF.

16 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I thought KF was going
17 to speak.

18 MS. FONG: He can't read the script. He hasn't
19 graduated from Canter yet.

20 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: All right. Elizabeth
21 Kay Herring.

22 MS. HERRING: Thank you. My name is
23 Elizabeth Herring, and I will save my credentials.
24 My most important credential is that I'm a mother

1 of a student at Bret Harte Elementary.

2 When comparing all schools in the 60615
3 ZIP Code that currently serves 7th and 8th graders,
4 Canter performs very well. In fact, Canter
5 outperforms every school but Murray. That means
6 outperforming Burke, Kozminski, Overton, and
7 Reavis. In both reading and math, for the past two
8 years, Canter is second only to Murray. Moreover,
9 no data exists for 7th and 8th grade for either of
10 the receiving schools, Ray or Bret Harte, because
11 they haven't had 7th or 8th grade for a decade.

12 By the way, Canter accomplishes all this
13 with a high percentage of students with
14 disabilities, the very group that tends to perform
15 lowest on the ISAT test. It seems strange to close
16 down the second best school in the whole ZIP Code.

17 It might be worth noticing at this point
18 that the overemphasis the Board places on the ISAT
19 data is quite troubling. The ISAT is a flawed and
20 outmoded test which is currently being replaced by
21 the PARCC test which is aligned to common core
22 state standards. CPS has told us repeatedly that
23 the PARCC test will provide a more detailed and
24 accurate picture of the student knowledge and

1 skills. That it is the future metric that CPS,
2 Illinois, and 44 other states will be using.

3 It seems eminently more reasonable and
4 appropriate to wait for the new and better data
5 before we shut down 54 schools and massively
6 disrupt the lives of over 30,000 children and their
7 families. Especially in the case like Canter. If
8 CPS has a school that works well and has special
9 programs to offer, leave it alone. Give it a
10 chance to show what it can do on the PARCC test.

11 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you. So I don't
12 make the same mistakes again, JH and KH are --

13 MS. HERRING: My children have already been
14 sent home, but they are here in support as well.

15 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Let's go with
16 Rosalyn Lynch.

17 MS. LYNCH: Good evening. Rosalyn Lynch.
18 R-o-s-a-l-y-n, L-y-n-c-h. I'm a parent of a
19 student at Canter.

20 So we're going to go to special programs.
21 Of course, there is much more to Canter than test
22 scores. Canter provides a myriad of special
23 programming that enriches and deepens the overall
24 learning and growth of our students. If Canter is

1 closed, it is impossible to fully replicate or
2 replace this experience.

3 Algebra. The goal of Canter's algebra
4 program is to have students learn freshman algebra
5 credit as 8th graders, and that puts them on track
6 for advanced placement math courses in high school.
7 This is a great way for Canter students to
8 distinguish themselves and improve their chances
9 for getting into colleges of their choice. To do
10 this, students must pass a rigorous district-wide
11 algebra test at the end of the school year.

12 Canter has seen increasing enrollment in
13 algebra with 19 of 25 students in the course
14 passing the exit exam in 2011 and 18 of 26 passing
15 in 2012. These passing rates are competitive with
16 many well-respected students. This year's algebra
17 class numbers 32. Just wait to see what they do.

18 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

19 Lina Fritz.

20 MS. FRITZ: Good evening. My name is Lina
21 Fritz. I'm a Local School Council member at
22 Shoesmith Elementary. I'm also a community member
23 and supporter of Canter and a graduate from the
24 University of Chicago and I have had ten years of

1 education experience as a teacher and an
2 administrator.

3 Canter has provided -- I'm sorry. If
4 Canter is closed and its students are split between
5 Ray and Bret Harte, it is unlikely that they will
6 receive an algebra class. There simply will not be
7 enough students in either building who are ready
8 for this rigorous program.

9 Canter has provided the intensive Illinois
10 Mathematics and Science Academy Fusion Program for
11 several years. IMSA Fusion is an Awarding-Winning
12 STEM, science, technology, engineering, and math,
13 program. IMSA Fusion is recognized among the top
14 programs in the nation by Change the Equation, STEM
15 Works, a corporate-led initiative, to identify and
16 expand effective STEM teaching to best prepare for
17 a powerful and diverse STEM pipeline for the global
18 future.

19 One important goal of the Fusion program
20 is to increase access for students historically
21 underrepresented or underserved in STEM
22 opportunities. As such, low-income minority
23 students are targeted for program participation.
24 Because the deadline for application has long since

1 passed, Ray and Bret Harte will not be able to
2 offer this program to Canter students who have been
3 displaced by school closure. This will be a huge
4 loss to Canter students.

5 The art program at Canter under the
6 direction of Ms. Rodriguez is stellar. All
7 students receive expert instruction in a wide range
8 of techniques. The hallways of Canter are filled
9 with student-generated work. We invite you to come
10 by and take a look. You will be impressed. Ray
11 and Bret Harte do not have comparable programs,
12 another blow to Canter students if it is closed
13 down.

14 The chess club at Canter has grown by
15 leaps and bounds over the past several years.
16 Canter participates in tournaments all around
17 Chicago, including the official CPS tournament.
18 Three years ago, Canter took second place in the
19 South Regional. This year, we fell one point short
20 of moving on to the city-wide finals.

21 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I'm going to ask you
22 to wrap up.

23 MS. FRITZ: In addition, individual players
24 have won medals in the individual competitions. If

1 Canter closes, the students shifted over to Ray
2 will continue to enjoy the benefit of chess. Those
3 sent to Bret Harte, on the other hand, will not
4 since Harte does not have a chess program. Another
5 loss for Canter students. For more details, please
6 see the testimonial letter submitted by Michael
7 Cardinale, president of the Youth Chess Foundation
8 of Chicago.

9 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.
10 Walter Winsor.

11 MR. WINSOR: Hello. I'm the algebra teacher at
12 Cantor and math. Just in the past two years, we
13 have -- 37 students have been able to move directly
14 to geometry. I know this was stated before. We
15 have been able to increase the number of students
16 taking algebra this year to 32.

17 I also want to say quickly that the fact
18 that we have a successful algebra program at Canter
19 guides the 7th and 8th grade pre-algebra program.
20 When we need math teachers, we all are really
21 preparing students for high school, and I think
22 it's been underestimated how well our students are
23 performing in high school.

24 I'm going to move on now to culture,

1 but -- I don't really know. Okay. I'm going to
2 talk for another minute.

3 Basically, CPS, CPS is looking for a
4 predictable linear growth in a 7th and 8th grade
5 when we take completely different students in each
6 year. Okay. I think it's ridiculous to the point
7 that if you were to switch our 10-11 numbers with
8 our 11-12 numbers, we would not be a Level 3. It's
9 absolutely absurd. I'm going to let it go at that
10 so people have time.

11 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: All right. Thank you.
12 Victoria Long.

13 MS. LONG: My name is Victoria Long. I'm a
14 homeowner and community member living in Hyde Park,
15 and also I'm the community rep, one of the
16 community reps for Kozminski Elementary School.

17 For five years, Canter has taken all of
18 its students on tours of area colleges and
19 universities. These are full-fledged tours given
20 by those institutions of higher learning. We have
21 taken tours of the University of Chicago, DePaul,
22 Northeastern University, Triton College, and many
23 others.

24 The tour guides are always impressed by

1 the seriousness with which our students conduct
2 themselves, asking the types of questions that high
3 schoolers might ask. As far as we can tell, we are
4 the only CPS school to provide this opportunity to
5 7th and 8th graders. Again, a huge loss to Canter
6 students if you shut us down.

7 The school climate. Test scores aren't
8 Canter's only strength. Take a look at the
9 5 Essentials surveys based on more than 20 years of
10 research by the University of Chicago's Consortium
11 on Chicago School Research that examines what makes
12 schools successful. Canter rates as highly
13 effective in the areas of collaborative teachers,
14 involved families, and effective leaders on the
15 5 Essentials. It receives the highest designation
16 of organized for improvement.

17 More importantly, it achieves higher
18 ratings in this area than either of the receiving
19 schools in the proposed area. Achieving this
20 rating on the 5 Essentials is one of the strongest
21 predictors of school success. No wonder Canter's
22 ISAT scores are so strong.

23 The school culture at Canter centers on
24 the relational trust between all stakeholders. Any

1 assessment of school success must include
2 qualitative indices of human development which are
3 the direct result of the school's cultural climate.

4 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you. Student B.
5 For the record, TT as in Thomas. Student B.

6 STUDENT TT: Hello, my name is TT.

7 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Strike the name from
8 the record.

9 STUDENT TT: I'm sorry. I attend Canter Middle
10 School right now and next year I will be attending
11 St. Ignatius College Prep.

12 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: That's where I went.
13 A long time ago though. There were no girls there
14 when I went.

15 STUDENT TT: Canter is safe and organized. It
16 is an emotionally supportive space. Teachers,
17 administration, and parents are a unified front in
18 establishing and enforcing clear, consistent rules
19 and boundaries. Students from other areas flock to
20 Canter because of its reputation.

21 Parent involvement is intense. The staff
22 take extra measures to call and interact with every
23 single parent to give them updates on their child's
24 progress academically, socially, and emotionally.

1 From in-school visits to after-school meetings to
2 event planning, parents are active participants.
3 Ongoing feedback creates a feeling of family as
4 many report there.

5 We would like to direct the Hearing
6 Officer to the part of the CPS binder which
7 contains the reporters' transcripts from the
8 meetings last Monday and Friday as evidence of the
9 family at Canter.

10 Canter is a culture of collaboration.
11 Teachers are organized in teams to co-plan
12 curricula. They consult each other and share
13 resources, both in and outside of school working to
14 address student issues including the many kids with
15 special needs.

16 And that's one reason why I believe Canter
17 should not be closed because the teachers --
18 because small classrooms and teachers get to get
19 around to every student and talk to them just in
20 case each one isn't understanding, then they can go
21 to an individual (applause).

22 Classrooms are designed for maximum
23 student collaboration, arranged in groups and
24 circles. Lesson build in participation that

1 supports both content mastery and social
2 development. As referenced earlier, one could
3 maximize space for 30 students arranged in rows;
4 however, this age group requires more carefully
5 designed spaces. A culture of collaboration
6 balances autonomy with social awareness in
7 decision-making and problem-solving and abstract
8 thinking. Students exercise these skills outside
9 of class.

10 Canter believes in affording individual
11 attention, crucial for this age group. This is a
12 culture of care. Teachers use their daily advisory
13 periods to check in with student concerns and
14 progress. Canter is a school where the extended
15 day is really extended. Teachers come early and
16 stay late. They make --

17 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I am going to ask you
18 to wrap it up, unfortunately.

19 STUDENT TT: They make themselves available
20 after work for tutoring, running a plethora of
21 enrichment activities, chess, yearbook, art club,
22 drama, IMSA Fusion as well as basketball, flag
23 football, cheerleading, and track.

24 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

1 Josephine Sanders.

2 MS. SANDERS: Hi. I'm Josephine Sanders. I am
3 a parent of Murray Language Academy. I'm also an
4 LSC member there. I live in the neighborhood. I
5 could go on. Okay. All right.

6 Canter exemplifies a culture of
7 leadership. In fact, Canter is a leadership
8 academy. Through coursework, students develop
9 skills like empathy, perspective taking, and
10 planning for the future. Students develop
11 competence, identity, and explore beliefs. Such
12 values are reinforced across the curriculum.

13 Every student participates in a service
14 project written by his/her homeroom. One such
15 project was inspired by a fellow student with
16 sickle cell disease. A series of fund-raisers,
17 culminating in three-on-three basketball
18 tournaments is now a yearly event. By planning
19 these projects, students prepare themselves for
20 their service requirement in high school.

21 Canter is a small school designed to meet
22 the social and emotional needs unique to an
23 adolescent at-risk population. The climate
24 reflects the value of safety, individual support,

1 collaboration, and leadership. Many students have
2 found a second chance here, and we know you'll hear
3 from some of them tonight.

4 Canter exemplifies the critical nature of
5 middle schools. Canter offers a middle school
6 approach in a neighborhood that has three other
7 public schools that are pre-K to 6th grade. The
8 specialty focus is best for adolescents and how
9 they learn since teenagers develop so uniquely.

10 A middle school creates the best
11 transition for high school as the staff is able to
12 use their professional development and training
13 days to further develop their expertise on
14 adolescent mind and to honor a common mission. A
15 middle school offers practice for the freedoms and
16 social expectations that students are abruptly
17 confronted with in high school. 8th graders need
18 to practice having the controlled freedom in the
19 halls like high schools offer --

20 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I am going to ask you
21 to wrap it up.

22 MS. SANDERS: -- learning about the
23 responsibilities that come from freedom, not
24 waiting in line to use the bathroom as an entire

1 class.

2 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

3 Gary Ossewaarde. I'm sorry if I
4 mispronounced your name.

5 MR. OSSEWAARDE: That's easy to do. G-a-r-y,
6 O-s-s-e-w-a-a-r-d-e.

7 I'm here to represent not only all these
8 wonderful people in these rooms who truly do
9 represent a community and we ought to be proud of
10 them. They gave excellent testimony concerning the
11 school and of the flawed process of CPS and the
12 Mayor that we do need to work on that ten-year
13 plan. We do need to take time to do things, to
14 plan things the way they should be.

15 I also want to commend the aldermen for
16 expressing their frustrations, their concerns with
17 the process and with having to triage when it
18 instead should be the moratorium or deferral.

19 I represent the Hyde Park/Kenwood
20 Community Conference and the school's committee
21 which has worked with many groups. I talked with
22 two -- talked with -- tried to work with their
23 aldermen. We also met with Barbara Flynn Currie on
24 this matter also to see what can be done.

1 This school is unique. It's part of an
2 option for continuity from early childhood through
3 high school. It has been supported by this
4 community financially through Alderman Burns' TIF
5 and its advisory council.

6 Also we have a number of families who are
7 moving into the neighborhood, and some of them had
8 said that they want this opportunity to be able to
9 continue moving into a middle school that meets the
10 needs of the community and then into high school
11 within their own neighborhood and seeing their kids
12 get to school safely and closely.

13 But there are also a number of people,
14 other people who come into this school from other
15 neighborhoods. And CPS talks about going to better
16 schools and many of them we're sure will not go to
17 better schools in the neighborhood. If they come
18 to our schools from wherever they come, they're our
19 people. They're Hyde Parkers and Kenwooders.

20 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I would ask you to
21 wrap up.

22 MR. OSSEWAARDE: I will give you the form, also
23 to Mr. Price. We expect to have a meeting coming
24 up. Hopefully we can meet with you and work on

1 these problems.

2 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Patrick Papczun.

3 MR. PAPCZUN: I'm a teacher, a math teacher at
4 Canter Middle School. It's my first year there.
5 Before this, I was an architect. I'm only
6 mentioning this because I have experience in many
7 different places. I've worked in Ireland as an
8 architect for two years. I've worked in Chicago
9 for ten as an architect. I have a master's in
10 urban planning and architecture. I have a master's
11 from UIC in education.

12 In all of the places I've worked, this is
13 the most collaborative place that I have worked.
14 This is the most competent place that I've worked
15 in terms of a school that's got things put together
16 and that has a strong future. And just at the
17 moment when we are poised to do great things, we're
18 being shut down through some very, very sketchy
19 numbers that don't take into account what we're
20 presenting to you today.

21 I also want to mention I have a stake. I
22 live in the neighborhood. I own property. I own a
23 home in the neighborhood, and I have two children
24 that will attend the public schools, probably

1 starting out at Ray.

2 Okay. I'm going to keep going with this.
3 As many parents and teachers can attest,
4 adolescents are unique, diverse creatures who have
5 extremely different psychological, emotional, and
6 social needs than elementary students. There is a
7 place for strong middle schools like Canter even if
8 CPS moves toward a general strategy of K through 8
9 schools.

10 CPS consistently supports unique models
11 that work throughout the city. Supporting Canter
12 as a middle school that works is critical. In CPS
13 planning for the Ten-Year Facilities Master Plan,
14 mandated by the 2011 state law, they reference the
15 Hyde Park community area. In the Hyde Park
16 community area, there are several small school
17 buildings that can work together in the
18 neighborhood to support students. Schools such as
19 Shoemith, for example, are an ideal size to house
20 the pre-K through grade 5 programs while Canter is
21 an ideal size for grades 6, 7, and 8. CPS should
22 support Canter, a middle school that works.

23 Okay. I'm going to stop here. I want to
24 mention one more thing. We are a safe school in a

1 safe neighborhood on the south side of Chicago.

2 And I want to mention one more thing. I
3 want to mention one more thing. They mentioned in
4 this presentation today about students and where
5 they come from, where their addresses are. We go
6 to some feeder schools. Most of our students come
7 from Ray, Shoesmith, and Harte. Most of the
8 students -- many of the students that go to Ray,
9 Shoesmith, and Harte do not live in Hyde Park and
10 Kenwood. Not all of them.

11 So what I'm interested in is that in that
12 document that we heard today, that they just
13 reported about, they talked about where those
14 students did not necessarily have a right to go to
15 the schools that are welcoming schools. We would
16 like to say receiving instead of welcoming.

17 But what's going on here is all of the
18 students on the south side that come to us from
19 South Shore and West Englewood and -- I'm sorry,
20 Woodlawn and neighborhoods, they're able to come to
21 us and get a great education to prepare them for
22 high school and we're taking --

23 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I'm going to ask you
24 to wrap up.

1 MR. PAPCZUN: CPS is taking that away. I think
2 that is a crime.

3 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: The next, Number 22,
4 as I recollect from reading the transcript from the
5 community meeting, this name is not Emon Powell.
6 It's pronounced some other way.

7 MS. POWELL: E-m-o-n, P-o-w-e-l-l. I want to
8 try to talk fast because I'm jumping around because
9 I want everything said.

10 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: All right.

11 MS. POWELL: First of all, my son heard a lot
12 of negative things about Canter and I was scared to
13 send him there. It's my baby boy. I am his
14 protector, but it's been instilled in me by my
15 grandmother and my mother sometimes -- you can't go
16 by hearsay. You have to go and see for yourself.

17 And what I'm saying, if I had to flashback
18 six years ago and never sent him to Canter, I would
19 have had a whole lot of regrets. I'm not downing
20 any other school because my son came from private
21 school before, but I think Canter is one of the
22 best schools in the City of Chicago. And because
23 of that, if it stays open, for the rest of my life,
24 I will advocate very highly for people to send

1 their children to Canter.

2 The staff is very friendly. The staff is
3 friendly. I love the principal. She's like a
4 sister or a mother to me. She keeps me (applause).
5 I'm called down here on several occasions, she's
6 calmed me down.

7 When they talk about the math, I have to
8 give credit to Mr. Winsor. My kid is at Kenwood,
9 and he's in AP calculus where he now has an A.
10 Also the person that spoke about the three-on-three
11 tournament, they're doing that in dedication to my
12 son that has sickle cell anemia. So that's why I'm
13 here.

14 I was also -- it's been instilled in me,
15 when people help you, you help others. But it's a
16 formula that you all don't have. If you really
17 have it, then you need to share it and get it out
18 there to the schools to help advance the learning
19 for our children or whatever.

20 Also, are you really concerned with the
21 children is what I want to know? Also the
22 educators, what about their livelihood? Or do you
23 not care? And this commercial that I keep seeing
24 on TV about all the money that's going to be saved,

1 is it going for you all raises, Mayor Rahm
2 Emanuel's raise, or what? I don't want to hear
3 there's no air conditioning at these welcoming
4 schools.

5 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I am going to ask you
6 to wrap it up. Sorry.

7 MS. POWELL: The last thing is think big, think
8 positive, think college and character. I'm not
9 trying to brag on my son, and many people have
10 heard this. Because that's been instilled to him
11 from Canter, my son will be attending when he
12 graduates June 18th, due to the strike, at
13 7 o'clock p.m. from Chicago State, August the 11th,
14 2013, he will be in Morehouse College. Thank you
15 very much.

16 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Joy Clendenning.

17 MS. CLENDENNING: Hi. Good evening. My name
18 is Joy Clendenning, C-l-e-n-d-e-n-n-i-n-g. I'm a
19 Hyde Park resident with four children in the
20 Chicago Public Schools, none at Canter, but I have
21 grown to really know and appreciate the community
22 there.

23 And I do work with an organization, Hyde
24 Park Cares, and we've been working together

1 throughout our community to try to make a plan for
2 all of our schools, and one of the key parts of
3 that is to have them open. There you go.

4 I just want to talk a little bit about
5 safety and Canter's location. It's really vital
6 that you see Canter in the larger context of the
7 community before you make your recommendation to
8 the Board. For this reason, you must consider the
9 location of Canter Middle School closely.

10 Canter sits in an ideal location, at the
11 border of Hyde Park and Kenwood, two safe, thriving
12 neighborhoods on the south side of Chicago. It is
13 sandwiched between our neighborhood high school,
14 Kenwood Academy, and our wonderful Blackstone
15 Library. It is three blocks from Shoesmith
16 Elementary School, the main feeder school for
17 Canter. The majority of Shoesmith graduates go on
18 to attend Canter. Their parents value the safe
19 location of Canter and its proximity to Shoesmith
20 which allows older siblings to pick up and drop off
21 younger siblings at Shoesmith.

22 Parents also appreciate the proximity to
23 Kenwood Academy which allows older and younger
24 siblings to commute safely together on the bus from

1 all over the south side. You see, many of the
2 children whom Canter serves do not live, as Patrick
3 said, in the immediate attendance boundaries of the
4 school, although actually I think the attending not
5 residing number for Shoesmith is lower than
6 Alderman Burns said. You might want to look into
7 that number.

8 CPS will try and tell you that this is
9 another reason the whole attending not residing
10 issue in favor of closing Canter. It does not
11 attract all of the students from the neighborhood.

