

Transcript of the Testimony of

Date: January 9, 2019

Case: THE PROPOSED REASSIGNED BOUNDARY CHANGE OF
OROZCO COMMUNITY ACADEMY

TOOMEY REPORTING

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January 9, 2019

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2019

COMMENCING AT 5:30 P.M.

OROZCO COMMUNITY ACADEMY

HELD AT 1940 WEST 18TH STREET

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

RE: THE PROPOSED REASSIGNED BOUNDARY CHANGE OF OROZCO
COMMUNITY ACADEMY AND COOPER DUAL LANGUAGE ACADEMY

The Report of Proceedings had in the

meeting of the above-entitled cause, taken before

January 9, 2019

ROBBIN M. OCHENKOWSKI, a Certified Shorthand Reporter in
and for the County of Cook and State of Illinois, at
1940 West 18th Street Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois,
January 9th, 2019, at 6:00 o'clock p.m.

CPS STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

CHERYL NEVINS, Director of Demographic Analysis &
Planning

CRISTINA CARRETO (Presenter), Family and Community
Engagement Manager for
Network 7

MINERVA GARCIA-SANCHEZ (Facilitator), Chief of
Schools for Network 7

NURYS UCETA-RAMOS (Timekeeper), Family and
Community Engagement Manager for
Network 4

ANNA DIAZ - NOTE-TAKER

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1 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

2 MS. CARRETO: Good evening. It's 6:00 o'clock now
3 so we're going to get the meeting started.

4 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

5 MS. CARRETO: So I know, moms who have known me for
6 a while, many of you know that I like to start my
7 meetings on time just because I know we all have busy
8 schedules and things to do at home. So let's get on --
9 we're going to get the meeting started.

10 Welcome to the meeting today. This is a
11 community meeting regarding the proposed reassigned
12 boundary change of Orozco Community Academy and
13 Cooper Dual Language Academy.

14 My name is Cristina Carreto. I'm the
15 Family and Community Engagement Manager for Network 7,
16 the community for Pilsen in Little Village. I will be
17 facilitating today's meeting.

18 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

19 MS. CARRETO: We also have joining us today the
20 Chief of Schools for Network 7 Minerva Garcia-Sanchez.
21 She will be going over the proposed action with you.
22 And then we also have the Vice-President of the Board
23 with us today.

24 I will be conducting the meeting, the first

1 part of the meeting in Spanish and in English.

2 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

3 MS. CARRETO: Okay. So now I'm going to go to the
4 introduction and meeting logistics, and then the Chief
5 will do the presentation on the proposed change.

6 Then we will have time afterwards for public
7 comments.

8 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

9 MS. CARRETO: If you wish to make a public comment,
10 we ask that you please step outside and sign up and
11 register to speak.

12 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

13 MS. CARRETO: Okay. My head is doing it in Spanish
14 when it's English.

15 Okay. So this will be a 90-minute community
16 meeting consisting of a short presentation by the Chief
17 of Schools as I mentioned.

18 And then we will get public comments and
19 feedback afterwards.

20 All right. Just so you know, we will have --
21 we do have a stenographer here and a note-taker as well
22 during this meeting so all public comments and questions
23 will be kept on record.

24 Those were questions we asked that you please

1 sign up to speak as we mentioned before. You will
2 receive two minutes. My colleague here will be giving
3 you a time warning once your two minutes are up. Each
4 participant will receive a notice that there's one
5 minute and then that there's 30 seconds remaining.

6 If you do not have a chance to read your
7 comments or feel more comfortable sending us e-mails, we
8 ask that you please do so by e-mailing to
9 transitions@cps.edu.

10 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

11 MS. CARRETO: You want to --

12 MS. GARCIA-SANCHEZ: No. You go ahead.

13 MS. CARRETO: So the overview of the legal process
14 for these meetings:

15 On October 1st, 2018, CPS published a draft of
16 the guidelines for the school actions;

17 Prior to December 1st, 2018, CPS proposed
18 school actions and sent notice letters and drafts of the
19 transition plans;

20 January 2019, CPS will hold two community
21 meetings. So this is one of two. Our next meeting will
22 be next week at Cooper;

23 And then February 2019 or later, CPS will make
24 recommendations to the Board after community meetings

1 and hearings. The Board will vote on any recommended
2 school actions, and then the Board vote may occur at a
3 February board meeting or later.

