

**CEO
The Chicago Public Schools**

**From: John E. Morrissey
Independent Hearing Officer**

**Board of Education
City of Chicago**

**In Re: Matter of the Proposal
To Close
West Pullman
Community School**

**Before
John E. Morrissey
Independent Hearing Officer**

At 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday April 16, 2013, a hearing was convened at the Board of Education of the City of Chicago, 125 South Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois. The purpose of the hearing was to enable the previously appointed Hearing Officer to receive public comments from concerned persons, including representatives of the CEO (Chicago Public Schools), members of LSCs, student school parents, members of the staff, the principal, students, Chicago Teacher's Union representatives and interested member of the public concerning the CEO's proposal that West Pullman Elementary School located at 11941 S. Parnell Avenue, be closed at the end of the current school year and that its current enrollment of approximately 301 students be assigned to Alex Haley Elementary School, 11411 S. Eggleston Avenue, Chicago. A Certified Court Reporter transcribed the hearing.

Applicable Law

Powers of the Board. The Board shall exercise general supervision and jurisdiction over the public education and the public school system (ch 105 ILCS 5/34 et seq.).

- (a) If the Board approves a school action, the chief executive officer or his or her designee shall work collaboratively with local school educators and families of students attending a school that is the subject of a school action to ensure successful integrations of affected students into new learning environments.
- (b) The chief executive officer or his or her designee shall prepare and implement a school transition plan to support students attending a school that subject of a school action that goals of the Section. The chief executed must identify and commit specific resources for implementation of the school transition plan for a minimum of the full first academic year after the board approves a school action.
- (c) The school transition plan shall include the following:
 - (1) services to support the academic, social and emotional needs of students; supports for students with disabilities, homeless students, and English language learners, and support to address security and safety issues;
 - (2) options to enroll in higher performing schools;
 - (3) informational briefings regarding the choice of schools that include all pertinent information to enable the parent or guardian and child to make an informed choice, including the option to visit the schools of choice prior to making a decision, and

- (4) the provision of appropriate transportation where practicable.

**GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL ACTIONS
2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR
ISSUED NOVEMBER 29, 2012
("Guidelines")**

For the 2012-2013 school year, the CEO will consider the criteria specified below when recommending any of the following school actions governed by Public Act 097-0474:

- Reassignment boundary change,
- Phase-out,
- Co-locations,
- School closure;
- School consolidation

ACADEMIC CRITERIA - CEO GUIDELINES

When a school receives the lowest performance level (Level 3) on the Performance Policy for two consecutive years, the school may be subject to a school action.

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS SPACE UTILIZATION STANDARDS

December 28, 2011

I. Executive Summary

A. Rationale and Importance for Space Utilization Standards

1. Education

It is important for CPS to codify space utilization standards so that it can clearly define what is adequate teaching and learning space within all of the school facilities it operates. These standards will help to ensure that all students have equal access to a learning environment that effectively supports strong instructional programs.

CPS is focused on introducing a capacity and space utilization methodology that principals, parents and guardians and community stakeholders can understand. Rather than narrowly prescribe the manner of classroom use, the

standards were developed to promote flexibility and to ensure that the space can be programmed to fit student needs.

B. Summary of Standards

For elementary schools, CPS provides an enrollment efficiency range based primarily upon the total number of instructional classrooms available in the main/permanent school building. Each elementary school building is allotted a number of dedicated general education homeroom classrooms, equaling approximately 76% of the total classrooms available. Each elementary school building is also allotted a number of ancillary classrooms equal to approximately 24% of the total classrooms available. As an elementary school's enrollment increases above the efficiency range, a school may be considered overcrowded as programming options are reduced and/or compromised. As an elementary school's enrollment decreases below the efficiency range, a school may be considered underutilized as classrooms are unused and/or poorly programmed making the use of limited resources less effective.

II. Core Concepts

A. Elementary Schools - Definition

The proposed changes to the way the district calculates space utilization and capacity provides a greater level of detail and will allow principals to better align instructional programming to physical capacity. The new space utilization standards rely upon both familiar defined concepts from the historical methodology and new concepts defined below.

Maximum Capacity is defined as the number of classroom spaces designed as such in a given facility multiplied by 30.

Allotted Dedicated General Education Homerooms Classrooms ("Allotted Homeroom Classrooms") is defined as the number of classrooms spaces required for homeroom use derived as a consistent and adequate proportion of the total number of classrooms present in a given facility.

Allotted Ancillary Classrooms is defined as the number of classrooms spaced required for non-homeroom uses, such as science labs, computer labs, art rooms, music rooms, resource rooms, special education rooms, governmental agencies and/or community organization special programs, after school programs, and other appropriate uses.