12 However, think about what this actually
13 means. Okay. I'll finish up right here. Thank
14 you. Canter has room to take in students from
15 outside of the Hyde Park and Kenwood area. It
16 serves students from neighborhoods all over the
17 south side. These students and families are
18 attracted to Canter because it is a safe school, in
19 a safe neighborhood, on the south side of Chicago.

20 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

21 MS. CLENDENNING: I didn't list my
22 qualifications which I'm just so old that there's
23 too many of them, but I share a degree from the
24 same institution as the woman from portfolio.

1 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Student C, JR.

2 Student C.

3 STUDENT JR: My name is JR. I attend Canter
4 Middle School. I'm an 8th grader, and I think
5 Canter should stay open because of the small
6 classes, which you all don't like, because you get
7 a lot of one-on-one time with the teachers and they
8 can really help you with things that you're
9 struggling in. Like in my math class, I was
10 struggling and not really getting good grades, but
11 because of my small class with only about 11
12 students, I was able to get more one-on-one time
13 with my teacher. He's a great teacher, Mr. Winsor,
14 and he helped me to more understand what we were
15 doing so I could get my grade up and I could pass
16 my test and finish my homework and get all the
17 answers right.

18 And also, I think that Canter should stay
19 open because all the teachers work very hard to
20 make sure the students succeed and that they go on
21 to do whatever they want to do when they get older
22 and -- yeah.

23 But I also think that you shouldn't close
24 Canter because it will be a struggle for a lot of

1 students to go from only walking like a block to
2 get to their school to walking like five or six
3 blocks to get to Ray or Shoesmith which is on like
4 the other side of a lot of different houses and
5 communities and college and big streets and that
6 they would also have to pick up their kids that
7 still go to Shoesmith and areas around there, and
8 it would be hard for them to go from all the way
9 over from Shoesmith back and forth to Bret Harte.
10 That's all I have.

11 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you. Student D,
12 AF.

13 STUDENT AF: Good afternoon, you guys. Yeah,
14 I'm sorry. Good evening. Please don't close
15 Canter because it's a great school. Just don't.
16 It's a lot of good kids that attend Canter.
17 They're very respectful and they're nice kids if
18 you get to know them, and they get good grades, you
19 know.

20 I'm kind of little nervous, though, you
21 know. I'm going a little slow. As my friend was
22 saying, my best friend, as he was saying was that
23 it's kind of hard if you close Canter that you have
24 to travel to other schools, and it's just like a

1 long way when mothers and fathers can like just
2 bring their kids like one block away and they can
3 live in the community instead of having to travel
4 like a lot of blocks.

5 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you. I would
6 just like to ask if Principal Shenethe Parks wishes
7 to speak before we run out of time. I'll leave it
8 up to her. Is she here?

9 PRINCIPAL PARKS: I'm here, but I prefer to
10 give my time to the speakers.

11 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Okay. I just wanted
12 to give you the option.

13 We'll go to EP. He's still a student.
14 I'm sorry, it says alumni. For the record, make it
15 EP.

16 STUDENT EP: EP. Good evening. My name is EP.
17 I'm currently a senior at Kenwood Academy. I
18 graduated from Canter in 2009. Canter is more than
19 an educational institution but right in my family.
20 I have developed relationship with friends,
21 teachers, and administration in Canter that I will
22 have the rest of my life.

23 The teachers at Canter pushed me and
24 stuff, despite some circumstances I faced. I'm the

1 young man that she was talking about having sickle
2 cell disease.

3 My 8th grade year, I graduated with
4 honors, but not only did I do that -- not only did
5 I do that my 8th grade year, I lacked my true
6 potential. Now I push myself to excel
7 academically, and I see there's no barrier that
8 will keep me from reaching the pinnacle that I plan
9 to reach.

10 At Canter, the motto is think big, think
11 college. And as I go off to college this fall, I
12 owe Canter and administration a big thanks for
13 helping me see that there's no limitations.

14 By closing Canter down, you are robbing
15 bright minds of the same opportunity that I had.
16 In this audience, there are individuals that go on
17 to do bright things. The teacher and staff there
18 are dedicated to teaching these students. They are
19 sincere. It's just not education we're talking
20 about here. We're talking about relationships. So
21 consider that for the record. Thank you.

22 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

23 Stephanie Royal.

24 MS. ROYAL: Good evening. My name is

1 Stephanie Royal, S-t-e-p-h-a-n-i-e, R-o-y-a-l. I'm
2 a mother, an educator, and a minister. I live and
3 work in the community. I have two children that
4 were in CPS. My oldest is now working for NASA and
5 he just turned 21. They came to my house and got
6 him because of his math. Thank you. Mr. Winsor
7 wasn't his teacher, but thank you to the teachers
8 like Mr. Winsor from Canter Middle School, and my
9 children started out at Ray.

10 I want to say, first of all, I'm concerned
11 about our children being moved because this is
12 going to impact them personally, mentally,
13 physically, emotionally as they already have to
14 transfer into 6th and 7th grade. They go through a
15 bunch of changes. And then when they have to -- if
16 you're going to re-transition them again into other
17 schools, they're not going to be able to grow and
18 blossom the way that they should based on the fact
19 that they're not given the freedom and the
20 liberties that they would be given where they are.

21 Also, you have to look at the fact that
22 they have forged commitments and relationships with
23 the teachers that they are with. They loop with
24 them, and those things will be taken away from

1 them. You're taking the teachers out of their
2 communities and displacing them as well which is
3 going to cause hardships in our community again.

4 These teachers will not have jobs. I
5 heard CPS say that the teachers will be transferred
6 over. Our teachers are not going to be transferred
7 over. How are they being transferred? How? Can
8 somebody give us the plan for that? Can you answer
9 those questions? What schools are our teachers
10 going to be transferred into?

11 So, therefore, jobs are being lost in our
12 community. The children are going to be displaced
13 as well as the teachers. Now people are going to
14 want to move out of the community.

15 I yet have another child that will be
16 coming through Ray and then Canter, and if Canter
17 is not there, I'm not going to want to stay in this
18 community. So there we have more loss within the
19 community.

20 So is anybody looking at that as far as
21 the safety is concerned? Closing down the building
22 and having an empty building instead of just adding
23 to the building a 6th grade.

24 So these are the concerns that we have.

1 I'm almost done. I think that we've also talked to
2 them about that.

3 On the minister side, I would like to say
4 that my concern is for the safety of the children
5 as well. Even though you said that you were going
6 to do bussing, is the bussing going to be for more
7 than one year? Is it going to be for two years or
8 just the one year that you close?

9 Because the children that are walking, I
10 work with the police department, we have a lot of
11 pedophiles in our neighborhood, okay. And our
12 children will be left to walk back and forth. And
13 then for the safety -- for the security people that
14 are going to be put in place, how far out are they
15 going to be put?

16 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you. I'm going
17 to offer the same opportunity to Eric Lewis, the
18 assistant principal, if he wishes to speak before
19 time runs out. Is Eric Lewis here? Do you wish to
20 speak or not?

21 AP LEWIS: No, I do not.

22 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Okay. Then we'll go
23 back to Dione Love.

24 MS. LOVE-BROWN: Hello. My name is

1 Dione Love-Brown, and I'm a parent at Canter Middle
2 School. I live on the borders of Hyde Park.

3 Canter and Ray are not my neighborhood schools.

4 I chose to enroll my children in Ray and
5 Canter because they are great schools in great
6 locations. I have always tried to keep my sons
7 engaged in positive atmospheres away from gang
8 violence, around other children that share an
9 interest in their education, therefore, there is
10 less interruptions and more instructional time.

11 I feel that grouping of these schools, the
12 classes that are moderate in size will now be
13 overcrowded and, therefore, making it impossible
14 for any one-on-one instruction. It will take away
15 from the teachers being more personal and making it
16 more institutionalized. There are already 28 to 32
17 students in these classes per one teacher. Exactly
18 how many more do you need so that you can feel that
19 the space is being used properly?

20 Previous budget cuts, in my opinion,
21 contributed to the underutilized space that you
22 speak of. If you include classes like music and
23 art, then this space will be utilized.

24 Finally, the closing of our schools will

1 have an effect on our children's educational
2 history as the building. How many times have you
3 gotten stuck on a history assignment and wasn't
4 able to say, well, I'm going to run down to my old
5 school and see if your Mr. P had a few minutes to
6 spare, and he always do. Or you get stuck on a
7 math problem and you don't have your Mr. Winsor to
8 go ask for help, for support.

9 In closing, I would just like to say that
10 you put the failures and underachievements of our
11 children on teachers when, in fact, it's your
12 continuous manipulations of our schools and our
13 classrooms that are failing our children.

14 You have elementary and middle age
15 children, not college students or adult men in
16 penal systems that should be identified by an
17 ID number. We have children that still have a need
18 for teachers, individual attention; and in grouping
19 these schools together, schools that are borderline
20 crowded will take away from this individualization.

21 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I'm going to have to
22 ask you to wrap up.

23 MS. LOVE-BROWN: Last statement. I urge you,
24 ask you, beg and plead with you not to disrupt our

1 children's foundation and keep Canter's doors open.

2 Thank you.

3 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

4 Kayla Webb.

5 MS. WEBB: Good evening, your Honor.

6 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Good evening.

7 MS. WEBB: I am a concerned and proud parent of
8 Canter. My daughter is an 8th grader at Canter.
9 This is her first year there.

10 Two weeks into school, I got a call from
11 her math teacher saying, allow me to teach your
12 daughter after school. My daughter has been going
13 to after school. My daughter has been on the honor
14 roll for her three consecutive marking periods.

15 Prior to coming to Canter, my daughter had
16 been a good student, but now that she's in Canter,
17 she has been motivated by everyone there,
18 administrator, teacher, clerks. I mean, as long as
19 they're in the building of Canter, they are with
20 these children. They have their concerns. Thank
21 you.

22 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you. Now is KW
23 a student?

24 MS. WEBB: That's my daughter. She's not going

1 to speak.

2 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Okay.

3 Rosalind Smith.

4 MS. SMITH: My name is Rosalind Smith,
5 R-o-s-a-l-i-n-d, Smith, S-m-i-t-h. I'm a life-long
6 Hyde Park resident. My family has been in Hyde
7 Park since 1930, may my auntie rest in peace. My
8 mother went to Murray. I went to Murray. My son
9 went to Murray.

10 I currently have a daughter in Shoesmith
11 who asked me, and I'm going to say what I said on
12 Friday, Mommy, if Canter is closing, where am I
13 going to go?

14 I went homeless for my children to be
15 educated at Shoesmith and Canter. The first day
16 that my -- actually she's my little sister, but I
17 take care of all her education business. The first
18 day that she went to Canter in 7th grade, I went to
19 Dr. Conlan and I'm like, Dr. Conlan, is she on your
20 enrollment? I was actually scared to go there.
21 And Dr. Conlan said, oh, yeah, she's here. Once
22 she's here, she can't go anywhere. And she's been
23 there ever since.

24 I don't know if anybody saw. I had to

1 walk out of the room because my two kids, when they
2 are always together, they were acting up. Canter
3 gave my little sister an individuality. She grew
4 up when she went to Canter because she didn't have
5 to worry about the little one who was also at
6 Shoesmith with her coming up, seeing her and
7 kicking her in the shin like what she was doing
8 today.

9 She gave her -- Canter did something in
10 8th grade that I never thought would happen. She
11 is doing so well in math. Oh, my God. Thank you,
12 Mr. Papczun. Mr. Winsor. And Ms. Bianca,
13 Dr. Conlan, Mr. Lewis, thank you for saving her
14 educational life. Thank you.

15 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Thank you.

16 Student JK.

17 MS. SMITH: She's not speaking. She's with me.
18 And neither is JM. She's the student from
19 Shoesmith who will be attending, will be attending
20 Canter.

21 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: How about student AG?

22 A VOICE: She's not speaking.

23 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Okay. Student DH.

24 A VOICE: No.

1 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Student E, DR.

2 STUDENT DR: Hi. My name is Student DR. If
3 you know me from the first two meetings, then you
4 know my real name. Before I start speaking, I
5 would like to give the letters to you that my
6 fellow classmates wrote today.

7 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: All right.

8 STUDENT DR: I am an 8th grade student at
9 Canter Middle School, and as we all know, the
10 selective enrollment high school program is a very
11 tough program to get into. You have to be the
12 cream of the crop to get into this program.

13 Thanks to the teachers at Canter, I was
14 accepted to one of the most highest ranked
15 selective enrollment high schools in Chicago,
16 Martin Luther King College Prep. Thanks to
17 Ms. Johnson who is a first year teacher at Canter
18 for giving me daily oral language and Mr. Winsor
19 who told my mother the day she said she wanted me
20 to go there he would get me in. I scored a solid
21 680 out of 900.

22 Not only have I been accepted, but half of
23 the graduating class of Canter has been accepted as
24 well. So this proves we're doing something right

1 here at this school.

2 As I spoke at Kenwood High School at the
3 Monday meeting, the counselor at the high school is
4 letting my mother know I was also accepted to
5 Kenwood High School.

6 Now as they said, we have low test scores,
7 but children are getting accepted into these high
8 schools left and right.

9 Another thing about us being
10 underutilized, well, there's a problem on CPS
11 because when Canter was still a school where they
12 held 6th to 8th grade and you took that away, did
13 you ever stop to think that maybe this could be a
14 solution? And if this is so, why isn't
15 Jackie Robinson still on the list anymore because
16 these are the schools that held pre-K through 8th
17 grade? And how do I know? Because I attended and
18 because the school is holding pre-K to 3rd grade
19 which it can hold up to pre-K to 8. Why is it
20 going to lose anymore?

21 And my last point is we really don't have
22 any really major real reasons why we're closing.
23 This is an outrage and needs to be reconsidered;
24 otherwise, we were just another promise of the CPS

1 you couldn't keep.

2 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: All right. We're
3 going to have time to hear from one final student
4 because I have another hearing after this, but I
5 have read the transcripts of the community meeting.
6 If you have not had a chance due to the large
7 number of you who showed up to say what you wanted
8 to say today, you can drop off your speech with me
9 or you can file it in person tomorrow or on line as
10 long as it's received by 5 p.m. tomorrow. Anything
11 will be considered that's not been heard from
12 today. So I apologize for that, but --

13 A VOICE: What e-mail address?

14 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Do you have it?

15 A VOICE: No.

16 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: It's either come here
17 at 125 or electronic mail is
18 Qualityschools@cps.edu. That's
19 Qualityschools@cps.edu. All those will be given to
20 me. They're hand delivered or by e-mail.

21 MR. PAPCZUN: They have to get to you by
22 5 o'clock tomorrow morning?

23 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: That's what it says.
24 It has to be hand-delivered or by e-mail.

1 A VOICE: You are who?
2 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Before 5 o'clock.
3 A VOICE: Tell us your name again.
4 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: My name is Gill,
5 G-i-l-l, Grossi, G-r-o-s-s-i.
6 A VOICE: Thank you.
7 A VOICE: So are you the one that's going to
8 answer all of our questions from the other meetings
9 because they weren't answered and we were told that
10 they were going to be put on line. That's what we
11 were told that they were going be to answered, and
12 I only see a few of the comments.
13 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: No. The questions
14 have to be directed to the public school system
15 themselves. I'm impartial. I have nothing to do
16 with the public school system directly or with the
17 Board of Education.
18 A VOICE: Thank you.
19 A VOICE: When are they going to answer them?
20 How do we find out?
21 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I thought the Board
22 was going to rule on May 22nd?
23 MR. PRICE: Yes.
24 A VOICE: Is that when the questions are going

1 to be answered? They told us if we were at the
2 town meeting, they said we were going to have
3 answers and they were going to post them on line.

4 MR. PAPCZUN: I think Denise Little promised
5 that.

6 A VOICE: He doesn't know.

7 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: That's not my role
8 here. My role is basically as an impartial hearing
9 officer.

10 A VOICE: I understand that, but I'm saying
11 from every meeting --

12 MS. KINGLY: Excuse me. May I be the last
13 student to speak?

14 ALDERMAN HAIRSTON: The thing is is he's not
15 working with the Board. He's the Hearing Officer.
16 All the Board of Education people are over there.
17 You all the ones that promised and said that the
18 answers to all the questions would be posted
19 earlier in the week. And so the question is when
20 are they going to be posted?

21 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Somebody from the
22 Board of Education want to address that?

23 ALDERMAN HAIRSTON: Mr. Price?

24 MR. PRICE: The answers to the questions, we

1 have somebody looking on finding the answers to
2 those questions right now.

3 MS. KINGLY: May I be the last student to
4 speak, please?

5 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: I appreciate all your
6 input.

7 MS. KINGLY: May I please be the last one to
8 speak?

9 A VOICE: You did say one more student.

10 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Anybody who wishes to
11 give me -- I'm sorry. I'm going to have to
12 terminate the meeting. We have another meeting in
13 here about another 20 minutes. Anybody who wishes
14 to give me any kind of documentation, just walk up
15 and give it to me.

16 MS. KINGLY: Didn't you say one more student?

17 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Pardon?

18 MS. KINGLY: May I speak?

19 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: That's fine. One more
20 speaker.

21 MS. KINGLY: I'm not going to read this, but I
22 am a former student at Canter Middle School. I now
23 attend (inaudible) College Prep. Canter School's
24 college motto helped me apply my sense that they

1 gave to me. I want to give a special thank you to
2 Mr. Winsor, my former math teacher because, as of
3 today, I have been in -- right now I'm in AP
4 calculus. When I entered Canter, I did not like
5 math. Freshman year, when they scanned my test
6 scores at Canter Middle School, they immediately
7 put me in physics, math concepts and algebra II
8 immediately.

9 Mr. Fishbein's class helped me get an AP
10 honors, AP lit, AP honors. And Dr. Conlan, if it
11 wasn't for Dr. Conlan's recommendation, I would not
12 be attending (inaudible) College Prep or be
13 graduating because I will be (applause).

14 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: Give us your initials
15 for the record.

16 MS. KINGLY: I'm 18.

17 HEARING OFFICER GROSSI: You're 18. Thank you.

18 (Whereupon, the Public Hearing
19 adjourned at 7:35 o'clock p.m.)
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21
22
23
24

1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
2) SS:
3 COUNTY OF W I L L)
4

5 ANNA M. MORALES, as an Officer of the
6 Court, says that she is a shorthand reporter doing
7 business in the State of Illinois; that she
8 reported in shorthand the proceedings of said
9 Public Hearing, and that the foregoing is a true
10 and correct transcript of her shorthand notes so
11 taken as aforesaid, and contains the proceedings
12 given at said Public Hearing.

13 IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF: I have hereunto set
14 my verified digital signature this 19th day of
15 April, 2013.

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24



Anna M. Morales

Illinois Certified Shorthand Reporter

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THE
CASE
FOR
CANTER

Hyde Park Community Area
Residents Empowering Schools

HPCARES

April 17, 2013

The Case for Canter Middle School

CONTACT: Joy Clendenning, joyclendenning@gmail.com, 773-647-8489

Introduction

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. You are about to hear a very compelling case to keep open Canter Middle School --a wonderful school that really works. But, before we begin our presentation, we must issue a formal protest. The representatives of CPS just spoke for _____ minutes, completely uninterrupted, to lay out their case.

By contrast, Canter Middle School and its community supporters will not be afforded that same opportunity. Instead, we will be forced to plead our case in two-minute sound bites. Is that fair? Is that legitimate? Does that even meet the spirit of the law? The intention of the law must be to gather all the pertinent data and best proposals regarding this school action.

Most precisely, this process must move us to do the very best we can for the children of Chicago--the children of this community. With that in mind, one can see that there are three distinct parties which must be heard from: CPS, Canter and its community, and the general public. The first two--CPS and Canter--are coherent entities, each with specialized information that the other does not have. The third party--the public--is individualized.

It makes sense that the individualized entity receives individualized chunks of time to speak, say, two minutes per person. But that treatment simply does not make sense for a coherent entity with specialized information. If we are serious about doing the best we can for our children, we need to hear fully not only from CPS, but also from Canter. Therefore, we strongly request that you immediately change the procedures of this hearing: Allow Canter and its community to speak, uninterrupted, for the same amount of time as CPS. In other words, equal time in an equal manner. If we make this change right now, all parties, including the public, will receive their due process. We await your response. [L O N G
-- PAUSE -----]

The Law

Given that we must proceed with this unjust framework, let me lay out yet another injustice:

There is no reason for us to be here today because CPS did not comply with the law when proposing to close Canter Middle School.

(105 ILCS 5/34-232 new)states:

(1) On or before March 31, 2013, the chief executive officer shall announce all proposed school actions to be taken at the close of the current academic year consistent with the guidelines published under Section 34-230 of this Code.

(2) On or before March 31, 2013, the chief executive officer shall publish notice of the proposed school actions.

Sec. 34-230 of the law states:

Notice of the proposal for a school action shall include a written statement of the basis for the school action, an explanation of how the school action meets the criteria set forth in the guidelines, and a draft School Transition Plan identifying the items required in Section 34-225 of this Code for all schools affected by the school action. The notice shall state the date, time, and place of the hearing or meeting.

Shoesmith Elementary school is affected by the school action to close Canter and did not receive a written plan for its students by March 31, 2013.

For at least 40 years, students who have attended Shoesmith elementary school have matriculated into Canter (formerly known as Louis Wirth) for the upper grades. The question, "Where will the Shoesmith sixth graders go?" was asked by several people at the "Community Meetings" but went unanswered like all other important questions.

There was no plan submitted to Shoesmith school, the Shoesmith school community was not properly notified of the meeting and hearing schedule, and parents of 6th graders from Shoesmith do not know where their children are to attend 7th grade. CPS did not comply with the law. That alone should nullify the decision to close Canter.

CPS did submit a plan to the communities of Canter, Ray, and Harte. However that plan was incomplete. Parents of Canter's seventh graders still do not know where their individual children are to attend 8th grade.