4 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

5 MS. CARRETO: And now the Chief of Schools is going
6 to make the presentation overview of proposed school
7 action.

8 MS. GARCIA-SANCHEZ: Good evening. So I'm going to
9 go through the overview of the proposed school action:

10 Adjust -- So we will be adjusting the Cooper
11 attendance area grades served to include sixth grade in
12 the 2019-2020 school year;

13 Then the following year we will adjust the
14 Cooper attendance area grades served to include seventh
15 grade in the 2020 and '21 school year;

16 In the following year, the third year, we will
17 adjust the Cooper attendance area grades served to
18 include the eighth grade in the 2021-22 school year;

19 Orozco will then expand its bilingual gifted
20 program to serve more bilingual students.

21 MS. GARCIA-SANCHEZ: (Speaking Spanish.)

22 MS. GARCIA-SANCHEZ: So we have engaged and given
23 feedback to date;

24 The school communities and elected officials

1 and both LSC's have advocated for the reassigned
2 boundary change including elected officials;

3 So Illinois State Representative, the
4 Cook County Commissioner, now U.S. Congressman, and
5 Alderman from the 25th Ward.

6 Community Support/Educational Partners are;
7 Obviously, Cooper and Orozco Parent
8 Collaboration, the Chicago Commons Association, the
9 Chicago Mariachi Project, Pilsen Arts & Culture
10 Committee, the Frida Kahlo Community Organization, the
11 Pilsen Education Task Force, the School Specialization
12 Initiative, the Pilsen Neighbors Community Council as
13 well as The Resurrection Project, the Quality of Life
14 Plan - Education Component.

15 MS. GARCIA-SANCHEZ: (Speaking Spanish.)

16 MS. GARCIA-SANCHEZ: So Cooper is an attendance area
17 school located at 1624 West 19th Street, and it serves
18 kindergarten through fifth grade with a pre-K program.

19 Cooper currently serves 418 students. Cooper
20 currently has 73 students in fifth grade that would be
21 eligible to stay at Cooper for Grade 6 and 20 -- in
22 school year 2019-2020.

23 Orozco is located here at 1940 West 18th Street
24 and serves K through eighth in its bilingual gifted

1 program with a pre-K program and sixth through eighth
2 grade in it neighborhood program.

3 Orozco currently serves a total of 542 students
4 with 116 students in Grade 6 and 110 in Grade 7 and then
5 a 110 eighth grade.

6 MS. GARCIA-SANCHEZ: (Speaking Spanish.)

7 MS. CARRETO: Thank you.

8 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

9 MS. CARRETO: We're going to start our public
10 comments.

11 I just want to remind everybody that you need
12 to register in order to make public comments. You will
13 have two minutes to provide questions or comments, and
14 each participant will receive notice when there's one
15 minute and when there are 30 seconds. If you look that
16 way (indicating) when you're talking, you will see the
17 signs go up and you'll be having a minute or 30 seconds
18 left.

19 And then, as I mentioned, we have a
20 stenographer and court reporter here today.

21 If you don't feel comfortable, like I said,
22 coming to the mic, you -- I have to do this for legal --
23 I keep on repeating myself for legal purposes, but if
24 you don't feel comfortable coming to the mic or if you

1 run out of time, you can always e-mail us at
2 transitions@cps.edu.

3 The meeting is scheduled to end at 7:30, okay,
4 7:30? Registration closes for speaker lists at 6:30.

5 So right now we only have three speakers
6 registered. We're going to start with Anabel Perez, to
7 begin with Anabel Perez, Marissa Santiago.

8 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

9 MS. CARRETO: If you are an English speaker, right
10 now is the time to put your headset on so that you could
11 hear the Spanish comments being made.

12 MS. SANTIAGO: Good afternoon. My name is
13 Marissa Santiago. I am a parent at Orozco School and
14 also a member of the Local School Council here.

