

PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSED
CO-LOCATION OF NKURUMAH ACADEMY ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL WITH WALTER Q. GRESHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ORIGINAL

APRIL 20, 2013

2:00 P.M.

125 South Clark Street, Suite 1500

Chicago, Illinois

HON. ROBERT BOHARIC

HEARING OFFICER

RECEIVED
OFFICE OF THE CLERK
APR 22 11:10:44
CITY OF CHICAGO

1 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: Let us begin.

2 We waited 15 minutes. It's now about 2:15.

3 Let us begin. You may proceed, Counsel.

4 MS. DREISHMIRE: Okay.

5 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: My name is
6 Robert Boharic, hearing officer for today's
7 hearing at 2:00 p.m.

8 MS. DREISHMIRE: Good afternoon, your
9 Honor. My name is Lisa Dreishmire. I'm an
10 attorney in the Chicago Board of Education's
11 Law Department. I'm appearing before you today
12 in connection with the proposal of the Chief
13 Executive Officer, or CEO, of the Chicago
14 Public Schools to co-locate the Nkrumah Academy
15 Elementary School, Nkrumah, with Walter Q.
16 Gresham Elementary School, Gresham.

17 At this time I would like to
18 tender to you and ask that you admit into the
19 record the CEO's compiled Exhibit 1, a binder
20 of documents being submitted for your
21 consideration and support of the proposal.

22 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: Thank you. It
23 is admitted.

24 MS. DREISHMIRE: A copy of this binder is

1 also available in this room on the podium for
2 public viewing. The binder consists of
3 documentary evidence and written statements
4 demonstrating that the CEO's proposal complies
5 with the requirements of the Illinois School
6 Code and the CEO's guidelines for school
7 actions. Specifically, the written statements
8 and documents demonstrate the following: At
9 tab A, the binder includes notice letters to
10 the parents and guardians of students, school
11 staff members, Local School Council members and
12 Board members at Nkrumah and Gresham,
13 accompanied by draft transition plans. The
14 notice letters and draft transition plan, one,
15 describe the basis of the proposal; two,
16 explain how the proposal meets the criteria of
17 the guidelines; three, identify supports for
18 student safety and security, academic and
19 social and emotional needs and specific
20 supports for students with disabilities,
21 students in temporary living situations, and
22 English language learners; and four, provide
23 information on choice of schools and explain
24 the proposal will not affect the enrollments of

1 students who are currently attending the
2 involved schools. Also included are affidavits
3 attesting to the delivery of notice via mail,
4 personal delivery, electronic mail and
5 newspaper publication.

6 Additionally, tab A includes an
7 affidavit attesting the proper publication of,
8 one, the list of independent officers for
9 hearing and the draft guidelines for school
10 actions by October 31, 2012; two, finalized
11 guidelines for school actions following a
12 21-day public comment period on or about
13 November 30, 2012, proposals on or about March
14 21st, 2013. And summaries from community
15 meetings held on April 6th and 13th, 2013.

16 Tab A also includes the published
17 public notice of hearing and community meeting
18 and the Board Report of January 26, 2011,
19 approving Nkrumah Academy Charter School.

20 At tab B the binder includes the
21 Illinois School Code provision, designating the
22 powers of the Board and outlining the process
23 for school actions.

24 Also at tab P are the Chicago

1 Public Schools' shared facility policy, space
2 utilization standards, and the CEO's guidelines
3 for school actions for the 2012/2013 school
4 year.

5 Finally, tab B includes the CEO's
6 procedures for public hearings on proposed
7 school co-locations.

8 At tab C, the binder includes
9 written evidence in support of the CEO's
10 proposal.

11 Tab C contains the transcript and
12 summaries from the two community meetings to
13 elicit public comment held at a location
14 convenient to Nkrumah and Gresham school
15 communities.

16 Tab C also includes the written
17 statement of Ben Felton, portfolio planner, who
18 will explain the space utilization of the
19 Gresham facility.

20 Finally tab C includes the
21 written statement and accompanying presentation
22 of Grace Kuklinski Rappe, capital architect and
23 design manager, who will explain the space
24 available at the Gresham facility can support

1 the academic programming of both schools.

2 Your Honor, I will now like to
3 introduce the CEO's representative Ben Felton
4 who will make a statement in support of the
5 proposal. This statement is located in the
6 binder at tab 21.

7 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: Thank you.

8 MR. FELTON: Good afternoon, your Honor.

9 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: Good afternoon,
10 sir.