CPS has no business closing a safe, vibrant neighborhood middle school serving primarily African American families on the South Side of Chicago if there is not a plan for the children. If CPS does have a plan, they have no business keeping it from us. In fact CPS had the obligation to share it by March 31, and they did not.

Therefore, this is an illegal school action and must be terminated. If you agree, as you should, we can all stop right now and go home. I await your response.

[-----LONG-----PAUSE-----]

Burden of Proof

Let us move on to another point. According to the CPS Board and Mayor Emanuel, the primary goal of CPS is to prepare our students for college and careers. That is a great and laudable goal upon which we can all agree! This goal perfectly links to CPS' adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

Canter is one of a handful of schools that was chosen to be an early adopter of the Common Core. We have done much work in this area, and we are better situated than most schools to move forward with this agenda.

If college and career readiness really are the ultimate goals, then **surely** CPS would have presented compelling and relevant data showing that Canter is failing in this mission.

Well as you heard moments ago --during their lengthy, **uninterrupted** opportunity to present, CPS presented NO such data. Absolutely none. Not one single data point related to college or careers.

They could have presented data that show the percentage of former Canter students that graduate high school on time, and how that compares with other schools. They did not.

What percent of former Canter students make the high school honor roll? They don't say.

What percent matriculate into selective enrollment high schools? They don't say. (The answer--several each year.)

What percent matriculate into two-or four-year colleges? They don't say.

You see the pattern. The CPS presenters did not tell us how Canter performs on the most critical mission of all.

Simply put: The most important data we need to make a thoughtful and appropriate decision for our children is missing. CPS did not present it. Either they do not have the data--which is a clear abrogation of their responsibility--or, they have buried it because it does not support their case.

Bottom line: CPS clearly has NOT met its burden of proof. In a civil proceeding, the burden of proof falls squarely on the complainant--the party bringing the action. Here, the complainant is CPS and the action is closing Canter. CPS has not met its burden of proof based on insufficiency of data; therefore, their action must be denied. Their case must be thrown out.

We suspected this meeting would differ little from the others. Adam Anderson from CPS will tell you that there has been a "rigorous engagement process" of community dialogue and conversation.

WE have attended the utilization commission hearings, the network meetings, the legally mandated meetings, and this hearing. No dialogue took place at any of those meetings either.

The process seemed designed to discourage rather than encourage input. Questions go unanswered and remain unanswered.

Perhaps this shouldn't be a surprise given that early in the school year, an offer to engage in discussion with CPS staff and increase community involvement through a community action council, was met with the response "that's not a model CPS supports anymore."

Tonight we are going to give you the input CPS never bothered to seek about what the community wants in its schools. We will tell you why Canter should stay open.

We come to you together. We are CPS parents. We are parents of infants and toddlers. We are already engaged in promoting a system that will work for our children, our families and our neighborhood. We are CPS teachers, current students and alumni of Canter. We are members of the Hyde Park/Kenwood Community who care about strong neighborhood schools.

We stand before you to support all our schools, but especially Canter and our elementary schools Ray, Bret Harte, and the school left out of the action -- Shoesmith -- that all send children to Canter.

In fact, many people of the Ray and Bret Harte communities did not have access to this hearing. Rather, they are required to be at their schools for report card pick-up and they are not allowed into this hearing after the first hour, making the timing impossible.

CPS scheduled this all-important hearing at a time when many stakeholders could not be present. This quite possibly violates the law! We ask you, Hearing Officer, to consider this point very deeply. If necessary, please refer this matter to a judge.

Those of us who could attend, stand before you on behalf of all the children on the south side who benefit from Canter's excellent program and teachers. We are proud that families choose to send their children to Canter. They do this in the model of school choice that CPS has championed for a decade or more. Canter is too rare a phenomenon in CPS. A safe school. In a safe neighborhood. On the South Side of Chicago.

More importantly, Canter is a middle school that works -- a good school, doing good things for CPS students. Tonight we are going to tell you just how good it is.

Utilization

First, however, we're going to address what CPS asserts is its reason for proposing to close Canter -- utilization.

The building is structurally sound and received some TIF funds and CPS funds for upgrades during the past decade. It, like many other good neighborhood schools in the city, draws students from various neighborhoods, because their families choose for them to attend a good school.

In determining utilization this year, CPS is using a flawed formula, which requires 30 students in a classroom. We should be planning space utilization of our buildings based on the class size we want, not the maximum we can pack in, especially when talking about middle-school-age students, who have bigger bodies.

CPS claims that Canter would be fully utilized with a student population of 390. That assumes 13 classrooms with 30 students each. Actually, if we follow federal law governing special education and counseling services, there are 12 classrooms available.

If we put the right number of students in a room--25--then we have full utilization with 300 students. Therefore, with 228 students, Canter is currently 76% utilized, not 58% as CPS claims. The "safe harbor" target for utilization is 80%; Canter is very close to this target.

At Canter 25 students "fit" in a classroom due to the size of the classrooms and due to the size of the kids. This is more appropriate for adolescents. Research indicates that low-income, African American and urban students benefit most from smaller class size. Canter's population is 83.3% low income and 91.4% African American.

At Canter, we can arrange desks in a circle with up to 25 desks to conduct the kind of instructional model that works best for student learning. As you will see in our discussion of performance coming up soon, our results show this model works.

Based on an ideal middle school class size of up to 25 students in a classroom, Canter can fit 300 students in the building, and would be happy to provide its outstanding learning experience to more students than are currently enrolled.

Canter is a wonderful old building which could be well-utilized by 300 students. In fact, when Canter had more than 300 students enrolled, visitors commented on how crowded it felt in the classrooms and the hallways. Again, we are talking about large, adolescent bodies.

The building is also already utilized in other ways not quantified by the CPS utilization formula; for example, a community group uses the building one evening a week. Canter's central location means it could be a valuable community resource. CPS has talked about using the building to generate revenue by leasing it to a third party. Our question is we can't reorganize the Canter space in order to rent out a certain number of rooms to community partners who need meeting, office or event space that would also provide a mutually beneficial partnership with the school.

Our students, families, and communities should not be punished because we have had so many CEO's at CPS over the past 5 years or because the state legislature blindly extended the deadline so that now CPS is considering the largest number of closings ever in a timeframe shorter than ever.

The win-win way to ensure Canter is fully utilized would be to have Shoesmith become a K - 5 (not overcrowded) school and have Canter be a 6, 7, 8 Middle School. When Canter was Louis Wirth it was 6/7/8 and that made it easier to maintain enrollment. This would solve a problem for Shoesmith as well. **Please note:** we are making a concrete proposal here, for Shoesmith to be a K-5 school which feeds to Canter as a 6/7/8 school.

It would allow Shoesmith to have two kindergarten classes instead of just one kindergarten class and two classes at all other grade levels. This year, Shoesmith had over 40 kindergarteners enroll at the school, which forced the school to have one kindergarten class and two split K-1 classes to accommodate for the large number. If Shoesmith could become a K-5 school, it would become a more well balanced school with the same number of classes in each grade level.

Canter's enrollment would increase. Families would have access to schools for children at every grade level within a three-block academic campus. Children could continue to benefit from the Shoesmith/Canter/Kenwood continuum that has served the community well for generations.

Community and process

Speaking of the community, as mentioned earlier, the CPS school closing process was disempowering. CPS did not engage this community. CPS did this without asking us. They didn't ask the people who send their children to the schools in our community. They didn't ask the people who work in and dedicate their lives to the schools in our community. They didn't ask the leaders in LSC's, PTA's, or PAC's. They didn't ask the people who live in our community.

Among us are people who grew up in Hyde Park, a teacher who has attended or taught in neighborhood schools for 32 of his 45 years, people who have or who plan to send multiple generations of their family's children to local schools. We are people who choose to make Hyde Park and Kenwood home and we never intend to live anywhere else. We volunteer in schools to keep them strong, not just for our own children, but for all the future citizens CPS schools are educating.

If CPS had asked us, if they had been willing to have a real conversation, to listen in longer increments, and respond to our questions, they would have understood that we are a community capable of making good decisions for our children. All we want is what our children deserve--no more, no less.

There are many possibilities for CPS to work with us to improve Canter. For instance, we could help CPS design a recruitment and enrollment plan to increase enrollment. Canter has impressive ISAT results, passionate teachers, motivated students, and some excellent academic programs. CPS needs to get the word out about the great things Canter is doing. Make it known that Canter is a strong and viable neighborhood option and actively recruit families to increase enrollment. There is an active community in Hyde Park who have a vested interest in lifting up neighborhood schools. Tap into this group, engage us in the work of transformation and we will roll up our sleeves and help Canter become a school that fits snugly into the K-12 academic campus that stretches these three Hyde Park-Kenwood blocks.

We want schools like Canter that work and we are here to engage with CPS to make that happen. Let's take a look at why keeping Canter open is so important.

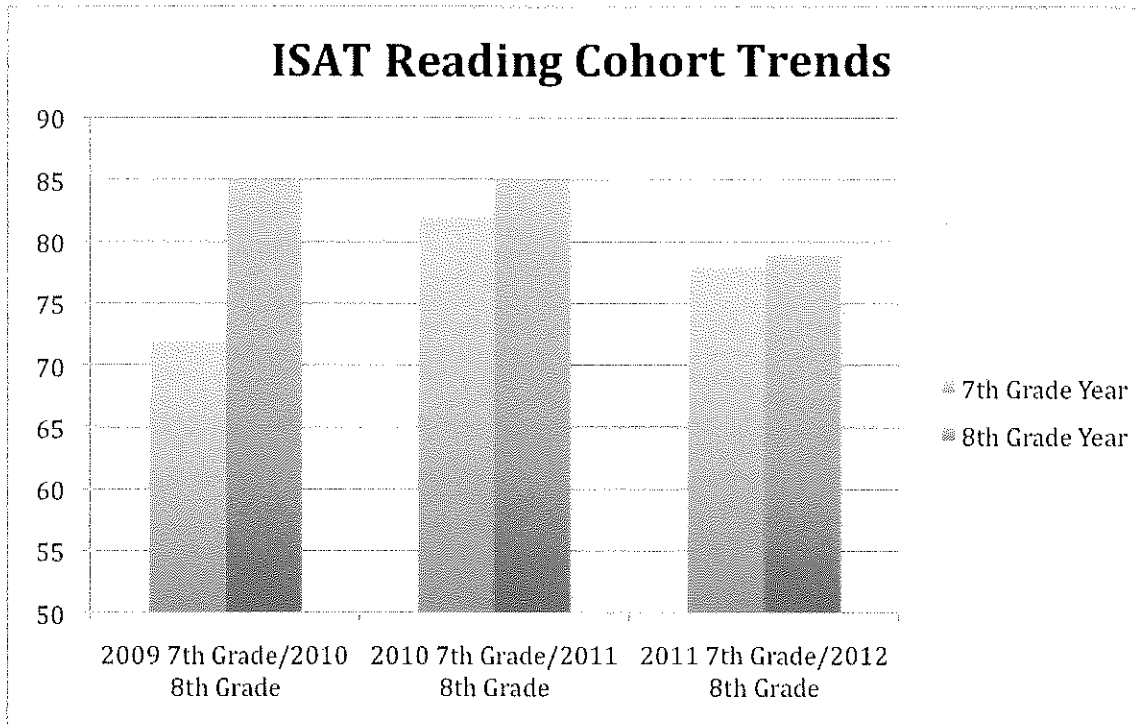
Performance

Canter's committed principal, staff and teaching team help students achieve critical developmental outcomes and increase performance. CPS will try to lead you to believe otherwise. Its performance policy report identifies Canter as a level 3 school on probation. However, there are significant flaws in this assessment. First, it relies almost exclusively on ISAT scores, which look at the number of students who reach a specific threshold regardless of whether they came to a school with significant delays. Only 14.3% of the standard is based on student growth!

But everyone knows that the whole purpose of education is to help students grow. Therefore, CPS performance policy is standing on its head--completely upside down. Special education students comprise 15.7% of Canter's population. The ISAT test it relies on does not capture the growth of students who start with the lowest performance and improve multiple grade levels because -- though Canter teachers may help them advance two, three, or even four grade levels from where they came in -- some don't quite make it to the seventh grade level.

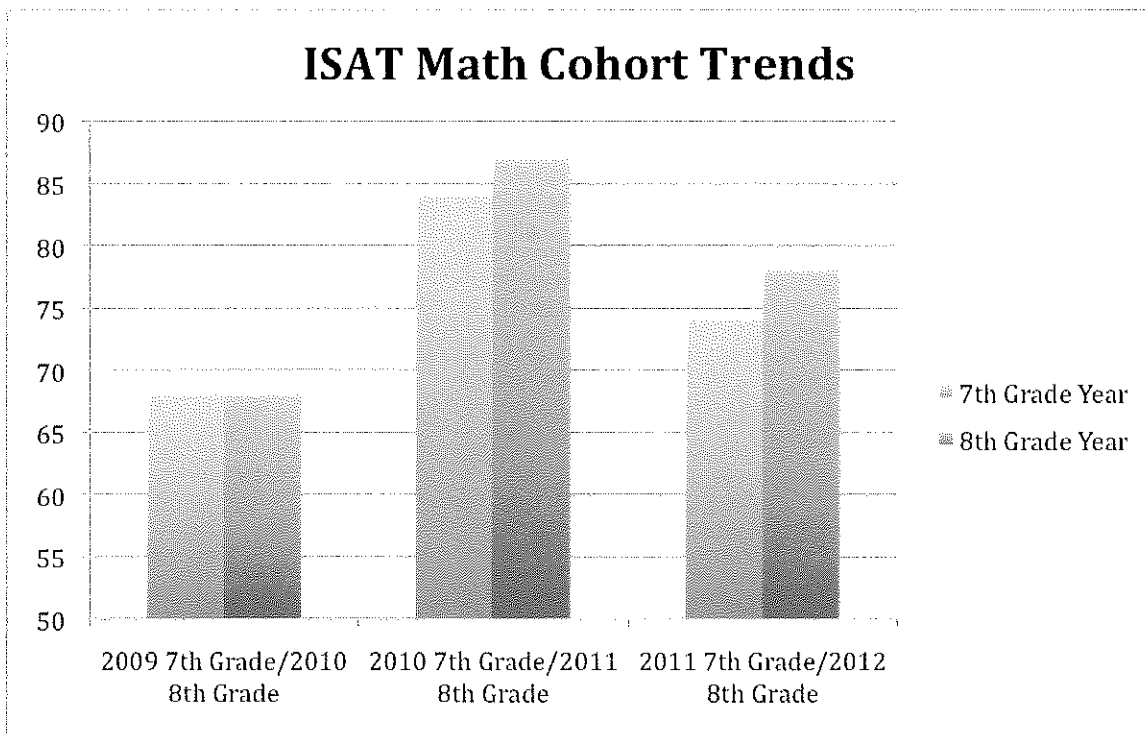
The charts we attach here use the ISAT numbers more appropriately and they show a dramatically different performance picture. Using cohort data for the most recent three consecutive years and following 7th graders to 8th grade, the percent of Canter students meeting or exceeding grade level requirements on the ISAT increased. It increased in both reading and math. It increased in all three years. Overall on the ISAT, Canter's composite scores outpace the CPS average. Canter is not an underperforming school! It is BETTER than many CPS schools.

The Case for Canter Middle School



Reading Cohort Scores		
	7th Grade Year	8th Grade Year
2009 7th Grade/2010 8th Grade	72	85
2010 7th Grade/2011 8th Grade	82	85
2011 7th Grade/2012 8th Grade	78	79

The Case for Canter Middle School



Math Cohort Scores		
	7th Grade Year	8th Grade Year
2009 7th Grade/2010 8th Grade	68	68
2010 7th Grade/2011 8th Grade	84	87
2011 7th Grade/2012 8th Grade	74	78

Moreover, comparing all schools in the 60615 zip code that currently serve 7th and 8th graders, Canter performs very well. In fact, Canter outperforms every school but Murray; that means outperforming Burke, Kozminski, Overton, and Reavis. In both reading and math, for the past two years, Canter is second only to Murray. Moreover, no data exists for 7th and 8th grade for either of the receiving schools, Ray or Bret Harte, because they haven't had 7th or 8th grade for a decade.

By the way, Canter accomplishes all this with a high percentage of students with disabilities--the very group that tends to perform lowest of the ISAT test . It seems strange to close down the second best school in the the whole zip code!

It might be worth noting, at this point, that the overemphasis the Board places on ISAT data is quite troubling. ISAT is a flawed and out-moded test which is currently being replaced by the PARCC test, which is aligned to the Common Core State Standards. CPS has told us repeatedly that the PARCC test will provide a more detailed and accurate picture of student knowledge and skills. That is the future metric that CPS, Illinois and 44 other states will be using. It seems eminently more reasonable and appropriate to wait for the new and better data before we shut down 54 schools and massively disrupt the lives of over 30,000 children and their families! Especially in a case like Canter: If CPS has a school that works well and has special programs to offer, leave it alone--give it a chance to show what it can do on the PARCC test.

Special Programs

Of course, there is much more to Canter than test scores! Canter provides a myriad of special programming that enriches and deepens the overall learning and growth of its students. If Canter is closed, it is impossible to fully replicate or replace this experience.

Algebra

The goal of Canter's Algebra Program is to have students earn freshman algebra credit as 8th graders and put them on track for advanced placement math courses in high school. This is a great way for Canter students to distinguish themselves and improve their chances for getting into the college of their choice. To do this, students must pass a rigorous district wide algebra test at the end of the school year.

Canter has seen increasing enrollment in algebra, with 19 of 25 students in the course passing the exit exam in 2011 and 18 of 26 passing it in 2012. **These passing rates are competitive with many well-respected schools.**

This year's algebra class numbers 32 students.

If Canter is closed and its students are split between Ray and Bret Harte, it is unlikely that they will receive an algebra class: there simply will not be enough students in either building who are ready for this rigorous program.

Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy Fusion

Canter has provided the intensive Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy Fusion program for several years. IMSA Fusion is an award-winning STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) program. IMSA Fusion is recognized among the top programs in the nation by Change the Equation, *STEM Works*, a corporate-led initiative to identify and expand effective STEM teaching to best prepare for a powerful and diverse STEM pipeline for the global future.

One important goal of the Fusion program is to increase access for students historically underrepresented or underserved in STEM opportunities. As such, low-income minority students are targeted for program participation. Because the deadline for application has long since passed, Ray and Bret Harte will NOT be able to offer this program to Canter students who have been displaced by school closure. This will be a huge loss to Canter students.

Art

The art program at Canter, under the direction of Ms. Rodriguez, is stellar. All students receive expert instruction in a wide range of techniques. The hallways of Canter are filled with student-generated work. We invite you to come by and take a look; you will be impressed. Ray and Bret Harte do not have comparable programs--another blow to Canter students if it is closed down.

Chess

The chess club at Canter has grown by leaps and bounds over the past several years. Canter participates in tournaments all around Chicago, including the official CPS tournament. Three years ago, we took second place in the South Regional; this year, we fell one point short of moving on to the citywide finals. In addition, individual players have won medals in the individual competitions. If Canter closes, the students shifted over to Ray will continue to enjoy the benefits of chess; those sent to Bret Harte, on the other hand will not, since Harte does not have a chess program. Another loss for Canter students. For more details, please see the testimonial letter submitted by Michael Cardinale, president of the Youth Chess Foundation of Chicago.

College Tour

For five years Canter has taken all of its students on tours of area colleges and universities. These are full-fledged tours given by those institutions of higher learning. We have taken tours of Univ. of Chicago, De Paul, Northeastern Univ. Triton College, and many others. The tour guides are always impressed by the seriousness with which our students conduct themselves--asking the types of questions that high schoolers might ask. As far as we can tell, we are the only CPS school to provide this opportunity to 7th and 8th graders. Again, a huge loss to Canter students if you shut us down.

School Climate

Test scores aren't Canter's only strength. Take a look at the 5Essentials survey, based on more than 20 years of research by the University of Chicago's Consortium on Chicago School Research that examines what makes schools successful. Canter rates as highly effective in the areas of "collaborative teachers," "involved families," and "effective leaders" on the 5 Essentials. It receives the highest designation of "organized for improvement."

More importantly, it achieves higher ratings in this area than either of the receiving schools in this proposed action. Achieving this rating on the 5 Essentials is one of the strongest predictors of school success. No wonder Canter's ISAT scores are so strong.

The school culture at Canter centers on the relational trust between all stakeholders. Any assessment of school success must include qualitative indices of human development which are the direct result of the school's cultural climate.

Canter is safe and organized. It is an emotionally supportive space. Teachers, administration, and parents are a unified front in establishing and enforcing clear, consistent rules and boundaries. Students from other areas flock to Canter because of its reputation.

Parent involvement is intense. The staff take extra measures to call and interact with every single parent to give them updates on their child's progress: academically, socially and emotionally. From in-school visits to after school meetings to event planning, parents are active participants. Ongoing feedback creates a feeling of 'family', as many report there. We would like to direct the hearing officer to the part of the CPS binder, which contains the court reporter's transcripts from the meetings last Monday and Friday as evidence of the strong sense of family at Canter.

Canter is a culture of collaboration. Teachers are organized in teams and co-plan curricula. They consult each other and share resources, both in and outside of school, working to address student issues, including the many kids with special needs.

Classrooms are designed for maximum student collaboration-- arranged in groups and circles. Lessons build-in participation that supports both content mastery and social development. As referenced earlier--one could maximize space with 30 students arranged in rows--however, this age group requires more carefully designed spaces. A culture of collaboration balances autonomy with social awareness in decision making, problem solving, and abstract thinking. Students exercise these skills outside of class.

Canter believes in affording individual attention, crucial for this age group. This is a culture of care. Teachers use their daily advisory periods to check in with student concerns and progress. Canter is a school where the "extended day" is really extended: Teachers come early and stay late. They make themselves available after school for tutoring running a plethora of enrichment activities, such as, chess, yearbook, art club, drama, IMSA Fusion (a STEM program), as well as basketball, flag football, and cheerleading.