15 I just wanted to make a comment and say that
16 this reassignment would benefit a lot of the children
17 that live in the southwest side of the city such as
18 myself, my -- well, my children.

19 We live in the McKinley Park-Brighton Park
20 area, and we commute every single day because we need
21 schools in the southwest side of the city such as Orozco
22 or something like this, gifted programs, not one that I
23 found that where I live, I would have to commute this
24 for the north or even further to -- for my children to

1 participate in a school like this.

2 So I think this would be a win-win situation
3 for all the children.

4 THE TRANSLATOR: (Interpretation of English to
5 Spanish.)

6 MS. PEREZ: Good evening. My name is Anabel Perez.
7 I'm a parent and a Local School Council member at
8 Cooper Academy.

9 I'm here to -- also, I believe, I'm in support
10 of having this gifted program compared to other
11 students, official students, and also having Cooper
12 going to K through eighth.

13 I have a daughter currently in fourth grade at
14 Cooper. I had two other children who have attended
15 Cooper. I was a student at Cooper many years ago.

16 And I believe in the dual language program, I
17 think that it's very important for our children, and I'm
18 very happy to have other parents here who I know that
19 also support this cause.

20 So we have --

21 MS. PEREZ: (Speaking Spanish.)

22 MS. PEREZ: That is all.

23 THE TRANSLATOR: So she's a parent at Cooper, she
24 had children at Cooper, she has a child at Cooper now

1 and --

2 I know. I'm sorry. Okay. I'm supposed to be
3 doing in Spanish. Sorry.

4 THE TRANSLATOR: (Interpretation of English to
5 Spanish.)

6 MS. SANTIAGO: Can I make a comment?

7 THE TIMEKEEPER: No. You have to sign up for that.

8 MS. SANTIAGO: Oh, I do?

9 Oh, okay. Okay.

10 MS. CARRETO: Next we have Ana Padilla and
11 Jose Reguena.

12 MS. PADILLA: Good evening. I'm here as a
13 representative from Pilsen Neighbors Community Council.

14 We are here to show our support of the
15 expansion of the bilingual gifted program at Orozco but
16 also the expansion of the pre-K through eighth grade at
17 Cooper.

18 We support this because we started over two
19 years ago working with parents with a parent-to-parent
20 conference listening campaign.

21 Our organizer began working with parents to
22 develop leaders in the schools and, therefore, to
23 organize the betterment of the education of their
24 children.

Not only has these specialization initiatives brought excellent academic programs, but we believe that this will encourage hundreds of families to choose Pilsen Schools as their academic choice to expand their enrollment and to save our schools from future school closures but also expanding the access to quality education and programs like the gifted programs, especially a bilingual program in our community.

MR. REGUENA: How about in English? It's less technical.

At the behest of some parents that had just some concerns about the transition, it sounds like an

1 amazing opportunity to bring much needed resources and
2 better programming to the students of the school and to
3 our community, which we absolutely, absolutely support.

4 The only concerns were, would this limit the
5 community programming, does this really mean that we're
6 going to take less students from a community school
7 programming, and do we do a disadvantage to future
8 students?

9 You know, I want all of the kids in this school
10 right now to have access to these programs for the
11 future, but some concerns of parents that are -- have
12 more kids, have kids that they're raising right now and
13 that they don't know if they'd be eligible for programs
14 like this at this school, and they very much want to
15 stay here.

16 It seems like a lot of work has gone into this.
17 I'm certainly not here to derail any work, only ask that
18 it gets shared with more of the community; that if
19 they're not in attendance of these schools right now but
20 would like to be, should be privy to these plans.

21 That's what I came here to share.

22 Thank you.

23 THE TRANSLATOR: (Interpretation of English to
24 Spanish.)

1 MS. CARRETO: Salgado.

2 MR. SALGADO: (Speaking Spanish.)

3 THE INTERPRETER: He's a member of the Local School
4 Council and been a member of the Local School Council
5 actually for six months, and they haven't talked to the
6 actual Local School Council in this area about the
7 program or the changes that are happening so he doesn't
8 know what's happening.

9 I don't know how this is taking place. The
10 Local School Council doesn't know about it. So they're
11 asking the organizer about this change or project.