11 MR. FELTON: My name is Ben Felton.

12 B-E-N. F-E-L-T-O-N. And I'm a portfolio
13 planner for the Chicago Public Schools. I have
14 been in this position since July of 2012. As a
15 portfolio planner, I manage strategic planning
16 to improve the efficient utilization of CPS
17 facilities.

18 Prior to be a portfolio planner,
19 I worked as a teacher at CPS. I then joined
20 the Tennessee Department of Education where I
21 focused on teacher and principal recruitment
22 and contributed to the development of the
23 department's five year strategic plan.

24 I have a bachelor's of science

1 degree from Vanderbilt University. I have been
2 asked to appear at this hearing today to convey
3 to you, the parents, and the community, as well
4 as interested members of the public in
5 attendance information regarding the space
6 utilization of the 8524 South Green Street
7 facility with respect to the proposal to
8 co-locate Walter Q. Gresham Elementary School,
9 or Gresham, with Nkrumah Academy Elementary
10 Charter, Nkrumah Charter.

11 A co-location is when two schools
12 share space in the same building or on the same
13 campus but operate independently from each
14 other.

15 According to the Chief Executive
16 Officer's guidelines for the 2012/2013 school
17 year, the CEO may propose a co-location of two
18 schools within the same facility if, one, the
19 combined projected enrollment is within the
20 facility's enrollment efficiency range as
21 defined by the CPS space utilization standards;
22 and two, the facility can support the academic
23 programming of both schools.

24 I will discuss the first factor

1 while my colleague, Grace Rappe, will discuss
2 the second factor.

3 Gresham is currently located at
4 8524 South Green Street. Gresham is an
5 elementary school that currently serves
6 approximately 341 students in grades
7 kindergarten through eight, including its
8 pre-kindergarten program.

9 Nkruman is currently located at
10 901 East 95th Street. Nkrumah is an elementary
11 school that serves approximately 244 students
12 in grades kindergarten through five. The
13 school is still growing grades and is
14 anticipated to reach enrollment of 421
15 students, serving grades K through 8.

16 The Board approving Nkrumah
17 Charter is located in your binder at tab seven.

18 To understand the efficiency
19 range of a facility, Chicago Public Schools
20 utilizes its space utilization standards which
21 are located in your binder at tab 14.

22 Thanks. The enrollment
23 efficiency range is plus or minus 20 percent of
24 the facility's ideal enrollment. For

1 elementary school buildings, the ideal
2 enrollment is defined as the number of allotted
3 homerooms multiplied by 30. The number of
4 allotted homeroom classrooms is approximately
5 76 percent of the total classrooms available.
6 A typical elementary school building has a
7 total of 39 chase rooms. Therefore, the number
8 of allotted homerooms, approximately 76 percent
9 of 39, is 30 classrooms. Multiplying 30
10 classrooms by 30 equals the ideal enrollment
11 number of 900 students.

12 Finally, the enrollment
13 efficiency range is plus or minus 20 percent of
14 900 students, which is between 720 and 1080
15 students. There are 39 total classrooms within
16 the 8524 South Green Street facility.
17 Approximately 76 percent of this number is 30,
18 the number of allotted homerooms. This number
19 multiplied by 30 yields the ideal enrollment of
20 the facility which is 900 students. As such,
21 the enrollment efficiency range of the 8524
22 South Green Street facility is between 720 and
23 1080 students.

24 The enrollment of Nkrumah Charter

1 School is currently 244 students. Combining
2 this number with the number of students at
3 Gresham will result in 585 students attending
4 school at the 8524 South Green Street facility.

5 Further, the projected enrollment
6 of Nkrumah Charter for the 2013/2014 school
7 year is 293 students. And the projected
8 enrollment for Gresham for next year is 333
9 students. The combination of these two numbers
10 is 626 students, below the enrollment
11 efficiency range of the building. Thus there
12 is enough space within the facility for both
13 schools. To accommodate the enrollment of both
14 schools, approximately 23 classrooms will be
15 assigned to Nkrumah Charter School in the south
16 building and approximately 16 classrooms will
17 be assigned to Gresham in the north building.
18 The number of classrooms assigned Nkrumah
19 Charter, 23, is sufficient to accommodate its
20 enrollment going forward from fall 2013 when
21 enrollment is projected to be 293 students to
22 fall 2015 when its maximum enrollment will
23 reach 400 students. And the number of
24 classrooms assigned to Gresham, 16, is also

1 more than enough to accommodate its enrollment
2 going forward.

3 You'll next hear from my
4 colleague, Grace Rappe, who will explain how
5 the facility can accommodate the needs for both
6 schools. Thank you, your Honor. This
7 concludes my statement.