Canter exemplifies a culture of leadership . In fact, Canter is a Leadership Academy. Through coursework, students develop skills like empathy , perspective taking, and planning for the future. Students develop competence, identity, and explore beliefs. Such values are re-enforced across the curriculum. Every student participates in a service project chosen by his/her homeroom. One such project was inspired by a fellow student with sickle cell disease. A series of fundraisers, culminating in a 3-on-3 basketball tournament, is now a yearly event. By planning these projects, students prepare themselves for their service requirement in high school.

Canter is a small school designed to meet the social and emotional needs unique to an adolescent , at risk population. The climate reflects the values of safety, individual support, collaboration and leadership. Many students have found a second chance here, and we know you'll hear from some of them tonight.

Middle schools

Canter exemplifies the critical nature of middle schools. Canter offers a middle school approach in a neighborhood that has 3 other public schools that are K (or pre-K) to 6th grade. This specialty focus is best for adolescents and how they learn, since teenagers develop so uniquely.

A middle school creates the best transition for high school, as the staff is able to use their professional development and training days to further their expertise on the adolescent mind and to honor a common mission. A middle school offers “practice” for the freedoms and social expectations that students are abruptly confronted with in high school. 8th graders need to practice having the controlled freedom in the halls like high schools offer, learning about the responsibilities that come with freedom, not waiting in line to use the bathroom as an entire class.

As many parents and teachers can attest , adolescents are unique, diverse creatures who have extremely different psychological, emotional, and social needs than elementary students. There is a place for strong middle schools like Canter even if CPS moves toward a general strategy of K-8 schools.

CPS consistently supports unique models that work throughout the City. Supporting Canter as a middle school that works is critical. In CPS planning for the 10-year Facilities Master Plan, mandated by the 2011 state law they reference the Hyde Park Community Area. In the Hyde Park Community Area there are several small school buildings that can work together in the neighborhood to support students. Schools such as Shoesmith, for example, are an ideal size to house pre-K through grade 5 programs, while Canter is an ideal size for grades 6, 7, and 8. CPS should support Canter, a middle school that works.

Safety and Location

It is vital that you see Canter in the larger context of the community before you make your recommendation to the Board. For this reason, you must consider the location of Canter Middle School closely.

Canter sits in an ideal location, at the border of Hyde Park and Kenwood, two safe, thriving neighborhoods on the south side of Chicago. It is sandwiched between our neighborhood high school, Kenwood Academy, and our wonderful Blackstone Library. It is three blocks from Shoemith Elementary School, the main feeder school for Canter. The majority of Shoemith graduates go on to attend Canter. Their parents value the safe location of Canter and its proximity to Shoemith, which allows older siblings to pick up and drop off younger siblings at school.

Parents also appreciate the proximity to Kenwood Academy, which allows older and younger siblings to commute safely together on the bus from all over the south side. You see, many of the children whom Canter serves do not live in the immediate attendance boundaries of the school or even come from the feeder schools. Now, CPS will try and tell you that this is another reason in favor of closing Canter-it does not attract all of the students from the neighborhood.

However, think about what this actually means. Canter has room to take in students from outside of the Hyde Park and Kenwood area. We serve students from neighborhoods all over the south side. These students and families are attracted to Canter because it is a safe school, in a safe neighborhood, on the south side of Chicago.

Families choose Canter for many reasons, but one that you will hear about again and again is that the neighborhood schools for many of our students are unsafe-because the very neighborhoods where they are located are unsafe. Imagine that! Located on the south side and close to several major bus lines and the Metra, Canter is close enough for families and students from all over the south side to get to, but snugly cocooned in a safe neighborhood.

Conclusion

At a time when violence and gang activity is an epidemic in our city it makes NO SENSE to close a safe school, in a safe neighborhood on the south side of Chicago. It makes even less sense, when you factor in the data you heard earlier about Canter's solid academic performance. As CPS repeatedly has stressed during this process, it is imperative that children from all over Chicago have the opportunity to attend a safe, high performing school. Canter is one of those schools and must not be closed.

We submitted as evidence a binder that includes this testimony covering multiple reasons Canter should stay open. We questioned whether CPS met the mandates of the law regarding school actions. The binder also includes supportive testimony from Canter alumni, State Senator Kwame Raoul, and the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference.

The closing of Canter would be an injustice -- to students, families and to Chicago's communities. Canter is a school that is doing what parents and community members want. With a family atmosphere, a strong educational experience, solid pedagogy and a committed team of administrators and teachers, Canter is helping its students achieve great things. Canter is a safe school in a safe neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago. Canter should remain open.

APR 10, 2013

Canter deserves another look

hph2012 / Guest Columns, Political Reports

By STATE SEN. KWAME RAOUL (D-13)

As a lifelong Hyde Park resident and parent, I am keenly concerned by the decision to close Canter Middle School, the product of a community vision for our neighborhood's middle school students.

It is not my place as a state legislator to micromanage the affairs of any school district, even our state's largest. I understand the challenges the Chicago Public Schools face today. Demographic shifts have left some school buildings half-empty, while diminished state funding and hard economic times continue to take a toll on the district's budget.

Meanwhile, the stakes couldn't be higher for our city's students, who will soon be forced to compete in an increasingly demanding job market. I appreciate the need to make tough decisions in order to maximize the dollars available to educate each student.

But it is my role as a community member and leader to advocate for the local institutions that serve our young people. I believe CPS should look at Canter's trajectory and potential, not just a snapshot of its utilization. Throughout the process of making Canter a school focused on the unique educational needs of seventh and eighth grade students, the Hyde Park community pulled together with a bold vision. The program has been growing steadily, and CPS should give the Canter experiment time to bear fruit. At a time when CPS increasingly looks to options such as magnet and charter schools, closing innovative community schools with strong local backing can only take the district in the wrong direction.

In 2009, the General Assembly created the Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force to recommend best practices for gathering public input and applying clear, consistent criteria to closure and turnaround decisions. Albeit with continual pressure from state and local sources, opportunities for public comment have increased and improved, though there is still much work to be done. Yet the rationale driving the final closure list released in March is still unclear. With my fellow lawmakers, I will continue pushing CPS to undertake school actions fairly, openly and in a way that minimizes disruptions to students, families and neighborhoods.

The law creating the task force states that the General Assembly's intent is to "make the individual school in the City of Chicago the essential unit for educational governance and improvement and to place the primary responsibility ... in the hands of parents, teachers and community residents at each school."

It is this school-level and neighborhood-level perspective that was missing from the decision to close Canter. I'm encouraged that our Hyde Park community is pulling together, once again, for Canter Middle School. Civic engagement will always be a necessary ingredient in quality education. May our children learn citizenship and leadership from our fight for their future.



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To: The Chicago Public Schools Board of Education

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David Vitale, President of the CPS Board of Education
Will Burns, Alderman, 4th Ward
Leslie Hairston, Alderman, 5th Ward
Rahm Emanuel, Mayor of Chicago
Barbara Flynn Currie, Illinois State Representative, 25th District
Ryan O'Leary, Office of Barbara Flynn Currie
John Price, Burnham Park Network
Michael McGehee, Burnham Park Network
Kwame Raoul, Illinois State Senator

Re: HPKCC's Schools Committee Support for keeping Canter Middle School
Open


April 10, 2013

As a follow-up to the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference's general resolution (see attached) to keep all the Chicago Public Schools open, we write to support keeping, in particular, Canter Middle School, as an ongoing school.

We write with the backing and firm determination of parents, students, teachers and residents in the Hyde Park neighborhood as witnessed at the CPS community hearing of April 8, 2013, at Kenwood Academy. The testimony of all those people was profoundly moving and convinced the HPKCC to speak out.

We argue in favor of keeping the Canter Middle School open for the following reasons:

1. The Canter Middle School has been successful at providing students with a solid curriculum organized departmentally that prepares students for high school.
2. The school is not under-performing: The faculty is first-class and highly prized by its students.
3. Middle school students need this kind of transitional preparatory experience and the community fought very hard to secure a middle school in the area.
4. Capital contributions were made to the school via TIF funds.
5. A number of families are moving into Hyde Park expecting to send their children there, and a number of families outside the neighborhood count on Canter to provide a safe environment for their children.
6. The school, said to be "underutilized" by CPS, could be expanded by adding a sixth grade, thus making it conform to standard middle schools throughout the country. For example, Shoemith School, which goes to the 6th grade and feeds into Canter School, is overcrowded, having two trailers used as classrooms.
7. The students at Canter, their teachers and their administrators, have formed a community and a bond that has transformed the lives of many students as they move through their school years.

- 
8. The children going into the fall 2013 seventh grade receiving schools may not have the structural and curricular support that is as strong as that now provided by Canter. Students from outside the area may have to attend schools that have no additional supports. For example, it isn't enough providing algebra without the preparation leading up to it, and success in algebra is critical to success in high school and eventually college. Specialized teachers in math are essential to this success, not teachers specialized in another area but doubling as math teachers (and say, language arts).
 9. To designate the space vacated by Canter to a parent university, while that may be a good thing to have, is a poor substitute for using the building as a school.
 10. The University of Chicago has a strong presence in the Canter School program. This presence should continue as it may not work as well in an elementary environment.
 11. The students who now attend seventh grade who might have gone to Kenwood Academy may well decide to leave Hyde Park or its schools, thus weakening the student body at Kenwood Academy.
 12. There may be other adverse effects in the larger community or certainly a sense of loss in a community that is trying to move ahead.

Please keep Canter open.

Regards,

Anita R. Hollins
President, Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference



HYDE PARK-KENWOOD COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

1525 East 53rd Street #907 • Chicago, Illinois 60615 • (773) 288-8343

Email hpkcc@aol.com • <http://www.hydepark.org>

March 17, 2013

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Resolution on Deferral of CPS School Closures

Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference

Drafted by the Schools Committee and approved by the Board of Directors

March 2013:

Whereas: The public schools in Hyde Park and Kenwood and in every neighborhood in the City of Chicago are key assets and community centers, and

Whereas: We do not want to see school buildings abandoned, torn down, or repurposed out of public use, thus setting back our neighborhoods, and

Whereas: The teachers, administrators, staff, teams of volunteers, parents and various community organizations and organized school support groups have, through tremendous effort, helped these schools make great strides, and

Whereas: Children should have the option of being able to walk to good public schools in familiar settings without having to cross into danger zones or to endure inconvenient transport, and

Whereas: The closure and consolidation of schools, as done in the past by CPS, even in small batches, has been disruptive for children, families, schools and communities, and has not resulted in the children displaced going to schools that are better but to schools that are further away, and

Whereas: The yearly threat of closures sets schools and communities against each other and makes it impossible for parents to plan their children's education or for schools to be assured of a stable population for long-term planning, and finally

Whereas: We believe that CPS's stated goals for the closures, including to reduce building operations costs and to sell assets, are based on inaccurate assumptions and data, and that closures will be detrimental to families, schools and neighborhoods,

Therefore be it resolved that the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference and its Schools Committee seeks deferral of school closings in our neighborhood and Chicago pending development of a sound and equitable plan that incorporates the input and takes into account the needs and concerns of children, parents and communities.

Dated this 19th day of March, 2013

Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference,

Anita Hollins, President *Anita R. Hollins*

April 11, 2013

Chicago Public School Board
125 S. Clark
Chicago, IL

To the School Board,

I am a former resident of the Hyde Park neighborhood. My Parents still live in the same home that I grew up in. I have three children; one is a graduate of Canter Middle School. I am a graduate of Murray and Bret Harte Elementary Schools. My fondest memories during grade school were the team spirit that we had when playing basketball games against the neighborhood schools. How can you have a historic rivalry and team spirit when the powers that be, want to take away your history?

My son currently attends Kenwood Academy High School. During his grammar school years we frequently researched the grade status of Canter Middle School. We never noticed anything "underperforming" about this school. As a matter of fact, at the time (which was only two years ago), the school's average was about the same as the grammar school that he was attending, (Beasley Academic Center).

As a result, the very next year we continued to look at the school's ratings. The small class size was very attractive. The only reason that we didn't transfer my son into Canter was because it was too far to travel at that age. We need to keep our history, and our concerned teachers, staff and parents. I do not believe in you or what you're trying to do to our children! Canter was just remodeled two years ago. It didn't have a lunchroom for the children to eat in. When I went to Bret Harte in the late 70s, it was already an overcrowded school, and now children from all over Chicago attend the school. How on earth, can you send any more children to that school? This past summer, I went there for reunion information and found out that a janitor closet was made into a bathroom for the staff, (male and female) to share. Almost forty years later, the children there still have to go to the basement of the school to go to the bathroom. Is that safe???? NO!

If Canter is really an underperforming school; then this is a first! I feel the Board is only closing these schools to send the challenge on to some corporation that will not comply with the standards of our neighborhood. This entity will not include the Chicago Teacher's Union and the civil monitoring system that the union upholds to the Board and etc. Like my other colleagues, I am angry! You are only concerned about money. Think about what you're doing to so many children across Chicago. Stay away from our schools and utilize that energy to improve the schools, don't close them!

Seriously sincere,
Donna Allen
Email: banksallen@yahoo.com
Phone: (312) 841-9508

April 10, 2013

To the CPS school board,

As a member of the Hyde Park community, a concerned family member of a current student, and a former graduate of Louis Wirth School (now Canter Middle School), I am angry about the recent threats of this school closing. I attended Wirth from 1971-1973. It was a wonderful experience. I am very upset about the Emanuel administration's plan to close 53 public schools at the end of the school year.

Some of my best, dearest, and most trusted friends come from Kenwood High School as well as my buddies, colleagues, supporters, and comrades. The reason we were EVER brought together is because of our Hyde Park neighborhood schools (Louis Wirth, Reavis, Kozminski, Ray, Murray, Bret Harte). It saddens me that my old school Louis Wirth (now Canter) is closing. Where will these neighborhood children go to school? Does this mean children won't be able to "walk" to school like we did? Does this mean that the "WELCOME" school will now be overcrowded and teachers will have 40-students in a classroom and be expected to have successful learning outcomes? It's a shame what happen to the ATL schools last week and the 30 teachers who may go to prison. Teachers are now under so much pressure. It's just not fair!!!! How did public education in Chicago get so out of control?

If Canter closes, this means the student population will have to go to Ray or Bret Harte, which means the "Welcome Schools" will be overcrowded. At the present time, Canter over the past decade has a talented and dedicated group of teachers/administrators who care about their learning population. This school must be supported and strengthened, not closed.

I am in support of this school **NOT** closing!!!

Sincerely

Sharon Johnson
5109 south kimbark
Chicago, IL 60615

April 10, 2013

To the CPS school board,

As a former member of the Hyde Park community, a concerned citizen, a product of Chicago Public Schools, and a former graduate of Louis Wirth School (now Canter Middle School), I am angry about the recent threats of this school closing. My 4 siblings attended Wirth from 1971-1977 as well as close friends. It was a wonderful experience. I am very upset about the Emanuel administration's plan to close 53 public schools at the end of the school year.

If Canter closes, this means the student population will have to go to Ray or Bret Harte, which means the "Welcome Schools" will be overcrowded. For many of these students, this means taking public transportation which may not be affordable. At the present time, Canter over the past decade has a talented and dedicated group of teachers/administrators who care about their learning population. This school must be supported and strengthened, not closed.

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Sincerely

Mike Tuggle

dvdmike@yahoo.com

April 10, 2013

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Sincerely

Lorraine Lynch
4800 south chicago beach drive
Chicago, IL 60615

April 10, 2013

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I am in support of this school **NOT** closing!!!

Sincerely

Edward Smith
16001 hwy 79 north Altheimer, AR 72004
edwardsmith1176@yahoo.com

April 10, 2013

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I am in support of this school NOT closing!!!

Sincerely

Vianne Jackson-Jordan

15770 Bellaire Blvd. #2413

Houston, TX 77083

The IMSA Fusion Program

IMSA Fusion is a very powerful program that has been offered at Canter for several years. Its many benefits are listed below.

Unfortunately, if Canter is closed, students moving to Ray and Bret Harte will NOT be able to participate. IMSA has strict rules. To become an IMSA partner school you must apply and pay an \$800 fee. Applications for next year were due March 1st.

Therefore, Canter students would lose a very valuable experience due to this proposed school action.

IMSA FUSION has a proven impact on both teachers and students

Evidence of Student Impact	Evidence of Teacher Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 81% of FUSION alumnae take advanced coursework in math in high school, and attain an average grade of 85% in these courses▪ 60% take "rigorous" math coursework according to a national high school transcript study (2011)▪ 70% of FUSION alumnae take advanced coursework in science in high school and attain an average grade of 87% in these courses▪ 61% take "rigorous" science coursework according to a national high school transcript study (2011)▪ 87% of teachers and principals report an increase in FUSION students' math interest; 74% report an increase in FUSION students' math achievement▪ 91-93% of teachers and principals report an increase in FUSION students' science interest; 80-82% report an increase in FUSION students' science achievement▪ 63% students report that FUSION improves and increases their content knowledge and academic performance in math, science	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 84% of FUSION teachers report use of FUSION instructional skills/resources in their classrooms;▪ 65% of FUSION teachers report change in their instructional practice▪ 93% of principals report that FUSION curriculum is aligned to state standards in both math and science▪ 96% of teachers report that FUSION curriculum is aligned to state standards in both math and science▪ Student communication, analysis of information, active learning in math/science have increased in FUSION teacher classrooms from 54% in 2008 to 64% in 2010▪ 54% of FUSION lessons show significant connections to real-world issues▪ 72% of FUSION sessions incorporate complex, multiple STEM concepts▪ 50-75% of FUSION teachers/principals indicate increase in teacher leadership and professional development▪ 57% of FUSION teachers facilitate internal professional development for colleagues

April 16, 2013

David J. Vitale
President, Chicago Board of Education
125 S. Clark
Chicago, IL 60603

RE: Proposed Closing of Canter Middle School

Dear Mr. Vitale:

I am writing today on behalf of Canter Middle School, based on my personal experience of its chess program, and the positive effect the program continues to have on many students. As president of the Youth Chess Foundation of Chicago (YCFC), I've had the pleasure of working with Howard Fishbein, Canter's dedicated coach, and with its roster of 20 chess players.

YCFC seeks to promote the growth of scholastic chess in Chicago, through the staging and sponsorship of free tournaments throughout the school year. Its central mission is to increase participation in chess at the scholastic level, recognizing that chess playing has been proven to increase scholastic aptitude, and that chess is a constructive extracurricular activity in an underserved urban environment.

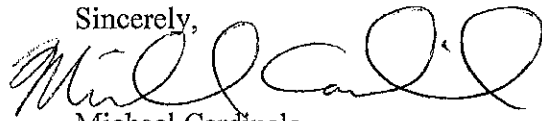
Canter began playing in YCFC tournaments four years ago, and in just that short time, I've seen firsthand how chess has impacted these students' lives. Canter's team has steadily improved its play, and has exhibited exemplary sportsmanship at our tournaments.

As metro vice-president of the Illinois Chess Association, I've worked diligently with Bill Gerstein at CPS over the past two years to expand scholastic chess at CPS. Chess accelerates cognitive developments in a number of key areas, including analytical reasoning, pattern recognition, and attention, and we're working hard to see that its benefits may be extended throughout CPS. It's a long and challenging process, however, and the prospect of losing some of the small gains we've made is disheartening.

I've too often witnessed students lose the chance to compete in our tournaments, usually when a change in personnel leaves a team without a coach or adult chaperone. It is my understanding that should Canter close, some of its students will attend Ray school, which I'm pleased to report fields a chess team. However, some will also be relocated to Bret Harte school, which, to my knowledge, has no team, club, or coach. I'd hate to see these students lose out on the benefits of chess that they've enjoyed at Canter in recent years.

I know you have many factors to consider. I simply wish to add my voice to those asking that Canter remain open, because from the perspective of the positive effects of extracurricular chess, the closing of Canter would be a great loss.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Cardinale". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Cardinale".

Michael Cardinale
President, Youth Chess Foundation
of Chicago



April, 2013

This letter is in support of the Miriam Canter Middle School.

I work at Canter on a weekly basis supporting teachers with curriculum and technology integration.

Always when I am there, I see students engaged in their lessons. The students seem to get individual attention from teachers, administration and other staff. I see students doing lessons in the computer lab. I see teachers using Interactive White Boards in their classrooms. I help teachers and administrators with their own web sites, to keep parents informed.

I believe that keeping Miriam Canter Middle School open gives the student population the best start toward their goal of being college bound.

Russ Revzan
Technology Resource Advisor
CUIP
University of Chicago

To The CPS Board of Education:

My name is Angela Browning. I'm a student from the Canter Class of 2011. I am now a sophomore at Kenwood Academy High School. Even though I only spent my 8th grade year there, Canter changed my life. I found my passion for music through Mr. Winsor and the music club. Songwriting was just a hobby for me until I joined. It gave me the opportunity to gain fans and critics that gave honest feedback. Because of that experience, I'm now able to be a part of a music production club at my current high school. The music club taught me how to collaborate with other artists. I always look back at that when writing songs with other musicians. Thanks to Mr. Winsor, I found my true passion and became a stronger student.

With a B average, I passed the Algebra Exit Exam that year. Since then I've had a nice transition from algebra to geometry and now to advanced algebra with trigonometry. I learned all the essential concepts of algebra at a high school level there. It was challenging, but ultimately made me a better math student. A determined scholar is what the class turned me into.

Other extracurricular activities such as golf club, art club and chess club molded me into being such a well-rounded person. Mr. Fishbein showed me that the game of chess takes a lot of patience and intelligence. That amount of rigor does something to your mind so that, eventually, homework isn't that hard anymore. Art is such a beautiful thing-- is what Mrs. Rodriguez taught me in her class. She took the frustration out of art for me. Golf is a difficult sport that also takes patience and precision. With the leadership of Mrs. Vroman, I lost the impatient mindset I had.