12 You come along to Orozco School and share these
13 positions with the changes that they're making. So as a
14 member of the Local School Council, I'm supporting the
15 change of this. I'm not saying it's a good change or
16 bad change. What I'm saying is that the Local School
17 Council members of this area have not put this on their
18 agenda, they have not discussed if they have approved it
19 or not.

20 So we ask that organizers of this project, can
21 you please come to our Local School Council and share
22 this information with us, thank you, for some
23 explanation and how we, the Local School Council, can
24 vote on this if we are supporting this project or not?

1 Thank you.

2 MS. CARRETO: Efrain Martinez.

3 MR. MARTINEZ: (Speaking Spanish.)

4 THE TRANSLATOR: First of all, thank you so much for
5 being here this evening.

6 My name is Efrain Martinez, and I'm the
7 principal of Orozco School Academy, and I'm really happy
8 that this is happening.

9 And when I've come, I had a list of all the
10 people I wanted to say thank you to, but I think that
11 those people know who they are.

12 So most people I want to say is that I was home
13 at bed sick, that I received a text from the mothers of
14 Cooper and the mothers from Orozco, they were working
15 together, and they were showing their leadership schools
16 in the board meeting, and they were asking what they
17 wanted for their children, and just that that is
18 leadership, we need to celebrate.

19 So I'd like to honor these parents who are
20 leaders. So thank you.

21 MS. CARRETO: Do we have anybody else?

22 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish).

23 MS. CARRETO: I just want to mention that, if you
24 want to speak or make public comment, would you please

1 register outside?

2 Everybody who registered has already gone, but
3 we would still hold it open for a little longer so that,
4 if any more comments came about, you can go ahead and
5 sign up and come back to make comments.

6 Just a reminder, if you don't feel comfortable
7 coming to the mic or you prefer just sending e-mails,
8 please e-mail transitions@cps.edu with any comments or
9 questions regarding this proposed action.

10 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

11 MS. CARRETO: Okay. So we have some more speakers
12 signed up.

13 I'm just going to leave registration open for
14 one to two minutes. So this is your last chance at
15 today's meeting to leave a comment.

16 Please sign up, and then that will be it, I'm
17 going to close the registration for speakers.

18 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

19 MS. CARRETO: So we got Marissa Santiago,
20 Maria Carrillo.

21 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

22 MS. CARRETO: Marissa Santiago.

23 MS. SANTIAGO: (Speaking Spanish.)

24 THE TRANSLATOR: It's about the comment that was

1 made by the LSC members. I talked about it during one
2 of the LSC meetings, I was talking about what the
3 parents were talking about.

4 And they were getting signatures for petitions,
5 and this guy signed, and what I did was to give what's
6 happening outside of the school conferring with the
7 parents and with Local School Council, and what I said
8 to them was that the parents were going to get together
9 and collect a signature what do you think about what's
10 happening outside of our school?

11 And what I had was a letter sharing what the
12 parents were doing, and in LSC, we would want to support
13 the change that was happening, and the parents and the
14 members that are part of the Local School Council, they
15 were there at that meeting, signed that petition.

16 And that's the letter that I presented to the
17 Board of Education. And we were outside, several
18 parents, with the petitions and with the information.

19 And she's referring to the guy that had the
20 information for the meeting.

21 MS. CARRETO: Antonia Costo.

22 MS. CARRILLO: (Speaking Spanish.)

23 THE TRANSLATOR: Good afternoon. My name is
24 Maria Carrillo, and I'm a parent of a student here at

1 Orozco.

2 And I've had my children here in Orozco School,
3 and what I wanted to say is that I agree with what's
4 happening here.

5 I want to say what parent wouldn't want this
6 program, right, that's with better education in their
7 schools, and this is all I wanted to say, and parents
8 for the community and parents in the community are very
9 different so we're talking about the education of our
10 kids.

11 Thank you so much.

12 MS. SANCHEZ: (Speaking Spanish.)

13 THE TRANSLATOR: Good afternoon. My name is
14 Maria Sanchez, and I'm a parent of Orozco Academy, and I
15 am really happy of the progress that my child has done
16 here.