8 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: Thank you, sir.

9 MS. DREISHMIRE: Your Honor, I will now
10 like to introduce the CEO's next
11 representative, Grace Kuklinski Rappe, who will
12 make a statement in support of this proposal.

13 This statement is located in the
14 binder at tab 22. And the presentation
15 accompanying her statement is in the binder at
16 tab 23.

17 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: Thank you. You
18 may proceed.

19 MS. RAPPE: Good afternoon, your Honor.

20 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: Good afternoon.

21 MS. RAPPE: Grace Kuklinski Rapp.

22 K-U-K-L-I-N-S-K-I. I'm capital architect and
23 design manager for the Board of Education of
24 the City of Chicago. My current

1 responsibilities include the review of
2 planning, design and construction of new
3 construction, as well as renovation of CPS
4 facilities, and confirmation that those
5 projects conform to current CPS design
6 guidelines, standards, as well as
7 specifications. I also initiate revisions to
8 current CPS design guidelines, standards and
9 specifications, to be up to date to current
10 educational program needs and requirements as
11 well as the needs and requirements of current
12 technologies.

13 I've been in this position since
14 October of 2012.

15 The Chief Executive Officer, or
16 CEO, has asked me to appear before you today
17 for this hearing to convey to you and to the
18 parents, staff members, and Local School
19 Council members as well as the interested
20 members of the public in attendance information
21 relevant to the proposal to co-locate Walter Q.
22 Gresham Elementary School, Gresham, and Nkrumah
23 Academy Elementary Charter, Nkrumah Charter.

24 As stated in the Board's 2005

1 shared facility policy, which is included in
2 your exhibit binder at tab 13, CPS believes
3 that it is in the best interest of the students
4 and communities to identify buildings that are
5 not being utilized at their full capacity and
6 to improve the use of the facilities. One
7 potential way to accomplish this is to
8 transform an underutilized building from a
9 single-school facility to a shared facility by
10 bringing one or more additional schools into
11 that building.

12 You've already heard from my
13 colleague, Ben Felton, who has explained that
14 the 8524 South Green Street facility is not
15 being utilized to its full capacity.

16 I will now speak about how the
17 8524 South Green Street facility can support
18 the academic programming of both Gresham and
19 Nkrumah Charter.

20 Gresham is located in Chicago's
21 southwest side at 8524 South Green Street. A
22 slide presentation following the facility will
23 be projected and is located in your binder at
24 tab 23. The facility was originally

1 constructed in 1895, with subsequent
2 construction years in 1915, 1931 and 1967. The
3 current main entrance to the facility is on
4 8524 South Green Street. Staff and visitor
5 parking are located behind the building along
6 Peoria Street. The site also includes a track,
7 basketball court, playground and green space.
8 The facility can be thought of as two separate
9 structures that are connected by a single-story
10 corridor. The four story main building on the
11 north side of the campus contains the
12 auditorium, gymnasium, library and small lunch
13 room, administrative spaces and classrooms.
14 The three-story 1967 addition to the south
15 contains classrooms, a lunchroom and
16 administrative space.

17 The 8524 South Green Street
18 facility has sufficient space to accommodate
19 the needs of both Gresham and the Nkrumah
20 Charter for academic courses, lunch, physical
21 education, administrative offices and other
22 programming.

23 If this proposal is approved, a
24 specific memorandum of understanding, or MOU,

1 to allocate space between the two schools will
2 be drafted in accordance with the Board's 2005
3 shared facility policy.

4 At this time, I will outline our
5 recommendation as to how these two schools can
6 allocate the space to ensure that the needs of
7 both schools are met.

8 Both schools need to maintain
9 separate school identities while still sharing
10 a certain common area.

11 We have identified separate
12 entrances to the facility as reflected in the
13 first slide in my presentation.

14 Gresham could continue to use its
15 existing main entrance and Nkrumah Charter
16 could use the main entrance to the addition.

17 Our recommendation for the
18 allocation of space can be seen in the next
19 four slides. As the legend shows, you will see
20 that proposed Gresham space is in light brown.
21 Proposed Nkrumah Charter space is in blue. And
22 shared space is shown in red.

23 I understand that Gresham needs a
24 total of 16 classrooms and that Nkrumah Charter

1 needs a total of 23 classrooms.

2 To fulfill this need, the space
3 allocated to Gresham could be primarily within
4 the main building. Here they will use 16
5 classrooms with art, science and computer labs
6 included. Additionally to fulfill Nkrumah
7 Charter's needs, Nkrumah Charter could use the
8 entirety of the addition to the south. Here
9 they could make use of 23 classrooms to support
10 their needs. Computer, science and art labs
11 would be as well included in this count.