There's so much Canter has to offer to its students. The heart that the teachers put into their teaching is remarkable. Out of all my K-8 teachers, they are the ones I remember. They were the ones to tell me things that I'll never forget. How can more students turn out like me without Canter being there to guide them? We need Canter in the community to continue to encourage young minds to be whatever they put their minds to.

Don't close the best school in Hyde Park.

Sincerely,
Angela Browning

To whom it may concern:

My name is Donae Hark, and I am a Canter middle school parent. This letter is in reference to the possibility of Canter closing. It will be a life changing, and drastic effect on my child if Canter closes. In the event that Canter does close down, I will have to uproot my family and relocate back to MN. It is not an option for me to send my child to a school, where she may have to travel through, gang territory or be subject to dealing with situations with violence. My family moved here from Minnesota in 2011. My daughter has excelled since being at Canter. She has gone from D's and F's to A's and B's. My daughter has never been excited about Report Card pick-up. Since she's been at Canter, she reminds me constantly of report

Card pick up day. I think it is
a wonderful school, wonderful
Caring, involved teachers. Great
neighborhood, Wonderful Community.
Cultural diverse, everything you
can ask for within City limits.

But if this is the way CPS
System operates, its very clear, that
the childrens future, nor their safety
is not a factor, nor a concern.

It is Sad, that these children has
to suffer the repercussions and
Consequences of and for someone
else incompetence to make a valued
and necessary decision, involving
our children, who are in a word
our future! and without a safe
environment, comfortable atmosphere
and sincere and caring teachers
they will not have a chance, and
will probably grow up to be someone
like Mayor Rahm Emmanuel.
An incompetent person given a
very important position. Thank you
Doree Hunt

To Chicago Public Schools/ Board of Education:

As a lifelong resident of the City of Chicago, and grandparent of two children currently enrolled in the CPS system, it is my strong opinion and belief that Miriam G. Canter Middle School 4959 S. Blackstone, should not close.

Canter School is an essential part of the education system and community that exists in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. Canter provides a vital bridge between elementary school and high school. Canter's teaching staff is exceptional; campus is orderly, clean and conducive to learning. Closing a school like Canter would be a great disservice to Chicago's educational system. Some things simply cannot be thought in terms of money alone. Our children's education and future is the only real future that exists for any of us. We must find a way to preserve what we have and make it better, not destroy it.

Thank you,

Michael Formanski

Michael Formanski

4936 S. Champlain Ave

Chicago, Illinois 60615

From: Nora J. Crutt
To: CPS Board of Education
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: 9/16/13

Dear Bored, Canter Middle School should be kept open because it's a safe school in a familiar neighborhood for the children. Canter let children in who are ~~not~~ living in the Hyde Park area. Some neighborhood schools are unsafe and not good academically. The teachers at Canter are loving and care about the students. There are not many middle schools. There aren't a lot of schools that even have 7th and 8th grade. They built Canter for middle school and now they want to close it. It is an injustice for both the parents and the students. No one gave any voice or dissonance for the parents! They never asked how the children felt they just do what ever. Canter is a great school! Therefore Canter should not be closed.

Sincerely Nora J. Crutt

4.17.13

7:13 AM

TO whom it may concern I
Jamie Thomas am a Proud Parent
of a Miriam Canter Student I
believe it is very disrespectful the
way the children are being forced
out how come when there was
a strike this wasnt mentioned I think
as a whole CPS knew about this
back in September why even allow
them to start at these home schools
just to displace them. Canter is
a great school simply because they
strive as a staff unit to help every
child. CPS is very wrong for these
actions life is too short to send
my son directly in harms way so
with that being said what am I to
do about my childs education I
left with pain and confusion plus
very pit how come the schools
north arent closing seems like CPS want
our children to fail and thats sad never
in history has there many schools closed

at the same time its very sad
we have to endure this at this
time imagine the crime and
violence thats goin to take place
due to this displacement myself
and my family will not stand for
poor education due to displacement
or we will not become targets please
solve this problem so our children can
grow respectfully They Deserve It!!!

Thank You
Jermie Thomas

4/17/2013

Dear CPS

I'm writing in support of the communities that has schools closing in their neighborhood. I see that you don't understand what this mean to these kids. Their school is there homes, There teachers are their guardians whom give them hope and security. This is where they feel safe. Its unfair that you would take them out of their families environment and throw them into unfamiliar territory. Knowing that these children is not allowed in other communities without a fight. Why would you do this? Why would you allow this to happen to our children when yours are safe?

My son is a 7th grader at Canter Middle School. Canter is one of the CPS Schools that's on the list for closure. I choose Canter for my son because he is at a school of his peers. All the students are in 7th and 8th grade they came from the same community together.

4/17/2013

They know each other from previous schools. Most parents know each other or know your child. This is what I want for my kid.

Carter is an excellent school and needs to remain open for this reason and more.

Mrs. Leshi Fleming

From: Kiera Morgan
To: CPS Board of Education
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: 04-15-13

I am writing to you because I don't understand why you closed down so many schools including mine. I go to Canter middle school and I believe Canter is a good school. Canter has good after school programs and teachers. Most of the kids from Shoemith comes to this school and what will happen if this school closes. I didn't go to Shoemith but I have lots of friends that did. I believe that if you close down this school, kids that go here education will change. Like what will happen to kids that's suppose to go to advanced classes next year.

People always want to hear from students and want them to speak up. But I am a student and I believe you should keep Canter Open. Like most students that go here, they will disagree with your decision. But like I said before, I am speaking up for my school. This school may have it flaws but we found a way to love it. And you may love it too if you keep it open, because every school has flaws.

Sincerely
Kiera

Denise Aniceto
Cps Board of Education
Closing Canter Middle School
April 17.13

I am writing to ask
you to please not close Canter.
You should not close Canter.
Because it is a good school. Also
because here there isnt any issues
with transportation its easy to
get to school. Also because this
is a school near alot of homes
Alot of parents have sent their
kids here and they want to send
the rest of them here. Its a
home to alot of people. IF this
school gets shut down its like
shuting down memories. So many
people have learned so much
from here. Like me this school
has helped me improve my grammar
alot. Also my or this school has
helped my sister. She we to not
take school seriwous in elementary
school. My parents would get calls

about her bad behavior. Then she came to Canter which changed her life. Her teachers made her realize she had to take school serious. So she did she started to study and try harder. By the end of 7th and 8th grade she was getting A's and B's. Now she does better in highschool because of Canter. Canter has changed alot of peoples lifes. Its a good school so keep it open.

Sincerely
Denise Aniceto

From: Kattlyn Greene
To: CPS Board of Education
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: 04-17-2013

I'm writing to beg you not to close our school. I have never felt so safe while learning until I came to Canter. Canter is full of love and it is a great environment. The teachers are fun too! He joke around with them until it's time to get down to business. Our future is serious, and Canter is one of many schools who understand that. Every year students are killed because their on the streets and not in the schools. Those students don't go to Canter because Canter protects us. Please don't close our school. We love it here!

Sincerely,
Kattlyn Greene

From: Alicia Roman
To: Cps School Board
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: April 11, 2013 Thursday

I am a seventh grade student at Canter Middle School. I am 13 years old and i have two younger brother and one younger sister. I am writing this letter to strongly request you to keep Canter open. Here are my reasons:

First, teachers and parents want us to act like grown ups and take responsibilities so why close Canter.? To me Canter made me grow up and realize that school and grades are important to me and my future. It also help me be more responsible with our education and what I do and what I want to do. As we are growing we need to be treated like we should, what I'm trying to say is if we are 13 or 14 years old we should be treated like 13 or 14 years old not like a 5 year old. If the school board closes Canter then we will have to go back to a elementary school where we have to line up in lines and be treated like little kids.

My second reason is that the classrooms will be crowded. There will be about 30 or more students in one classroom and I have been in classes where there are only 25 students and half of them don't seem to care about their grades and education. I say this because I see people who have a week to do a project or something and they don't do it, but then they say they care about their grades, but it doesn't seem like it by the way they act. So if half of the class is lacking then how will teachers be able to teach a classroom with 30 or more students!? Also It will get hot in the room and still half of the class will be lacking and not doing the work, than the teachers have to be paying attention to them and take time away from the students who do want to learn. That doesn't seem fair to the students who actually want to learn!

My third reason is that Canter is a great school! Every teacher cares about us and they always tell us to do our best. I had family members who went to Canter and I have heard good things about it so instead of going to any other school I wanted to go there and I did. I have seen my grades go higher than last year. I was a C's and low B's student but once I got to canter my grades went to high A's and high B's student. My family was proud once they saw my grades and they tell me that that's a good school and they like it. Canter is also in a good neighborhood, I live 5 minutes away from my school, so my mom won't be worrying much. Keep Canter Open!

- Sincerely,
Alicia Roman ♥

From: Trinity Lynch
To: CPS Board of education
RE: Canter Middle school closing
April 17, 2013

It's come to my attention that Ms. Bennet dislikes Middle schools and that's the reason she's closing them, and the Mayor Rahm Emmanuel doesn't have to worry about his kids school closing because his kids attend Lab schools. But the real reason I think she's closing the schools is because of money and because of low enrollment. And ~~exactly~~ really because of budget cuts. And when you borrow and don't pay it back right away interest builds and you have to pay more back.

But if you make Canter a 6th, 7th, and 8th like it was before the enrollment would grow dramatically student and teacher because you would be creating more jobs. Or you could make Shoemithan a Canter building one for the K-6 and then this school would be 7th-8th. Mainly because the big kids don't need to be around the little kids with all of their drama.

I also have some questions for Ms. Bennet. Since the people at the town hall/community meetings from CPS couldn't, why couldn't you have attended the meetings? What was the purpose of the people being there if your people couldn't answer any questions? All we needed there was the time keeper and the note takers. Also, you can't put a time limit on a person's voice let them speak and express themselves.

Another thing Ray schools parents doesn't even want to be there. Why would you send us some ~~one~~ where we aren't even wanted that's stupid. Bret Harte isn't even big enough for the students they have. And I sorry Ms. Bennett if you had a horrible Middle school time period. But she still doesn't have the right make generations now and to come misarable. Canter is a good school you should think about it before you just close a school because of low enrollment. You should look into it before you make a big decision with affecting other people lives and these are kids not adults.

Sincerely,

Trinity Lynch
of Canter
middle school.

From: Paige Butts

To: The Board of education

Re: The closing of Canter middle school

Date: April 10, 2013

I am a current 7th grader at Canter. I always wanted to come here, and graduate from this school, just like my older brothers before me, I want to spend both of my years here. Canter is a safe and productive learning environment for us. I feel that closing Canter would not only hurt the current and past students, it would hurt the community. Canter has always been within distance for everyone and it has been here for awhile, so the community deserves to have it. Also Canter is really the only school just for 7th and 8th graders in the city. If people knew about us then they would be jumping over hoops to come here. Being a female I go thru alot of issues and how would you know if K-6 teachers can handle 7-8 problems. Also they don't let us just walk ~~for~~ freely to our class. Canter ~~gives~~ gives us our own responsibility to make sure we get to class on our own. Elementary schools would make us walk in lines, wear uniforms, sit with our own classroom and really restrict us. Canter provides us with even more than we need and really tries to get us prepared for whats to come. I think

the most important part of the Canter Community is the staff. For starters they are always coming together to discuss good lesson plans for us. And you can really trust them. We feel like we can tell them anything and they would help or if we want to talk they would just listen. Canter staff is like a family you can depend on. Canter is a great school and you all should come down here to see what we really do. Students always say "How great 5th grade teachers are and how they taught them so much, and got them ready for high school", But if you shut us down, we would never get to experience that. As a closing statement I would like to say don't close my school.

Sincerely, Paige Butts ♥

From: Desiree L. Jean Patterson

To: CPS Board Education

Re: Canter Middle School

Date: 4-12-13

I'm writing to you today to ask you to keep Canter Middle School open. Canter is a great school. This is a place where the staff actually care for the students. They care what we do both in and outside of school. Canter is also a place where they accept everyone. Even if you don't live in Hyde Park you can attend Canter. If they send us to neighborhood schools then it won't be the same experience. Some neighborhood schools are very bad. For example I used to live by this school. Between that school is horrible. They fight way too much and don't care about anything. The students, teachers, and staff don't care what is going on and don't care if a student passes or care about their academic growth. But Canter on the other hand helps students learn and grow both mentally and intellectually. They don't just pop a workbook in our face but we go above and beyond to get the full meaning of what we are trying to learn. We don't just learn the basics but we learn life lessons and leadership. They help us see what's going on in the world. They help us see the negative and turn it into positive. Canter is not perfect and yes it has its flaws but no school is perfect. For kids like me who have never attended a middle school. This experience is exciting it has opened a whole new world and lessons so I can be ready for both high school and

From: Mervel Applewhite
To: CPS Board of Education
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: 04/17/13

I am writing this letter to convince and ask the Board to keep Canter open. If Canter close and US Canter Students have to go to a school we don't want to go to then what if students decide to drop out because they can't learn anything because the class room is out of order because there are 30+ students in one class. What if students decide to sell drugs or join a gang? What if kids get shoot or shoot at or possibly killed on there way from school? If this was to happen the people will probably blame it on the Board of Education for closing 54 schools.

Sincerely,

Mervel Applewhite

To: C.p.S Board of education

From: Joseph Beard

I think that C.p.S is making a big mistake by closing so many schools. I can't if there were closing five to ten schools but 50 to 60 schools over three thousand student relocating to different schools. Most of us will not be going to the same schools as are friends some we have known for years other we were just getting to know.

Canter middle school is a big part of this community. Middle schools let you know that your growing up, and it get you ready for high schools. Canter is one one of those schools who let you in no matter what social class you are and no matter what area you are from.

How are kids going to learn in a class room filled with 34 or 35 other kids. That will just be another thing Chicago can be proud of we will have the lowest education rate. In all top districts there are middle schools so why can't C.p.S.

Sincerely,

Joseph L. Beard.

From: Brandon White
To: Cps Board of Education
Re: School Closing (Canter)
Date: 4-15-13

I think you shouldn't close down Canter because it's a big part of of the Hyde Park community. I have always wanted to go to high school and middle school. I've watch movies and TV shows about how high school and middle school is suppose to be like. Middle school is suppose to be about preparing for high school. How am I suppose to prepare for it if you stop my training.

If you close down Canter and send me to Ray elementary or Bret Hart elementary, my training will be back wards. They ~~are~~ would be telling me how to become a kid again and not how to be an adult. They wouldn't know how to deal with teen agers. Also the school's would be crowded, they would care less about how the students and more about getting money. I also don't believe Canter is being under used at all.

Sincerely, Brandon White

From: Arthur Berriel
to: CPS Board of Education
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: 4/15/13

I am writing to the CPS Board of Education because we want Canter to stay open, people here have a family tradition like my friends had big brothers and sisters that went here and from here to a high-school. Canter is a great school and it's easier for me and my friends to come here to Canter because we live near Canter and if the CPS Board of Education closes it would be harder for all the students here, Canter is a school that is great this whole year I haven't been bullied even one time but on Roy School I was bullied everyday and the teachers didn't even help me.

Sincerely,
Arthur Berriel

From: Denise Perry

TO: Cps Board of Education

Re: Canter Middle School

Date: 04-17-13

I am a Seventh grader from Canter Middle School. My Name is Denise Perry and I believe that there is no purpose in closing my school down. We have great teachers that push us to do what we need to do when they teach a lesson they break it down so we can understand it they are very patient with us. Canter is in a good community so we are safe traveling back and forth from home to school. Canter students are a strong bunch we fight for what we think is right that's why I'm writing this letter. Please don't waste time on shutting down this school it's not worth it and Canter is one of the best schools.

Sincerely,

Denise Perry

From: Anayiah Powell
To: CPS Board of Education
Re: Canter

4-15-13

I'm writing to inform you that Canter is a school we care about, which would make it totally unfair for you to close it. I say this because I am a seventh grader here at Canter, and I was looking forward to eighth grade here. But because of Canter closing, I will be moved to a school I know nothing of. Yes, of course, I would have this feeling sooner or later but it wouldn't hurt to hold that feeling back. Please think of how the children might feel because of your actions

Sincerely
Anayiah Powell

From: Imani Bennett
To: CPS Board of Education
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: April 17, 2013

I do not think that closing Canter is a good idea. This is a really good school. This school teaches things that a lot of other schools don't teach. At my old school the art teacher didn't really teach us anything. But here at Canter we are learning a lot. In art we are actually learning something and I can draw better than ever. I wasn't prepared for this big bomb shell to drop on us like this. I was expecting another year. We already only get two years. I wasn't expecting to leave all of my friends. We might not ever see each other again if we don't go to the same schools.

From: Kiarra Lanier
To: CPS Board of Education
Date: 4-17-13

I am a student, seventh grade student at that on my school is in the process of closing and I really don't want to leave all my teachers and friends. I am writing to ask you if you try to help our school. I have learned so much from my teachers. We can try to do everything to get better. Our school is the best. I support this school 100%. I really think that we can have one more chance to try and work this out. If we can have one chance to prove are self we don't let you down. Just believe in us. We can be the best school ever. Thank you very much if you take this and think about it.

Sincerely,
Kiarra.

From: Raymond E Vickers

To: Barbara Bryd-Bennett

Re: Canter Middle School

Date: 4-15-13

I think that canter is a great school everybody pay attention only a couple of people off task. I have to pick up a brother from a school right down the street. I love this place I'm not the brights or the smartest kid but I think that canter is one the schools that help me the most out of all the schools I went to. I am learning new stuff how to play chess and when we was in a tournament was 4th place in the tournament we miss by 1 point going to the Finals out of 30 teams. But if you close down canter your stopping my road to Success. and the education that I got. So please don't close down my school I mean we school.

Sincerely

Raymond Ernest Vickers

From: Gabrielle Hart

To: The board of education

Re: Canter middle school

Date: 4-15-13

Hello my name is Gabrielle Hart a student from canter a school your closing. I'm writing you this letter because "you are" closing my school. I honestly don't know why you are closing Canter. Canter is a great school with wonderful hardworking teachers. They teach student's how to be something in life they teach student's how to be respectful to other's. But not only are you closing Canter your closing other's schools i would like to know were you thinking about our education were thinking about the student's being effected by this because is you think smushing us in one school is education it's not i really hope you sit and think about what i'm trying to say

Sincerely

Gabrielle Hart

From: Neema Kimondo
TO: CPS Board Of Education
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: 04-17-13

My name is Neema Kimondo,
And I am apart of the Canter Family.
I think closing down Canter would be
a huge tragedy to the community and
the people apart of it.

Canter to many students is a
second home, a place were they
can be themselves, learn with others,
and be apart of something bigger.

Closing down Canter would cause alot
of problems which could effect the
student and their family.

Canter for me was a huge improvement
my grade are higher, I am able to do
things that I never though I would
be able to. For me and alot of students
Canter has been able to teach us more
then the "other" schools we used to go
to.

The canter community is a good commu-
-nity and there is no reason to close
it down and break both children,
teachers, and staffs heads.

From: Nadia Barnette
To: CPS Board of Education
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: 4.17.13

I'm writing today to ask to keep Canter Middle School up in process for the students here at Canter and teachers. Canter been here for many many years so why stop now. Parents and students always have had come to Canter with bright smiles and ideas. This wonderful school has provided me with all the help I need. Canter school is a part of this Community cycle. I went to Shoosmith an elementary school then Canter an middle school and is planning on attending Kenwood high school. If you shut down Canter its going to be hard on us as children as our parents. Mr Goldsmith and Mr. Fishbein has so much for me since the first year I been here and I would like to go here next year so they can see me overcome. Now all I can say now is please dont shut down Canter.

Sincerely,
Nadia Barnette

From: Taylor Dwyer
To: CPs Board
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: 04-17-13

I am in 7th grade, I go to Canter Middle School. My name is Taylor Dwyer. I believe that Canter should stay open because it's not the best school or the worst school but the teachers, staff and community members try their best to keep Canter safe and working. Canter is not just a school. Canter ~~teaches~~ teach us how to achieve and become what we want in life. Other teachers from other schools might give up on students, but not at Canter. We stick together. We might fight and argue but we are like a big family, and we will fight to keep our school open. Sincerely,
Taylor Dwyer

From: Dwayne Barker
To: Cps Board of Education
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: 04-15-13

I am writing this because you are closing my school. Canter is a very good school. It allows in people from other districts. Another bad thing about what you're doing is we have no say in it. When I leave Canter I go down the street to Belvon Shoemith to pick up my little sister. Closing down the school will make picking up my sister very hard. It is very inconvenient for me. Canter teachers are great. They make students look forward to going to class. They also bring the classroom to life, with there great activities. That is why you shouldn't close down Canter Middle School.

Sincerely,
Dwayne Barker

From Raikwon Noel
To CPS Board of Education
Re Canter middle School
Date 4/17/13

I Raikwon im writing about the matter of the schools closing. We as the people should have our say in this and not some group of board members who are only worried about money and their well being. We must make a solution to these problem that has come upon us because of the government. The only way for our school Miriam G Canter to rise above these is to keep it open and us the community to say if the school should close or not. I im the first of my family to enroll into Canter. I personal want to graduate from these school like the 7th graders before us are. I strongly advice that we should keep these school open

Sincerely,
Raikwon Noel

Freedom of Speech letter

Date: 4/15/13

From: Kaylyn Allen

To: Board of Education

Dear, CPS Board of Education

I am a seventh grade student at Carter Middle School and I am writing this letter to ask you can you please keep my school open because my school is in a good community. Teachers are positive we have lots of activities that some schools don't have. We learn a lot.

Splitting students into Ray can have a affect on the 6th graders at Ray because what if they want to go to a middle school not just stay in the same school and experience how it would be in a middle school and example Carter Middle School is a great school to go to and its around the community.


So please as a student at Carter Middle School please keep my school open. you won't regret it!