Ideal Program Enrollment is defined as allotted homerooms multiplied by 30¹.

Enrollment Efficiency is defined as an enrollment range defined as Ideal Enrollment 20% to Ideal Enrollment plus 20%.

Overcrowded status is defined as an enrollment range greater than Enrollment Efficiency.

Underutilization is defined as an enrollment range less than Enrollment Efficiency.

The proposed space utilization standards for elementary school essentially creates a range of efficiency based primarily upon a school facility's total number of classrooms, estimated requirements for dedicated homeroom use, and estimated requirements for ancillary, non-dedicated homerooms use.

¹See Board of Education of the City of Chicago Policy on Class Size 10-0615-PO1.

B. Elementary Schools - Calculations

The baseline efficiency ranges are derived from the district's new construction prototype schools.

The prototype new construction school elementary school contains 39 classrooms: 30 dedicated general education homeroom classrooms and 9 ancillary classrooms. The 9 ancillary classrooms are generally programmed - though not required to be used - as 1 science, 2 music/art rooms, 1 technology, 3 specialized education rooms, and 2 specialty classrooms.

The proportion of homeroom classrooms to ancillary classrooms in this example is roughly 3-to-1; 76.9% of total classrooms are allotted for homeroom use with remainder allotted to ancillary use.

The district will apply this proportion of homeroom-to-ancillary room use model to all elementary schools effective 2011-12 school year and plans to publish annually a list of all elementary schools with associated space use statistics referenced above by December 31 of each school year.

CPS finds this methodology to be consistent with approaches used by other K-12 school districts and resembles calculation strategies referenced by the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI)².

² Calculating School Capacity: Local, State & National Perspectives, CEFPI Workshop, October 6, 2007.

Total # of Classrooms Within Main Facility	# of Allotted Homeroom Classrooms ¹	# of Allotted Ancillary Classrooms ²	Enrollment Efficiency Range			Maximum Facility Capacity Aka Design Capacity ⁴
			-20% of Ideal	Ideal Program Enrollment ³	+20% of Ideal	
26	20	6	480	600	720	780
39	30	9	720	900	1,080	1,170
52	40	12	960	1,200	1,440	1,560

¹ equal to 76.9% of Total # of Classrooms Within Main Facility

² equal to Total # of Classrooms Within Main Facility less # of Allotted Homeroom Classrooms

³ equal to # of Allotted Homeroom Classrooms x 30

⁴ equal to Total # of Classrooms Within Main Facility x 30

SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE Via Public Hearing

A. Speakers on behalf of the Chicago Public Schools, Tuesday Evening April 16, 2013

1. Lisa Huge: Staff Attorney, Chicago Board of Education who summarized the evidence to be presented at hearing on April 16, 2013, with full binder admitted, in connection with the Chief Executive Officer, Chicago Public Schools proposal. She presented evidence of Notice, Illinois Law, Chicago Board of Education Policy, Guidelines and Procedure, transcripts of two prior community meetings and the accounts CPS witness.
2. Ashley Richardson: Portfolio Planning Officer for CPS. She explained that West Pullman is underutilized and by CPS Policy its students will be better served by consolidation with Alex Haley School. The new total enrollment at Haley will not affect the school's efficiency.
3. Karen Saffold: Chief of Rock Island Network and Haley School, she discussed West Pullman's Level 3 academic performance over the past 2 years, and related that Haley is a higher performing school. Further, CPS

Office of Safety and Security will work to ensure student safety, and a large staff will coordinate student performance and welcoming.

C. Speakers for the Public

All argued cogently that West Pullman should not close, and emphasized safety. All West Pullman students will have to travel nearly 1 mile to their new school.

SATEMENT OF FINDINGS

1. Proper notice of the hearing was given as required by Illinois law, Chicago Public School Policy, and Procedure for hearings on school closing to the Principal, staff, parents, LSC, Chicago Teachers Union, Public Officials, and the interested Public.
2. On April 16, 2013, a public hearing was held at the Board of Education, 125 South Clark, Chicago.
3. West Pullman is subject to school action, including closure and reconfiguration, due to its underutilization and its low performing performance rating over the past 2 years.
4. The CEO of the Chicago Public Schools has recommended closure.
5. There have been 3 opportunities for public comment, including one public hearing, captioned above.
6. West Pullman meets all criteria for closure: under performance rating - 2 consecutive years and ISAT composite score below geographic network average.
7. Alex Haley Academy is a nearby school, rated Level 2 and willing and able to accept West Pullman students to a safe and nurturing environment.
8. Safety and guidance will be available to West Pullman students for at least the near future.