12 Lastly, each school would have a
13 designated library.

14 Both schools will also need space
15 for lunch.

16 Under this proposal, a new
17 lunchroom would be constructed on the ground
18 level in the main building, which could be
19 dedicated for Gresham use only. Nkrumah
20 Charter would make use of an existing lunchroom
21 in the addition. Both schools could then eat
22 lunch independent from one another and within
23 their respective buildings.

24 Both schools need administrative

1 space. Currently both -- currently, both the
2 main building and the addition are equipped
3 with administrative spaces that could
4 adequately support their respective staff.

5 To meet other needs of these two
6 schools, we propose that they share the
7 auditorium, gymnasium and playground.

8 The specific details of how these
9 could be used and scheduled between schools
10 will also be defined during the MOU process.

11 If this proposal is approved, CPS
12 will work with both schools to develop the MOU,
13 confirming all dedicated and shared spaces and
14 scheduling use of each space.

15 If this co-share proposal is
16 approved, the Department of Operations will
17 propose the following facility improvements to
18 the 8524 South Green Street facility for the
19 benefit of all Gresham Elementary and Nkrumah
20 Charter students and staff: Designate the two
21 existing administrative clusters to reflect the
22 newly allocated spaces. Provide signage that
23 reflects all newly allocated spaces. Add
24 independent communications and intercom systems

1 so that each school maintains separation.
2 Provide window air conditioning units for all
3 classrooms. Provide selective interior
4 cosmetic improvements as needed. Expand the
5 lunch room capacities as needed. Upgrade or
6 provide required labs as needed. And provide
7 Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility
8 upgrades, in accordance with ADA Titles I and
9 II compliance requirements.

10 The Department of Operations
11 anticipates that these improvements will cost
12 approximately \$7 million.

13 To conclude, these two schools
14 can fit within the 8524 South Green Street
15 facility. And if this co-location approved by
16 the Board, CPS will work to develop a
17 memorandum of understanding that outlines all
18 dedicated and shared spaces.

19 Thank you, your Honor. This
20 concludes my statement.

21 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: Thank you.
22 Thank you very much.

23 MS. DREISHMIRE: Your Honor, this
24 concludes the presentation in support of the

1 CEO's proposal.

2 If you have additional questions,
3 we will be available to answer them.

4 Thank you for your time and
5 attention.

6 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: Okay. Once
7 again, I think we need to take the time now to
8 see whether or not there are going to be
9 additional people. So let's stand adjourned
10 here until 3:00.

11 MS. DREISHMIRE: Yes, sir.

12 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: Would that be
13 correct?

14 MS. DREISHMIRE: Yes. We started at 2:00
15 o'clock. Keeping the record open at 3:00 would
16 be consistent with the notice.

17 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: All right.
18 Thank you very much. And so we'll resume at
19 that time.

20 (Recess.)

21 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: All right.
22 We're all back here. And I've been told there
23 has not been anybody else sign up. We're past
24 3:00 o'clock now; is that correct?

1 MS. DREISHMIRE: That's correct, your
2 Honor.

3 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: So I believe
4 that unless there's anything further, that we
5 could conclude the hearing at this time; is
6 that correct?

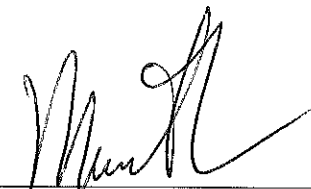
7 MS. DREISHMIRE: Yes. Thank you, your
8 Honor.

9 HEARING OFFICER BOHARIC: All right. So
10 that will be the ruling of this hearing
11 officer, that we will conclude at this time.
12 And I just want to thank, everyone, very much
13 for your patience and your hard work on this
14 case and all the other cases that have been
15 here today. Thank you very much.

16 MS. DREISHMIRE: Thank you, your Honor.
17 (WHEREUPON, the
18 proceedings were
19 adjourned at 3:10 p.m.)
20
21
22
23
24

1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
2) SS:
3 COUNTY OF C O O K)
4

5 MAUREEN A. WOODMAN, C.S.R., being first
6 duly sworn, says that she is a court reporter
7 doing business in the City of Chicago; that she
8 reported in shorthand the proceedings had at
9 the hearing of said cause; that the foregoing
10 is a true and correct transcript of her
11 shorthand notes, so taken as aforesaid, and
12 contains all the proceedings of said hearing.
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MAUREEN A. WOODMAN