Sincerely,

Kaylyn

DEAR, Board of Education,

My NAME is BRITTANY SIMS
I go to CANTER Middle School, A
public school that you will be closing
down. But I think that CANTER
Middle School should stay open because
this middle school helps me so much
it pre-pares me for High And it's
Also one of the only middle schools
close to where I live. It's also
down the street from shoesmith A
little school my little sister goes
to. Also at CANTER all the teachers
MAKES SURE you understand your work
And that's why I think it should
stay open.



Sincerely, Brittany
Sims Rm 106 CANTER
Middle School.

Freedom of speech

From: Lencell Williams
To: Cps Board of education
Re: Center middle school
Date: 4/13/13

The school I come from only went to 6th grad but this one go up to 8th grad. Center middle school is probly the best school I ever went to, and it is Really no point of closing the school then open a rather school for older people. So we have ~~to~~ to keep this school alive so more young pre teen can get there education and have an experience of high school and college. before that leave. this school will teach you the things you need to know for high school and college. so please don't close this school down.

Sincerely, Cps

From: Jacylin Weathersby
To: CPS Board of Education
Re: Canter Middle School
Date: 4-17-13

Dear CPS Board of Education,

I am writing you in Requests to
Canter Middle School Closing Canter is
a great school. The teachers really
dedicate their time and effort to their
students. They really care about you future
and your well being. I also wouldn't want to
leave Canter and transfer to another
school and spend just one year there, I would
love to spend my last year at Canter before
going to High School. It would sadden
me transfer to another school and leave
my friends and my teacher's jobless.
Please save Canter

Best Requests,
Jacylin

To: CPS Board of Education
From: Cathy Zha
Re: School Closing Problem
Date: 4-17/13

I am a student in
Canter Middle School. I
am writing to discuss
the school closing problem
with you.

I think Canter
shouldn't be closed. Canter
is a really good school.
It got good teachers
and good students, but
you are closing it just
for profits. I don't think
that is the right decision.

Sincerely,
Cathy

TO: Chicago School Board
from: Imani B. Miller
School: Canter middle school
Room: 102
Date: April 04/17/13

Dear, Chicago School Board, I just wanted to say, that can you keep Canter middle school open? Many people would love, for you to keep this school open, they teach really good things, that you can understand.

So if you would please, keep Canter middle school open that would be wonderful, I would show great gratitude to you this school helped me open my mind to new things. They show very great care to there students, and say everyday that you should do your best! And get off your lazy butt and do some work.

Look, they helped me get good grades and I understand most of the work now. I'm very happy to be here, and no offense but your crazy to let this school close, you should see how people care about this school you should be shamed to close it down, I'm speaking the truth you can see for your self that it is a

good school if you keep it open
I'm Imami Miller, Room 102
Age 12 about to turn 13 and I want
to say please keep center open
and if you do thank you
Also you won't regret it I trust
me, just have faith in this school,
you already closing down to many
school, now if you keep on where
will I go? Huh? Well I would not
know my ~~own~~ self ~~so~~ so please
keep this school (center, middle,
school) open.

Sincerely,

Imami B.
Miller.



04-17-13

Letter to School Board

To: CPS Board of Education

Dear School Board,

I don't know why you are shutting Canter down. We are a talented group of individuals, I think this is not the type of credit that we deserve. We have been trying our best to make Canter a better and triumphet school. But, if you shut it down we can't show the potential that we have. Please don't shut it down! We need this school it is our background. I have family who went here when it was Louisworth. History is Canter, Special is Canter, Life is Canter!

Sincerely,
Chris Brackett

To: CPS Board of Education
From: Jorielle Coleman

I am writing to you to keep Canter Middle School open. I want you to keep it open because Canter is a great school. When you need help they will help you. When there is a problem and when you are not ok you can talk to them. I remember when I got some bad grades on my report card and my teacher Mrs. Cobbinas said you are a really smart girl but you are not trying enough. But I believe you can do it and that really meant something to me. Also Canter is a great place to learn and that is why I think you should keep Canter Middle School open.

Sincerely,
Jorielle Coleman

From : Kennedy Hayes
To : Cps Board of education
Re : Canter Middle School
Date : April 17, 2013

Hi, My name is Kennedy Hayes i'm a 7th grader and i go to Canter Middle School And i want you to do for me is keep my school open because this school is really good to everybody in the school. They have good teachers, students, After school program And good principles. Other schools don't have what we have and where would Canter middle school students go And shoemith student and other schools. I'm sad that our school is closing because i'm gonna miss my friends im really sad about that. Our parents is shock and mad that you are closing. I'm gonna do the best i can to save our school.

Love,

Kennedy
Hayes

I am writing today about
keeping canter open because it's not
fair if you close down canter I
had one year here and it been great
I wish I can stay here at canter
for 2 years. Where are the shoemith
kids going to go it not fair to them
at all. I here kids from shoemith
talking about joining the boys basket
ball team you are take away there
happyness.

Malik Jones

From: Alexis Davis
To: CPS board of education
Re: Canter middle school
Date: 4-17-13

What I would like to talk about is my school closing, I think they shouldn't close Canter Down because Canter is a very good school and lots of kids would have to be put into other schools that already have lots of kids and that really don't want to have us to come there. And lots of other kids don't have anywhere else to go, so that's why they shouldn't shut down Canter.

Sincerely
Alexis D.

From - Dejahnee Bell

To - CPS Board of Education

School - Canter Middle School

Date - 4-17-13

Dear CPS,

I have a problem, a big one.
the big problem is ~~at~~ school closing.

I'm in seventh grade and it affects
by getting less educated in a over crowded
school. What should we do? How this is
going to affect us? What's going to happen
to Canter? Why do you want to close
down Canter? You should close ~~that~~ the
schools that has low test scores.

Sincerely,

Dejahnee Bell

Victoria Williams

TO: CPS Board of Education

Re: Canter middle school

Date: 04.15.13

Hey... IM HURTY, Like very sad. IM
Mad, I just cant belive my school is
shutting down, I have the best bond
with these teachers, I get the best
help from these teachers. It makes
me think like its so unfair because
other schools ars staying open, other
teachers still have their job do you
have an idea how hard teachers
have to study to be a teacher?
how many years OF college?
now they might cant be a teacher
cause they lost their job its heart breaking.
Its unfair, Its very sad it really
is.

Sincerely: Victoria
Canter 7th grader.
HR. (106)



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Preservation, Zoning, and
Development

Schools Committee

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Action Fund

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Website and Reporter

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HYDE PARK-KENWOOD COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

1525 East 53rd Street #907 • Chicago, Illinois 60615 • (773) 288-8343

Email hpkcc@aol.com • <http://www.hydepark.org>

To: The Chicago Public Schools Board of Education

Barbara Byrd Bennett, Chief Executive Officer, Chicago Public Schools

David Vitale, President of the CPS Board of Education

Will Burns, Alderman, 4th Ward

Leslie Hairston, Alderman, 5th Ward

Rahm Emanuel, Mayor of Chicago

Barbara Flynn Currie, Illinois State Representative, 25th District

Ryan O'Leary, Office of Barbara Flynn Currie

John Price, Burnham Park Network

Michael McGehee, Burnham Park Network

Kwame Raoul, Illinois State Senator

Re: HPKCC's Schools Committee Support for keeping Canter Middle School
Open

April 10, 2013

As a follow-up to the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference's general resolution (see attached) to keep all the Chicago Public Schools open, we write to support keeping, in particular, Canter Middle School, as an ongoing school.

We write with the backing and firm determination of parents, students, teachers and residents in the Hyde Park neighborhood as witnessed at the CPS community hearing of April 8, 2013, at Kenwood Academy. The testimony of all those people was profoundly moving and convinced the HPKCC to speak out.

We argue in favor of keeping the Canter Middle School open for the following reasons:

1. The Canter Middle School has been successful at providing students with a solid curriculum organized departmentally that prepares students for high school.
2. The school is not under-performing: The faculty is first-class and highly prized by its students.
3. Middle school students need this kind of transitional preparatory experience and the community fought very hard to secure a middle school in the area.
4. Capital contributions were made to the school via TIF funds.
5. A number of families are moving into Hyde Park expecting to send their children there, and a number of families outside the neighborhood count on Canter to provide a safe environment for their children.
6. The school, said to be "underutilized" by CPS, could be expanded by adding a sixth grade, thus making it conform to standard middle schools throughout the country. For example, Shoemith School, which goes to the 6th grade and feeds into Canter School, is overcrowded, having two trailers used as classrooms.
7. The students at Canter, their teachers and their administrators, have formed a community and a bond that has transformed the lives of many students as they move through their school years.

EXHIBIT

B

tabbies

8. The children going into the fall 2013 seventh grade receiving schools may not have the structural and curricular support that is as strong as that now provided by Canter. Students from outside the area may have to attend schools that have no additional supports. For example, it isn't enough providing algebra without the preparation leading up to it, and success in algebra is critical to success in high school and eventually college. Specialized teachers in math are essential to this success, not teachers specialized in another area but doubling as math teachers (and say, language arts).
9. To designate the space vacated by Canter to a parent university, while that may be a good thing to have, is a poor substitute for using the building as a school.
10. The University of Chicago has a strong presence in the Canter School program. This presence should continue as it may not work as well in an elementary environment.
11. The students who now attend seventh grade who might have gone to Kenwood Academy may well decide to leave Hyde Park or its schools, thus weakening the student body at Kenwood Academy.
12. There may be other adverse effects in the larger community or certainly a sense of loss in a community that is trying to move ahead.

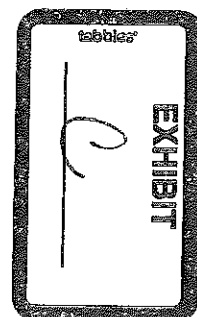
Please keep Canter open.

Regards,



Anita R. Hollins

President, Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference



April 17th 2013

Dear Chicago Public School Board,

I am saddened to hear Canter is closing. It's only a two year school, but it's important. The teachers actually care about us, and care about us succeeding. Our algebra classes ^{test scores} ~~are~~ increasing each year, and keeping ^{are} Canter open will give us a chance to make 100% on the Algebra Exit Exam, soon! I think other children deserve ~~the~~ opportunity to come to Canter and actually feel ~~important~~ important. With other schools with more grades everyone is noticed. At Canter the Principle knows the majority of the students. We aren't unknown and we all matter.

Sincerely
Paula Clayburn,
an 8th grade
Canter Student.

Nina Hampton
Canter Middle School

4-17-13
Room 1206

Canter Middle School

Dear CPSB,

I think Canter Middle School shouldn't close down. I've had a great two years at Canter. I've made good grades. I met my best friend at this school and amazing teachers. I've learned a lot and grown confidence over the years. I will miss this school, truly.

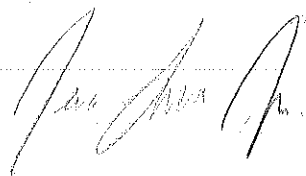
I think Canter shouldn't close down because it doesn't help other schools that are small, that now have to go up to 8th grade. Why does Kenwood need a 7th and 8th grade, if right next door has a 7th and 8th grade school? I'm confused. The teachers and students is ~~amazing~~ what makes the school and this school is pretty damn good. People have been wanting to go to this school. I want to graduate from this school and in the future say I went to that school right there, Canter Middle

School

-Love Nina

✓ Dear Cps Board of Education,

My name is Jess Lawrence
I am a Alator student at
Miriam G. Canter. I have
attended Canter for 2 years. Also,
I'm receiving the full experience.
The teachers here are awesome
and they all ways have your best interest in mind.
The students are welcoming
and accepting. One day
I want to come back and visit
my old teachers. Talk to
the new students about their
experience so far at Canter. If
Canter closes I won't be able
to have that privilage and kids
won't get the same experiences
and opportunities I recieved.
This building has had many
names Kenwood Academy, Louis
Worth, and finally Miriam G. Canter.
Well many others and I think
Canter is the best fit for it.

Sincerely, 

Dear Chicago Board Of Education,

I really believe that you all should keep Canter Middle School open. Canter is a good school for your child to be at. The teachers are very intelligent and understanding of the students. Canter also offers the 8th graders a freshman algebra class, so you won't have to take it in high school if you pass. Canter Middle School teachers motivate the students to learn and they actually care about us. It takes a lot to know that the ~~school~~ school is closing. In conclusion, Canter Middle School is a good loving school. So, PLEASE don't close it.

Love, Kaylah Gidouch

Damon Crombe

Dear, C.P.S

I think that Canter should stay open because it is a very wonderful school, with its amazing staff & faculties such as the teachers. The teachers are very hard working people who are excellent at what they do, even though they know that they will be soon unemployed they still continue to push the students to do better and they come to school every day ready to teach each and every student they have, even though the teachers are working hard they aren't the only ones working hard it's also the students are hardworking, they are devoted to getting good grades to pass and graduate. The students are very well educated and intelligent young people that care about this school.

April 17, 2013

Dear CPS,

I am a student who attends a CPS school, and the closings of the schools is affecting many CPS students, and I, a CPS student should know better than anybody. My school is being scheduled to close, and even though I was on my way to graduate, I feel like the closing of the schools were going to affect me.

I go to Carter Middle School, one of the very few middle schools in Chicago, and it is planned to be closed at the end of the school year. This school should not close, because it is a very well educated school. The motto for the school is "Think Big, Think college," so college is definitely on our minds. We have well taught teachers who should not lose their jobs.

I feel that the school should stay open because today, not many elementary schools go to grades anymore, so their is not really a place for us to go. I think the reason they closed Canter was because it was a middle school with at most 300 students. They felt that if they close our school down, along with other middle schools, it will only affect a few people but it affects us all.

When I came to Canter, I met teachers who you could be close enough with, and not just be their student but you could be their friend. I came from a school, and yes I had many friends, but those friends didn't last. But the friends that I met here are gonna stick with me, and also, since that there are not alot of people here there, this is enough space to get to know everybody.

My experiences at Canter
are going to stick with me forever.
I love this school, and we may not
be the best, but we are certainly
not the worst. I may have been graduating
this year, but this is still my school,
and I am still a part of it. So please,
consider the students, and education,
not just money.

Sincerely, Cheyenne Anderson

Dear CPS,

In my opinion, Carter Middle School shouldn't close because the teachers are nice but sometimes mean but about them teaching, they know how to handle us properly^{ly} how we needed to be handled. One of my memorable experience was when I was in 7th grade, it was payama's day and one basketball player's wife came here to encourage us to not give up on something even if something bad happen, you shouldn't give up because you never know what^{it} can get you in the future like what you can be. Also she talked about going to college and stuff and I think it shouldn't close because kids here can be who they really are, and the school should encourage some of the students to work hard "think Big, think College!"

Sincerely,

Amelia Kaulate

(Student of class 2015)

Brian Doan

4/17/12

In my opinion center
should stay open. There
are many rooms. Cps says
the school is not utilized
but almost every class
is filled and out of
desk. Second thing school
is extremely hot, if cps
wants to fund something it
should be the ac for
the kids and class, third
of all our class sets
or books are in terrible
condition, the books are so
old that my brother used
them and he graduated in
'08. Lastly, I went to Howard
ac and I had a horrible
year and without center I
would have never been
able to get back on my
feet. So if you want
close a school you need

to consider, with this being
my 1 year at center I
have made no friends just
family

Sincerely,
John Deen

Justice Jones

4/15/13

Room #305

6th period S.S

Keep Center

Dear CPS,

Keep Center open. I think center should stay open for many reasons. I know a boy who takes 3 buses from his neighbor hood just to get to school. A good school and he's still late everyday, almost everyday. But that did not stop him he comes to school everyday happily. I mean don't you know think if a kids has to get up at 6 AM to take 3 buses to school. Means it's a good school and shouldn't be closing. Because I know I had to do that I wouldn't want my school to close. I would love to come back when I get older and remember those times.

Justin McDaniel
Canter Forever
4-15-13

"What?!" That is what I said when I heard Canter Middle School was closing. I sat there thinking of all my good memories, because I have not had no bad memories here. Still sitting here thinking why is Canter closing, every one here has helped everyone of us in some way. Before coming to Canter I didn't really care about school. I got a .O.K. grades just to get Past. But now at Canter I'm getting good grades and staying out of trouble most the time, and taking my education to a bigger level than others in my grade. Being in a advance math class it was hard at the beginning of the year, to the point ^{where} I got F's on all my assignments and tests but now ever since I've been going to after school math, I've been getting A's on every thing. As a current A/B student at Canter, from the bottom to the top of my heart can you keep Canter open. It was built for a purpose you know.

- #CanterForever

Jaren Jenkins

My experience at Canter was
fun because it was finally a
place where I felt welcomed. It
was a place where I could be
myself and not have to act like
someone else. Also the teachers
there were the best, they
helped me when I needed it
the most. Now I'm not going
to say they weren't on my
back, but they only did
that because they saw the
potential I have. They always
set me on the right track. I
feel Canter should stay open
because it's not just any type
of school, it's a school where
every single teacher cares
about the student even
though the students give teachers
problems. It's also a school where
every teacher gets along
with their co-workers. Also I

Could go on and on, but
I just want you to look
deep in your heart and
ask ^{why} didn't you want
to keep a school open
where every single teacher
wants to educate their
students and help them
earn to be successful.

April 16, 2013

Dear CPS and Barbara Bennett

My years at Canter Middle School have been the best years of all my school years, before I came to Canter I was a sixth grader at Price elementary where I then had been suffering from 2 years of being bullied and tormented by kids who I thought were my friends. When I transferred to Canter it felt like a weight was lifted off of me because I was in a new and loving environment, I learned a lot from Canter because each of our classes are on my grade level, have a decent amount of students, and I get to interact with kids my own age with a stable teacher. Unlike my old school which had 40 students in each class with a teacher who couldn't really accommodate all the students because our classrooms were mixed with 5-6 so we all learned on the same

level, being here at Canter I met my boyfriend Elmani who is my age, I learn my grade level, I switch classes and have a stable teacher for everyone, I've been here from Canter because this school has given me something called hope when the only word I could think of was hate, it's helped mold me into a better student from when I used to talk and goof off this school and the kids here have shown me love and acceptance when Trice showed me hate and depression but overall we're benefited from Canter because we've gained and received something from here Change and possibilities which is why I believe Canter needs to stay open so more students can have this experience otherwise we were just another problem you couldn't help.

Sincerely

LeAnna
Richardson
Room 305

hello as a member of Carter M Middle School
I felt the need to write this ~~letter~~ letter
a few months ago I found out ~~by~~ their
A chance that my school could close indefinitely
as a 8th grader I was covered all the Meonias
lession experience gave their's a unige in virement
at Carter that I've never experienced ~~and~~ that
ultimately help me ~~per~~ paper for high school
over the year Carter has touch me like
no other school has before. I remember one of the ~~ouse~~
Mortment was when i/y a 7th grade
girl was brutally battered with shot when her mom
drove to the gas station to get some gass
for what speed like 2 weeks we all ~~could~~
raise money to cover for some of her
hospital ~~bill~~ Bill and even a new psp
then we had an assembly where we
unwode how much money we had raised an
a picture of her lit up face as we harden
her the boy as a I look around at ~~the~~
~~crying teacher~~ one of the teacher I "dis like"
was crying an I couldn't understand it
I though Sec did care but in that moment
I saw she was human ~~and~~ that though I
could see it see loved her ~~kid's~~ (student)
She care for her ~~kid's~~ ~~and~~ and did the best
to teachen extapiar Show and learn ~~and~~ and
Most importantly love and it's that love tha
make's this school great

Dear CPS,

4-17-2013

I'm not sure if you've thought about it or not but, Canter matters. Our school isn't just some mistake you can erase, it's a monument of history. By this I mean that trials and tribulations have been gone through in this school, no matter what its name is or was. You may not think so, but you're destroying our school. We may not be as good as others, but I guarantee we are like no other. Our differences make us who we are, make our school what it is. The experience we're having here and now can't be had anywhere else. The teachers, students, feel of the desks, smells of the classrooms, none of it can be replaced. Please, let me and my fellow peers have a chance to finish our journey, in Canter Middle School.

Sincerely,
~~Destiny Brady~~
Destiny Brady

Cheyenne Vinci

4/17/13

Being a student of Carter Middle School for 2 years since the 7th grade has been decent. In a 8th grader now and the experience was great. I have teachers that actually care and strive for us to get an education. Unlike some other teachers at other schools, they teach, they don't just sit down and say, "As long as I'm getting paid." No it's not like that here at Carter, here's a home. The principles and teachers are strict on us for a reason and I understand that. We're being prepared for high school and college because they're not going to be all sweet and let you get away with things. Carter is a good school. My brother graduated from here in 2011 and is now doing exceptionally well in school. His grades are good, and he's staying out of trouble. Sending the 7th graders to other schools is sure it'll make traveling inconvenient. Economically, driving for a while cost money. Hello, gas! I just feel like this is a great school, it's teaching me the things I need to know especially in math. We are being way over-prepared! Mrs. Johnson, that's **1** lady, is teaching us, reading, writing, research,

and Social Studies! Canter puts the
C in Care! ♥

Dear CPS Board of Education,

Canter middle school is a very good school which I believe should stay open because they have good teachers, we had a great Principle, makes me feel like I am a high school student. When being at Canter I feel like I am going to become something and I am going to be known.

Our teachers at Canter Middle School are very respectful, if we are not passing they would do anything to make sure that we pass in their class. I learn a lot in all the classes I take at Canter Middle School and our teachers here are what helped me to get in a good high school.

Our principle at Canter Middle School is also respectful. Her name is Dr. Conlan and she walks through the halls to just make sure that we are on the teachers are doing there job and to make sure Canter students aren't causing trouble and aren't in the hall ways.

Canter Middle School makes
me feel like I am in high school
because of the way they treat,
like how we have to switch
class, you can't be late for class
or else you will get detention.

Canter is a perfect school for
7th grader and 8th graders who
are trying to make a living.