9. Utmost security will be extended to the Owens students through CPS Office of Safety and Security working with community groups and the Chicago Police Department.

10. Although suggestions and concerns expressed by the public were at time compelling, the emotion and argument against the closure of Wets Pullman was not supported by law or policy, does not outweigh reasons for closure, or supported by Illinois law and CPS policy.

RECOMMENDATION

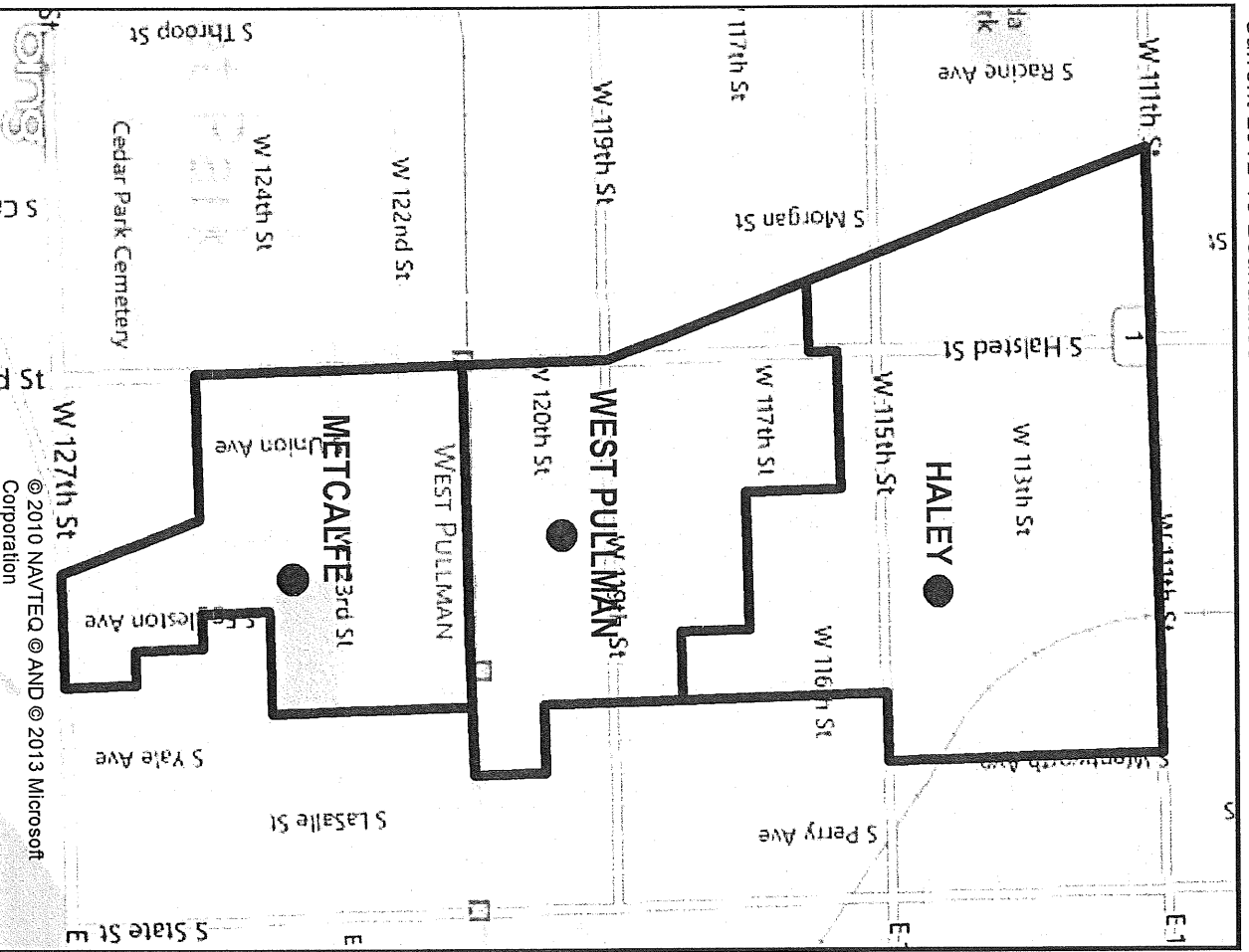
With due consideration given to the time and effort spent on both sides of this issue, the Hearing Officer recommends, in accordance with the CEO's proposal, her recommendation to the Board for closure of West Pullman School be approved.

Respectfully submitted,

John E. Morrissey
Hearing Officer
May 3, 2013

Current and Proposed Attendance Area Boundaries

Current 2012-13 Boundaries



Proposed 2013-14 Boundaries