17 My child has been here since kindergarten, but
18 today I want to get here in the microphone because I was
19 one of the parents that was outside getting the petition
20 that was talking to parents and explaining to them what
21 I knew about the changes that we wanted for this
22 community and for this school.

23 And I got close to Mr. Angel, and he signed the
24 petition for me, and I said thank you to him for your

1 signature and for giving us your support and what we've
2 done is we're here for this project.

3 Thank you so much for listening to me, and
4 Thank you so much for your time.

5 MS. COSTRO: (Speaking Spanish.)

6 THE TRANSLATOR: Good afternoon. My name is
7 Antonia Costro, and I'm a parent of a student at Cooper.

8 And I am in favor of this change because I am
9 always in contact with the changes in schools, and I had
10 a daughter here at Orozco, and it was very difficult for
11 me to be at the same time in two schools, I had a
12 daughter here at Cooper or two in Cooper and one in
13 Orozco, and now I have one in fifth grade and one in
14 first grade, and I'm going to be fluctuating more like
15 bringing one here and bringing one in the other school.

16 And for them it's a change, right, that they
17 make that change because they have to do it, right?

18 And now, if they have the opportunity to say in
19 the same school, it's better, it's a better benefit for
20 those students.

21 This is what I wanted to share with you. It's
22 nice. Thank you so much.

23 MR. SALGADO: (Speaking Spanish.)

24 THE TRANSLATOR: Again, my name is Angel Salgado. I

1 just want to clarify so that what these parents have
2 said about Orozco.

3 To Marissa, I want to answer what I said a few
4 minutes ago is that I -- this is never on the agenda, it
5 was not in the agenda legally. There was no explanation
6 of the leaders of LSC, comment to the LSC that came and
7 gave us this information. They haven't had a point
8 where it became to explain to us the changes.

9 So with the signature that they were adhering
10 to was the expansion of the limits of Orozco that they
11 never actually explained that this was a closing of
12 program of neighborhood schools here.

13 Thank you for letting me explain all of this
14 because it seems like I'm lying.

15 I did support to expand that nobody explained
16 in any of the professions of the Local School Council
17 the project that we're talking about here.

18 If you today said that this is explained and
19 this was on the agenda of the Local School Council and
20 there was supporting this, did that really happen?
21 You're saying that this happened?

22 No, it didn't happen. That's all that I'm
23 saying; that that didn't happen during a Local School
24 Council meeting.

1 We need a little bit of more attention from the
2 leaders of this project of explaining to us the Local
3 School Council right now of what's happening of this new
4 project.

5 And yes, I did sign, but I explained -- they
6 explained to me the expansion of this program, but it
7 didn't share to me that the program, the program was
8 going to be closed.

9 And like I asked the principal this morning,
10 never talked to me about it, so what I want to see is
11 how many signatures is signed and they asked for the
12 expansion of the program so in this program we've had at
13 this program and kindergarten.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. CARRETO: (Speaking Spanish.)

16 THE TIMEKEEPER: English.

17 MS. CARRETO: Sorry.

18 So that concludes our second round of speakers
19 for today's meeting.

20 We have another community meeting next week at
21 Cooper Dual Language Academy at 6:00 o'clock on
22 Wednesday, January 19th -- 16th.

23 Sorry. I lost my dates.

24 If you weren't able to say a comment or feel

1 comfortable leaving a comment today, please make sure to
2 get our e-mail at transitions@cps.edu. Your e-mail is
3 there for comments or concerns.

4 The next meeting will follow the same format.

5 Please, if you want to speak again with
6 additional comments (inaudible).

7 It is now 6:40, 6:38, and we said it in
8 Spanish, we did two rounds of community comments so we
9 will be concluding our meeting early, okay?

10 We hope to see you next week.

11 (Applause.)

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1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
2) SS:
3 COUNTY OF C O O K)
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7 ROBBIN M. OCHENKOWSKI, being first duly sworn,
8 deposes and says that she is a Certified Shorthand
9 Reporter in Cook County, Illinois;

10 That she reported in shorthand and thereafter
11 transcribed the foregoing;

12 That the within and foregoing transcript is
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14 evidence which was received and the proceedings had upon
15 the within cause.
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