Canter Student,
Shree Robinson

Cemarah Spencer

April 15, 2012

Dear, CPS School Board

I go to Miriam G. Carter Middle School. I'm an 8th grader in Ms. Johnson's class. Before Carter my elementary school was Shoemith. My opinion on you guys closing the school is that this is ridiculous and horrible and not right.

Many schools, actually 54 schools are shutting down. I know you guys really don't care about people but many teachers and staff are losing their job and lots of them have families to support and take care of but of course the way the system is set-up people won't be able to fail.

You guys are shutting our school down because we don't have enough students in our classrooms if you think about it that's crazy because for one reason each classroom has one teacher, a second reason is

that you people want over 35 kids
well, about 45 kids in each class
that is very overwhelming for one
teacher. Every student, every teacher
knows that the reason your closing
our school down is because your not
getting enough money from us its
real obvious you people dont care
about our education our future.

These teachers are sincere, loving and
respectful toward each student they
want us to have a good future and
a good life. Its very heartbreaking
that you only think about money.

Sincerely,
Cemarah Spencer

Dear CPS,

My name is Nick Johnson
I am an 8th grader at Carter
middle school. Though I have only
been here two months and I
already see how great of
a school this is. This school
is amazing and shouldn't
be closed. I have three reasons,
one, the teachers, the Academic success
and the benefit to the community.

This school inhabits
teachers and students that opened
their arms wide when I first came
here. They showed me love
and acceptance. I can't say
I felt the same at my other
school. Each teacher has showed me
they cared.

Also since I've been here
I've been prospering Academically
and socially. I have maintained
a A, B Average. I have also
found time to join in two
after-school activities, which can
be beneficial to -resimays.
I have attained Personal Assistance

from any teacher when I
require it.

My last reason is
its benefit to the community
in Wd Park. This school is
a safe place where students
from all different kinds of
Neighborhoods and feel safe
together. If you take away
a safe haven of learning,
where will the kids go?

Where I come from
the Mayor wasn't closing
schools left and right, so why
does Chicago? What is more
important, the Mayor's pay check
or the children of Chicago's
learning and welfare? Thank you
for your time.

Sincerely Rich Johnson

Christian Jones

Dear CPB School Board,

Hi, my name is Christian Jones and I go to Carter Middle School and I am in 8th grade. I also live in ~~My~~ Hyde ~~park~~ and it is a very beautiful neighborhood. I believe that at the most elementary schools in the area, Ray, Shermith and ~~for~~ Korte, the majority of them come to ~~3~~ Carter. I believe that there are ~~no~~ benefits ~~that~~ and programs that Carter has that others do not. Carter has classes like Art and Leadership that teaches us about life and that raises students goals. In det we work on big projects like posters and boards. In Leadership we talk about Wars ~~and~~ Heroes and life. Here there is a real middle school and we have five minutes to get from class to class, no returnway to homeroom at dismissal and ramp like a high school. I believe that due to our small class sizes, we learn more and get more attention when needed.

~~Just~~ Just because you are not
Not being effected by us, it doesn't
mean that you shouldn't close ~~out~~
our school ~~because~~ for some dumb
reason about ~~small~~ our students
are not reaching the capacity
limits. At Center, we all feel like
family and we don't want any
of that to change.

4-17-2013

Dear, Cps Board of Education

My name is Dawn Branton I attend Carter M. School and went to Shoosmith Elementary School. I am coming to you with a problem and the problem is the Board of Education is agreeing to close Carter down.

I disagree with this because first of all this is a good school and Carter stay on top of things. They don't allow drama and they have counseling for children that have bad anger problems that will help them get over their problems.

Also Carter have great teachers. The teachers teach well and help children stay on track. And if any children have a problem with something that have a personal talk with that child. The children all enjoy this special attention and not all schools have this event.

Canter also have a good number of students and very small classes. This is a very good thing because students are allowed to have special attention if they need help with anything. And if they go to a school with big classes and a lot of students,

students are not going to have special attention and everyone are going to get irritated and confused on things.

But I believe that the school should remain open and don't close. We need this school and this will help not only teachers but the students that attend Canter and Shoemith a lot. I feel cops don't care about the students, I feel you guys are selfish people and you guys need somebody to help you guys understand our side of the story. My last and final words to you are don't close the school over something stupid not having a lot of students. Thank-you for your time and hopefully you guys get a break through.

Love,
Dawn Blanton

4-17-2013

Dear, CPS Board of education

My name is Dawu Blanton I attend Carter M. School And want to Shad Smith Elementary school. I am coming to you with a problem And the problem is the Board of education agreeing to close Carter dawu.

I disagree with this because First of all this is a good school And Carter stay on top of things. They don't allow Drama And they have counseling for children that have bad anger problems that will help them get over their problems.

Also Carter have great teachers. The Teachers teach well And help children stay on track. And if any children have a problem with something they have a personal talk with that child. The children all enjoy this special attention And not all schools have this event.

Center also have a good number of students
And very small classes This is a very good because
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if they need help with anything. And if they
go to a school with big classes And a lot of students,
Students ^{are} not going to have special attention
And everybody going to get irritated And
Confused on things.

But I believe that the school should
remain open And don't close we need this
school and This will help not only the teachers
but the students that attend Shoemith And
Center a lot. I feel CPS Don't care about the
Students I Feel that you guys are selfish
people And you guys need somebody to get at
ya'll head to make you guys not close the school
hopefully CPS OF Board^ed education understand.

Love,
Lawn Blanton

4 V4/13

Dear, Cps board of education

I attend center middle school where the learning is great. I cannot leave the building without learning something. This school is preparing us for high school. They give us alot of freedoms, such as us not having to walk in lines we dont have bathroom breaks we have advisors which is just like study hall we also have smaller classes so the teachers can give us more one on one attention helping us learn how to communicate and good transitional skills. I believe you are wrong for wanting us to all be squeezed into one room where learning will be hard and fights will happen often putting corners back into a bad place and even putting lives at stake because of money.

Sincerely
Jerome Royal

4/14/13

Dear CPS Board of Education

My Name is Osis,
I'm a 8th grader at
Center Middle School. I came
from Arthur E. Wicker on 53rd
and Locust. I transferred to
this school because I did not
like my old school. I like
Center Middle School. Center
Middle School teaches me leader
ship and this school is teaching
me to become a better and better
student every single day. I
love my school.

Since the first day I
came to this school I know
how different this school is
from other schools and how the
teachers work very hard to
make sure every child succeeds
to walk out the end of
there 8th year.

All I'm trying to say
is that why can't we have the
same experience as other 8th
graders by being able to
come visit our 8th grade
teachers that we show
our grade at for and
helped us get to high
school. We don't deserve this,
nobody does.

Shannon Adams,

Bonita Morris
Carter m. d.

306
4/17/13

Dear,
Lps

I am a 8th grader at Carter Middle School. I have went here for 2 years. I have had so many great experiences. I think Carter is a great school for many reasons.

When I first came to Carter I was shy, but then the kind students and teachers helped me up. I went to a school called Morrow Middle School. The class were filled with many students. It was hard to concentrate. So there for I think Carter is a great school. Here, the teachers stay and help kids learn the material even if they don't get paid for it.

I think only negative things
will come from this school closing
down. Many kids will lose big opportunities.
Schools will be overcrowded. I think
Center shouldn't close down at all.

Sincerely,

Benito Morales

Dear cps,

Canter Middle School is full of smart and intellectual students who have a desire to learn, and teachers who strive to fulfill those desires. Closing Canter will not only cause inconvenience for the teachers but also for the students. Where will the 7th graders go? TO classes with 30-40 students in one class?

I feel that this move will highly effect the children for the worse. Being in close with 30-40 students will put a strain on the teacher trying to get to each student. Canter has a decent amount of students in each class. Where there isn't any chaos^{or havoc}. Canter has given me the best two years of my life, and I think many other students

Can agree with me Please, think
about us, the children, and how
this affects us. Center is a
safe environment for students and
staff. please, take this letter into
consideration, and atleast rethink
you decision.

Sincerely,

Brian Jones

Proud Center Student

Dear CPS,

My name is Troy Mayo and I am currently an eighth grader at Carter Middle School and I want to speak in regards to my school closing, however it doesn't affect me I would still like to speak on the behalf of the seventh graders to whom it does affect and even though how I feel about the school is ineffable. I feel that I should elaborate on the fact that it is unfortunate that such a great school is closing, a great school that offers a diverse environment of learning. For example, Carter offers a freshman algebra class that most middle schools don't offer unless it's private or selective enrollment algebra at Carter puts you a step ahead of others when you walk through high schools door.

I know that Canter has not only been a essential asset to me but to the Hyde Park Community. For example what happens to for those families and Elementary Schools in Hyde Park they can't go to the next school because it's probably closing too and by closing this school you are not just hurting students and teachers here but a whole Community and other Schools in Hyde Park.

Sincerely
Tady Mayo



HYDE PARK-KENWOOD COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

1525 East 53rd Street #907 • Chicago, Illinois 60615 • (773) 288-8343

Email hpkcc@aol.com • <http://www.hydepark.org>

March 17, 2013

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HPKCC is a 501c(3) nonprofit
in good standing

Resolution on Deferral of CPS School Closures

Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference

Drafted by the Schools Committee and approved by the Board of Directors

March 2013:

Whereas: The public schools in Hyde Park and Kenwood and in every neighborhood in the City of Chicago are key assets and community centers, and

Whereas: We do not want to see school buildings abandoned, torn down, or repurposed out of public use, thus setting back our neighborhoods, and

Whereas: The teachers, administrators, staff, teams of volunteers, parents and various community organizations and organized school support groups have, through tremendous effort, helped these schools make great strides, and

Whereas: Children should have the option of being able to walk to good public schools in familiar settings without having to cross into danger zones or to endure inconvenient transport, and

Whereas: The closure and consolidation of schools, as done in the past by CPS, even in small batches, has been disruptive for children, families, schools and communities, and has not resulted in the children displaced going to schools that are better but to schools that are further away, and

Whereas: The yearly threat of closures sets schools and communities against each other and makes it impossible for parents to plan their children's education or for schools to be assured of a stable population for long-term planning, and finally

Whereas: We believe that CPS's stated goals for the closures, including to reduce building operations costs and to sell assets, are based on inaccurate assumptions and data, and that closures will be detrimental to families, schools and neighborhoods,

Therefore be it resolved that the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference and its Schools Committee seeks deferral of school closings in our neighborhood and Chicago pending development of a sound and equitable plan that incorporates the input and takes into account the needs and concerns of children, parents and communities.

Dated this 19th day of March, 2013

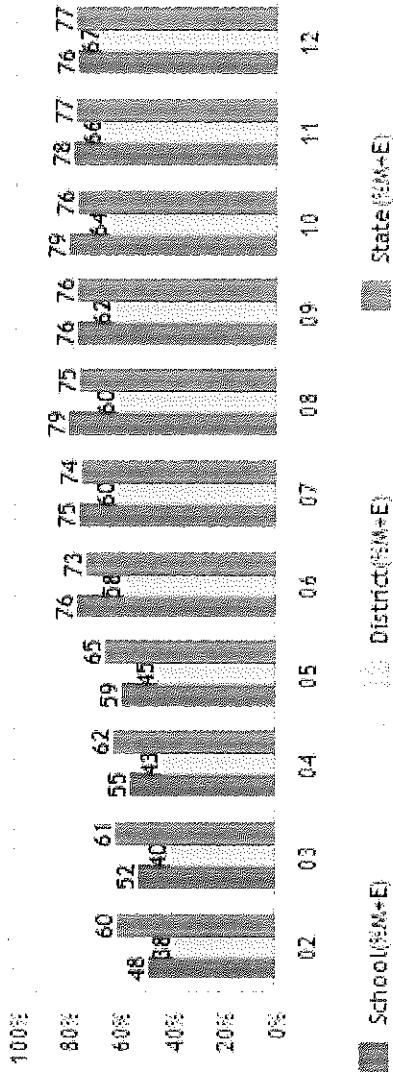
Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference

Anita Hollins, President

☒ All Tests
 ☐ ISAT
 ☐ IAA

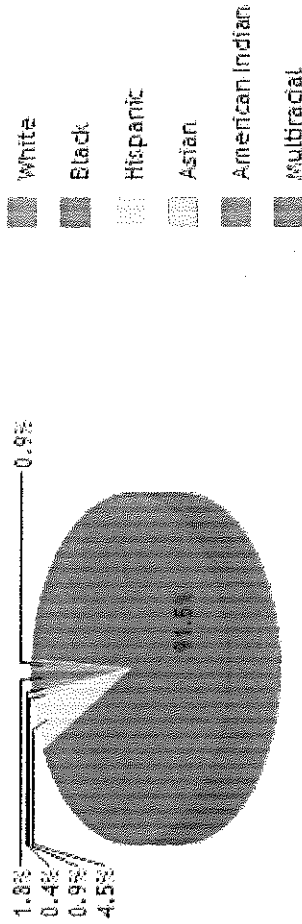
CANTER MIDDLE SCHOOL-CITY OF CHICAGO SD 299

Composite Percent Meets and Exceeds - All Tests



CANTER MIDDLE SCHOOL-CITY OF CHICAGO SD 299

Demographic Information (2012)



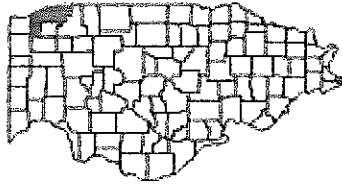
Administrator

Colleen Conlan
 4959 S BLACKSTONE AVE
 CHICAGO IL 60615
 (773) 535-1410

School Profile for Parents

County: COOK

City: Large



School Summary

School Enrollment

223

State Status

AWS

U.S. Status

3 Years in School

Improvement

76%

All Subjects Meets and Exceeds

Made Adequate Yearly Progress

No

School Low Income

89.7%

District Summary

Avg. Teacher Salary

74,990

Avg. Teacher Experience

11.9 Years

Instructional Expenditure Per Pupil

8,235

Operational Expenditure Per Pupil

13,616

Low Income

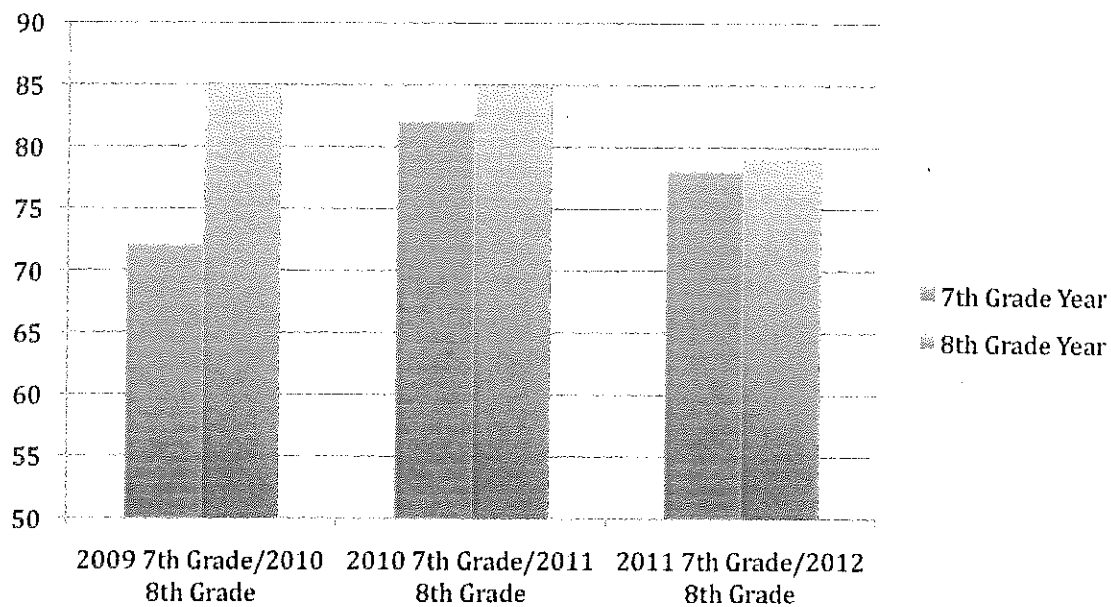
86.6%

EXHIBIT

D

tabbles

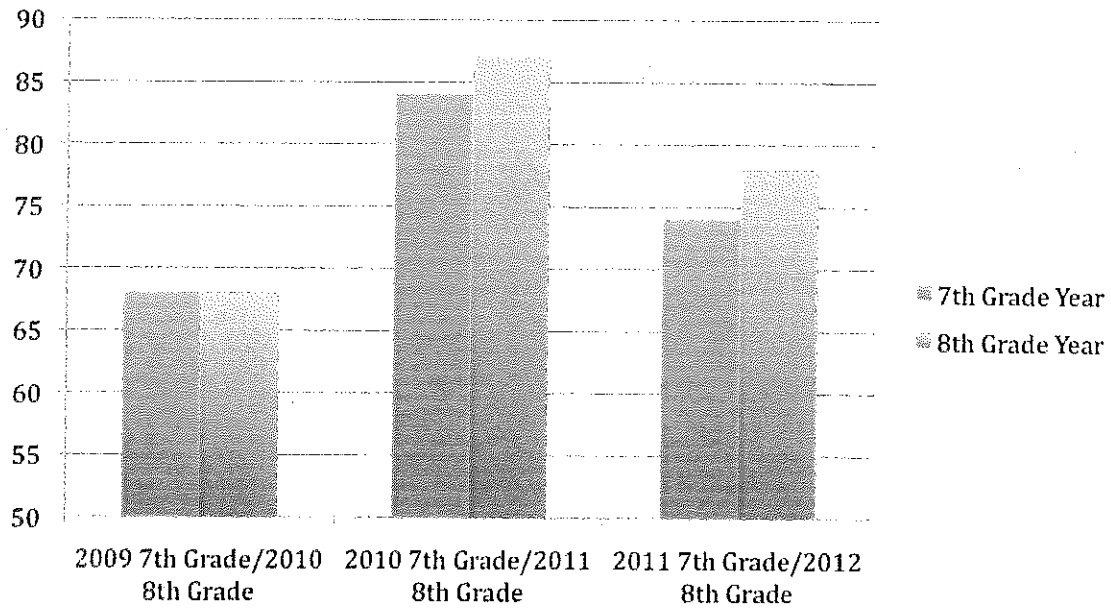
ISAT Reading Cohort Trends



Reading Cohort Scores		
	7th Grade Year	8th Grade Year
2009 7th Grade/2010 8th Grade	72	85
2010 7th Grade/2011 8th Grade	82	85
2011 7th Grade/2012 8th Grade	78	79

**Miriam G Canter Middle School
2009-2012**

ISAT Math Cohort Trends



Math Cohort Scores		
	7th Grade Year	8th Grade Year
2009 7th Grade/2010 8th Grade	68	68
2010 7th Grade/2011 8th Grade	84	87
2011 7th Grade/2012 8th Grade	74	78

Miriam G Canter Middle School
2009-2012

5Essentials Overview

5Essentials Predicts School Improvement

School improvement is challenging work. Without strength in multiple areas, schools often struggle to improve. Researchers at the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research used 20 years of evidence to define five essential components of organization and climate related to improving schools. What they found is compelling. These researchers showed that schools strong on these Essentials are more likely to:

- improve student learning and attendance year after year;
- graduate students from high school;
- improve student ACT scores;
- get students into college; and
- keep their teachers.

In fact, schools strong on at least 3 out of 5 Essentials are 10 times more likely to improve student learning.

5Essentials at Canter

Miriam G Canter Middle School completed the CPS My Voice, My School Survey 2012 in 2012. The results of these surveys indicate that **Canter is well-organized for improvement.**

Each of the Essentials provides a different lens into the organizational and learning conditions at Canter and provides guidance on how a school can organize its work:

Ambitious Instruction: Classes are challenging and engaging. *Low Response/Not Applicable**

Effective Leaders: Principals and teachers implement a shared vision for success. *Strong*

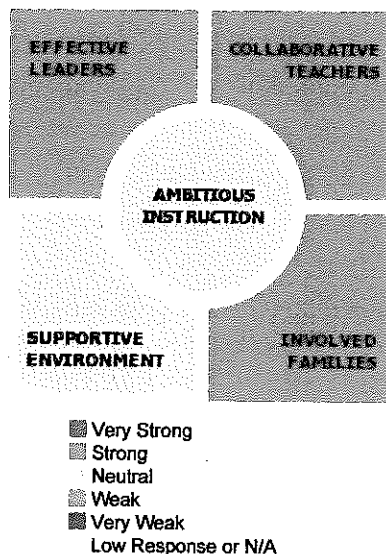
Collaborative Teachers: Teachers collaborate to promote professional growth. *Strong*

Involved Families: The entire staff builds strong external relationships. *Strong*

Supportive Environment: The school is safe, demanding, and supportive. *Low Response/Not Applicable*

Chicago Public Schools

Miriam G Canter Middle School
2012 5Essentials Performance



Survey Response Rates

Respondent	Response Rate	(Chicago Public Schools)
Students	0.0	(74%)
Teachers	79.0%	(65%)

Survey results are available to schools if they have at least 8 valid student or teacher responses and if at least 50% of their students or teachers responded.

Username

Password

Login

> 5Essentials Overall

Find

Miriam G Canter Middle School

FAQs and Support

4959 S Blackstone Ave Chicago, IL 60615

Report Home

5Essentials Overall – WELL-ORGANIZED for improvement

5Essentials

Ambitious Instruction

Effective Leaders

Collaborative Teachers

Involved Families

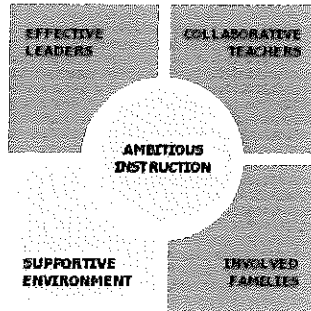
Supportive Environment

All Measures

About the Survey

Downloads

Summary of performance on each essential



Very Strong
Strong
Neutral
Weak
Very Weak
Low Resp Or N/A

In 2012, students and teachers in Chicago Public Schools participated in the **CPS My Voice, My School Survey 2012**, which asked questions about their school's culture and climate. Miriam G Canter Middle School's performance on the 5Essentials (see diagram) summarizes the participants' answers to those survey questions as they relate to the 5Essentials.

Survey Response Rates for Canter

Respondent	Response Rate	(CPS)
Students	0.0%	(73.7%)
Teachers	79.0%	(65.5%)

Performance



Trend

2011 2012

Explore Performance
View current performance

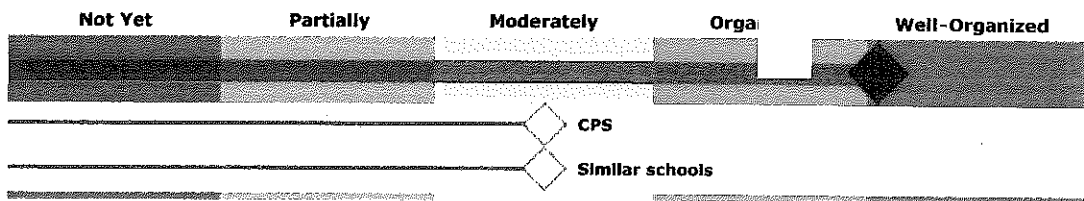
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over time

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Miriam G Canter Middle School Comparative Performance

5Essentials Overall

Compare Canter to the CPS and similar schools' average



What are these results based on?

This school's overall performance is based on the 5Essentials shown below. Click the > to learn more about each Essential and its underlying concepts (measures).

Essential

Essential Performance



Ambitious Instruction
Classes are challenging and engaging.



Low Response

Low Response/Not
Applicable*



Effective Leaders
Principals and teachers implement a shared vision for success.



Strong



Collaborative Teachers
Teachers collaborate to promote professional growth.



Strong



Involved Families
The entire staff builds strong external relationships.



Strong



Supportive Environment



Low Response

Low Response/Not
Applicable*



5Essentials Overview

5Essentials Predicts School Improvement

School improvement is challenging work. Without strength in multiple areas, schools often struggle to improve. Researchers at the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research used 20 years of evidence to define five essential components of organization and climate related to improving schools. What they found is compelling. These researchers showed that schools strong on these Essentials are more likely to:

- improve student learning and attendance year after year;
- graduate students from high school;
- improve student ACT scores;
- get students into college; and
- keep their teachers.

In fact, schools strong on at least 3 out of 5 Essentials are 10 times more likely to improve student learning.

5Essentials at Harte

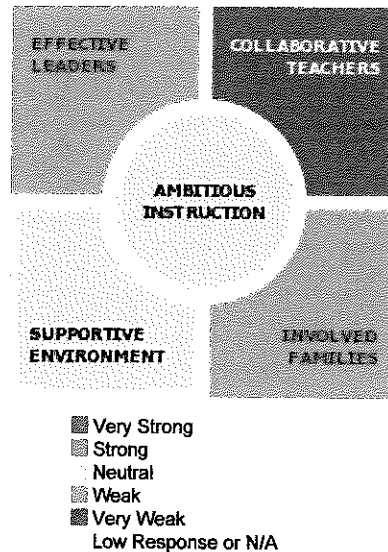
Bret Harte Elementary School completed the CPS My Voice, My School Survey 2012 in 2012. The results of these surveys indicate that **Harte is not yet organized for improvement.**

Each of the Essentials provides a different lens into the organizational and learning conditions at Harte and provides guidance on how a school can organize its work:

- **Ambitious Instruction:** Classes are challenging and engaging. *Neutral*
- **Effective Leaders:** Principals and teachers implement a shared vision for success. *Weak*
- **Collaborative Teachers:** Teachers collaborate to promote professional growth. *Very Weak*
- **Involved Families:** The entire staff builds strong external relationships. *Weak*
- **Supportive Environment:** The school is safe, demanding, and supportive. *Neutral*

Chicago Public Schools

Bret Harte Elementary School
2012 5Essentials Performance



Survey Response Rates

Respondent	Response Rate	(Chicago Public Schools)
Students	92.1	(74%)
Teachers	63.2%	(65%)

Survey results are available to schools if they have at least 8 valid student or teacher responses and if at least 50% of their students or teachers responded.

Bret Hart Elementary School

FAQs and Support
1556 E 56th St Chicago, IL 60637

Report Home

5Essentials Overall – NOT YET ORGANIZED for improvement

5Essentials

Ambitious Instruction

Effective Leaders

Collaborative Teachers

Involved Families

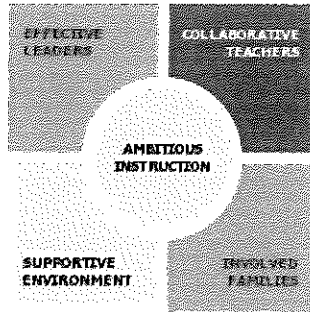
Supportive Environment

All Measures

About the Survey

Downloads

Summary of performance on each essential



Very Strong
Strong
Neutral
Weak
Very Weak
Low Resp Or N/A

In 2012, students and teachers in Chicago Public Schools participated in the **CPS My Voice, My School Survey 2012**, which asked questions about their school's culture and climate. Bret Hart Elementary School's performance on the 5Essentials (see diagram) summarizes the participants' answers to those survey questions as they relate to the 5Essentials.

Survey Response Rates for Hart

Respondent	Response Rate	(CPS)
Students	92.1%	(73.7%)
Teachers	63.2%	(65.5%)

Performance



Trend

2011 2012

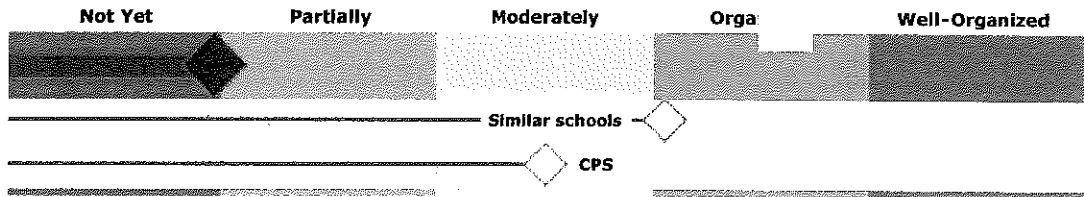
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Bret Hart Elementary School Comparative Performance on 5Essentials Overall

Compare Hart to the CPS and similar schools' average



What are these results based on?

This school's overall performance is based on the 5Essentials shown below. Click the > to learn more about each Essential and its underlying concepts (measures).

Essential

Essential Performance



Ambitious Instruction
Classes are challenging and engaging.



Neutral



Effective Leaders
Principals and teachers implement a shared vision for success.



Weak



Collaborative Teachers
Teachers collaborate to promote professional growth.



Very Weak



Involved Families
The entire staff builds strong external relationships.



Weak



Supportive Environment



Neutral

5Essentials Overview

5Essentials Predicts School Improvement

School improvement is challenging work. Without strength in multiple areas, schools often struggle to improve. Researchers at the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research used 20 years of evidence to define five essential components of organization and climate related to improving schools. What they found is compelling. These researchers showed that schools strong on these Essentials are more likely to:

- improve student learning and attendance year after year;
- graduate students from high school;
- improve student ACT scores;
- get students into college; and
- keep their teachers.

In fact, schools strong on at least 3 out of 5 Essentials are 10 times more likely to improve student learning.

5Essentials at Ray

William H Ray Elementary School completed the CPS My Voice, My School Survey 2012 in 2012. The results of these surveys indicate that **Ray has low response.**

Each of the Essentials provides a different lens into the organizational and learning conditions at Ray and provides guidance on how a school can organize its work:

Ambitious Instruction: Classes are challenging and engaging. *Low Response/Not Applicable*

Effective Leaders: Principals and teachers implement a shared vision for success. *Low Response/Not Applicable*

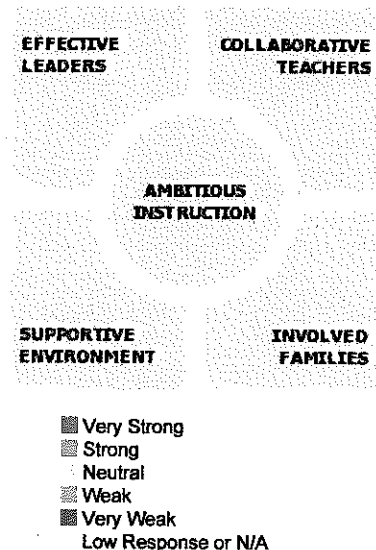
Collaborative Teachers: Teachers collaborate to promote professional growth. *Low Response/Not Applicable*

Involved Families: The entire staff builds strong external relationships. *Low Response/Not Applicable*

Supportive Environment: The school is safe, demanding, and supportive. *Low Response/Not Applicable*

Chicago Public Schools

William H Ray Elementary School
2012 5Essentials Performance



Survey Response Rates

Respondent	Response Rate	(Chicago Public Schools)
Students	0.0	(74%)
Teachers	27.8%	(65%)

Survey results are available to schools if they have at least 8 valid student or teacher responses and if at least 50% of their students or teachers responded.

Comparable School
in the neighborhood.

Username

Password

Login

School, group, or zip

Find

University of Chicago Charter - Carter G Woodson

FAQs and Support

4444 S Evans Ave Chicago, IL 60653

sponsor
of 5Essentials

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5Essentials Overall – NOT YET ORGANIZED for improvement

5Essentials

[Ambitious Instruction](#)

[Effective Leaders](#)

[Collaborative Teachers](#)

[Involved Families](#)

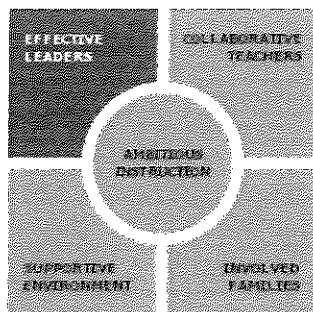
[Supportive Environment](#)

[All Measures](#)

[About the Survey](#)

[Downloads](#)

Summary of performance on each essential



Very Strong
Strong
Neutral
Weak
Very Weak
Low Resp Or N/A

In 2012, students and teachers in Chicago Public Schools participated in the **CPS My Voice, My School Survey 2012**, which asked questions about their school's culture and climate. University of Chicago Charter - Carter G Woodson's performance on the 5Essentials (see diagram) summarizes the participants' answers to those survey questions as they relate to the 5Essentials.

Survey Response Rates for UCCS - Woodson

Respondent	Response Rate	(CPS)
Students	57.4%	(73.7%)
Teachers	73.1%	(65.5%)

Performance



Trend

2011 2012

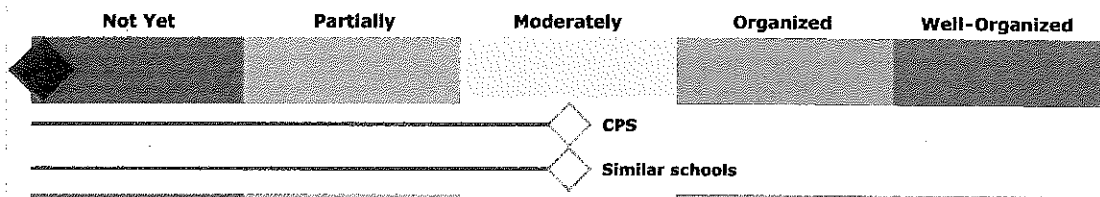
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University of Chicago Charter - Carter G Woodson Comparative Performance on 5Essentials Overall

Compare UCCS - Woodson to the CPS and similar schools' average



What are these results based on?

This school's overall performance is based on the 5Essentials shown below. Click the > to learn more about each Essential and its underlying concepts (measures).

Essential

Essential Performance



Ambitious Instruction
Classes are challenging and engaging.



Weak



Effective Leaders
Principals and teachers implement a shared vision for success.



Very Weak



Collaborative Teachers
Teachers collaborate to promote professional growth.



Weak



Involved Families
The entire staff builds strong external relationships.



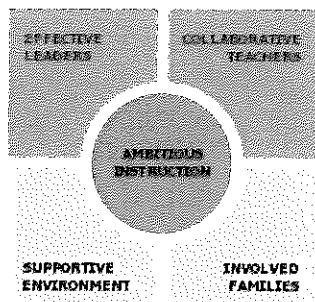
Weak



[Report Home](#)[5Essentials](#)[Ambitious Instruction](#)[Effective Leaders](#)[Collaborative Teachers](#)[Involved Families](#)[Supportive Environment](#)[All Measures](#)[About the Survey](#)[Downloads](#)

5Essentials Overall – PARTIALLY ORGANIZED for improvement

Summary of performance on each essential



Very Strong
Strong
Neutral
Weak
Very Weak
Low Resp Or N/A

In 2012, students and teachers in Chicago Public Schools participated in the **CPS My Voice, My School Survey 2012**, which asked questions about their school's culture and climate. University of Chicago Charter - Woodlawn's performance on the 5Essentials (see diagram) summarizes the participants' answers to those survey questions as they relate to the 5Essentials.

Survey Response Rates for UCCS - Woodlawn

Respondent	Response Rate	(CPS)
Students	62.0%	(73.7%)
Teachers	91.9%	(65.5%)

Performance



Trend



2011 2012

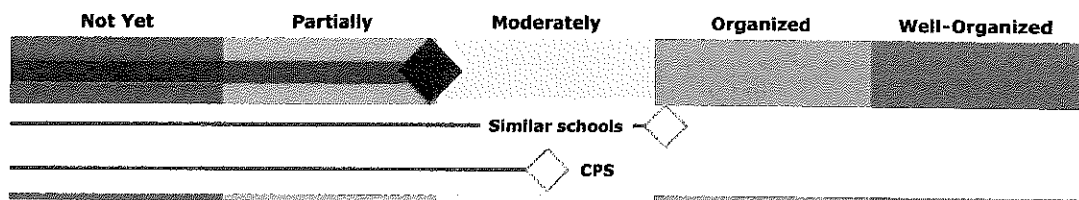
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University of Chicago Charter - Woodlawn Comparative Performance on 5Essentials Overall

Compare UCCS - Woodlawn to the CPS and similar schools' average



What are these results based on?

This school's overall performance is based on the 5Essentials shown below. Click the > to learn more about each Essential and its underlying concepts (measures).

Essential

Essential Performance

**Ambitious Instruction**

Classes are challenging and engaging.



Strong

**Effective Leaders**

Principals and teachers implement a shared vision for success.



Weak

**Collaborative Teachers**

Teachers collaborate to promote professional growth.



Weak

**Involved Families**

The entire staff builds strong external relationships.



Neutral



As the school social worker I am here to talk about the importance of relationships, as many of our students have articulated better than myself throughout all of the hearings. It is well documented that we can not accomplish academic goals without purposeful and thoughtful focus on social development. Middle school children are fiercely independent, yet still reach out for meaningful relationships with adults, revealing emotional vulnerability, yet extremely self-protective. The early adolescent years worry us as adults, but these children also astonishes as to what they can accomplish, and how fiercely they are willing to fight for what they believe-whether positive or negative. Without the strong supportive adult relationships in their lives, the quickly positive choices and gains can turn into negative decisions. Here at Canter we have seen academic gains by every and each student. We have seen students come to us sharing worries about friends, that at times have led us to even call across states to inform other districts that one of their students is "cutting and is suicidal". This trusting relationships have allowed us to stop fights from occurring, curtailed violent reactions to situations, and kept our school community safe. It is not metal detectors that keep kids safe! It is caring *TRUSTING* relationships with adults. Caring relationships take time to develop, and are not transferable to welcoming schools. Please consider these facts when you make your decision!

Bessie Tsitsopoulos



EXHIBIT

tabbies

F**AMERICAN LAW TEACHERS**www.SALTLAW.org

ello everybody! I'm Cathy,
7th grader, in Canter
dle School. Today I
st want to say that
Canter is a great school.
I say that because (Canter
ovided high-quality
ducation for us.) In Canter,
e have teachers that teach
s everything; we have
uices that helps us to study;
nd we have academic and
creational after class programs
ese things taught me a lot.
fore I came to Canter, I
dn't even know how to play
ess, but now I'm able to
y in tournaments; (when I
irst came to Canter I got,

~~Canter~~ Canter ~~can~~ provides
opportunity for students
in other country, like me.
Canter also have a lot of
good students, they get

A's, and follow the rules
like good students in
other schools. And if Canter
closed, those good students
would have to continue
studying in other schools,
that would change their
learning surroundings. For
example, they might feel
uncomfortable without their
friends. This will be no good
for those good students.

Canter is like a home
for all of us. Don't close it



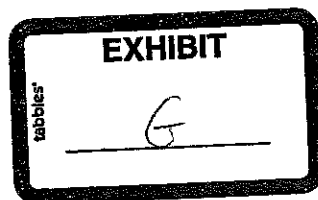
THE JOHN MARSHALL LAW SCHOOL

315 South Plymouth Court Chicago, Illinois 60604 www.jmls.edu

Ms Collins:

I understand that Yanxin(cathy) zha, my daughter will stay at school and take the bus to CPS public hearing on April 17, 2013. I'll meet her at the meeting.

Thank you very much!



Guilian Yuqing

Apr. 16, 2013

1. Unutilized is nothing about
education.

Center helped me has nothing
wrong

3. Center ~~helped~~ helped me
as well

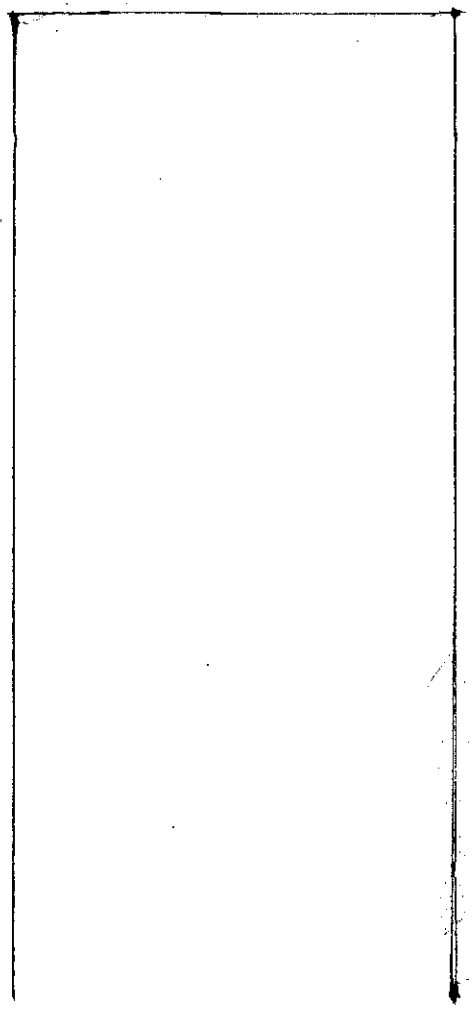
4. Center is the center, home,

we have academic programs.
2. we have academic programs.

we have after class
programs that satisfy
students' social needs.

emotional

1. Center provides computers and PCs
2. Center provides 1. prefer safe
3. Center provides opportunity for students from other countries like me, from Chicago, and from other parts of the world.



no. 2. cd
 65 spapoch... 10000

April 16, 2013

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Almost a year ago I was hit & knocked to the ground at 9:00 am in the cross walk at Ray School only doors from my residence on 56th Street. An SUV en route to Ray didn't stop while making a turn onto Kimbark in the front of the school. The same vehicle didn't stop when it illegally entered 56th St from the Kimbark Alley. Every morning dozens of vehicles bringing students to Ray break the law in this manner.

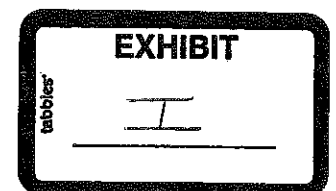
I was advised to sue the City & CPS to make you take seriously the failure to provide crossing guards and issue instructions to parents & other drivers delivering students to Ray each morning. Instead I opted to work to address these issues with the proper authorities.

Nothing has been done to better these safety and other quality of life issues associated with Ray. Despite the efforts of the Alderman, The Southeast Chicago Commission and others the CPD has not helped remedy these issues by issuing tickets to law-breaking vehicles. So, maybe it's time for a lawsuit?

In a city so desperate for revenue, that tickets are written for parking 13" off the curb on 56th St., why wouldn't this omnipresent source of revenue be tapped and banked? After all, moving violations are expensive and would add real dough to the city's coffers.

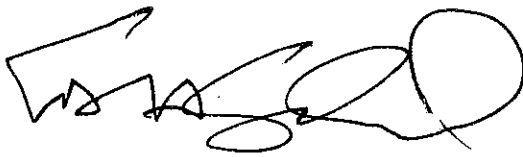
The problems also include unacceptable loud rally music most mornings, littering, honking & general obnoxious behavior in a neighborhood that has always been considered a dignified & safe residential environment on the troubled Southside. The rally music exceeds the noise limits stipulated in the Chicago Environmental Noise Ordinance.

Now we are faced with the advent of middle school students from outside the immediate neighborhood if you close Canter & send them to Ray from 1-1/2 miles away. This will heighten the issues we already endure and now we will be forced to deal with more serious issues like gangs and hangers-on that students of this older (and more susceptible) group may attract.



Therefore, I urge you to support Alderman Leslie Hairston's recommendations to keep Canter open or provide a more thoughtful phase out plan. I demand that you provide resources (crossing guard, formal drop off/pick up plan) that ensures the safety of the students already attending Ray School and respects the rights of the neighbors to live safely, peacefully & quietly in our houses.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Todd Schwebel'. The signature is stylized with a large, circular flourish at the end.

Todd Schwebel

1221 E. 56th Street