



Proposed Reassigned Boundary Change of Orozco Community Academy
and Cooper Dual Language Academy
January 16, 2019
Cooper Dual Language Academy
1624 W. 19th Street
6:00-7:30 PM

CPS Staff in Attendance

Cristina Carreto, Minerva Garcia Sanchez, Judith Camacho, Carla Escobar, Lauro Roman, Cheryl Nevins, Efrain Martinez, Ana Diaz

CPS Presentation

Ms. Cristina Carreto, Family and Community Engagement Manager for Network 7, welcomed the audience and proceeded to give a brief overview of the presentation structure: introduction, meeting logistics, presentation on school action, and time for public comments. She introduced Ms. Minerva Garcia Sanchez, Chief of Schools for Network 7, who presented the proposed action.

Ms. Carreto explained that the meeting would be 90-minutes long consisting of a short presentation and public comments to follow. She advised that the meeting would be in English and Spanish. She advised that there was a stenographer and a note-taker present so all public comments and questions would be on the record. She explained that each speaker would have two minutes to speak and that speakers would be notified of their time at one minute and thirty seconds. She explained that this procedure is set up to make the best use of time and so that as many people as possible have an opportunity to speak. She advised that guests are welcomed to sign in to speak during the public comments portion. She advised that there will be a third meeting, a public hearing on Thursday, January 31st, 2019 at Central Office, 42 W. Madison, from 6-8 PM. She advised that on or around February 2019, recommendations will be made to the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Board of Education after the community meetings and hearings have been held and that at that time the CPS Board will vote on any recommended school actions. She notified the audience that if they do not have an opportunity to comment or feel more comfortable sending an e-mail, they may do so at transitions@cps.edu.

Ms. Minerva Garcia Sanchez explained that she would go through the legal overview of the proposed school action. The proposal will be to adjust the Cooper attendance area grades served to include sixth grade in 2019-2020 school year, then the following year to adjust the Cooper attendance area grades served to include seventh grade in the 2020-2021 school year, and in the following year to adjust the Cooper attendance area grades served to include the eighth grade in the 2021-2022 school year. And additionally, Orozco will then expand its bilingual gifted program to serve more bilingual students.

She shared that the school community, elected officials, including an Illinois State Representative, the Cook County Commissioner – now U.S. Congressman, and 25th Ward Alderman, and

Orozco and Cooper LSC's have advocated for the reassigned boundary change. Also in support of the proposed school action are community leaders and educational partners, including Cooper/Orozco Parent Collaboration, Chicago Commons Association, Chicago Mariachi Project/Pilsen Arts & Culture Committee, Frida Kahlo Community Organization, Pilsen Education Task Force - School Specialization Initiative, Pilsen Neighbors Community Council, and the Resurrection Project - Quality of Life Plan – Educational Component.

Ms. Sanchez then proceeded to supply in-depth detail regarding the proposal. She stated that Cooper is an attendance area school located at 1624 W. 19th Street that serves K-5, with a pre-K program. Cooper currently serves 418 students. Cooper currently has 73 students in grade 5 that would be eligible to stay at Cooper for grade 6 in SY19-20. Orozco is located at 1940 W. 18th Street and serves K-8 grade in its bilingual gifted program with a pre-K program, and 6-8th grade in its neighborhood program. Orozco currently serves a total of 542 students with 116 students in grade 6 and 110 students in grade 7 and 110 in grade 8.

Ms. Carreto reminded the audience of the final public hearing on Thursday, January 31st, 2019 at Central Office, 42 W. Madison, from 6-8 PM. Ms. Carreto then opened the public comments portion of the meeting by reminding everyone of the registration process in order to make a public comment and the two minute time limit. She advised that meeting attendees can sign up to make a comment until 6:30 PM.

Public Comments

Student A and Student B: Cooper students. It is important for Cooper to include grades 6th through 8th. They feel safe at Cooper. Cooper has great programs, education, meals and teachers.

Alfredo Calderon: Teacher Representative of the Cooper LSC. The LSC wants Cooper to offer grades 6th through 8th. Cooper staff, administration, students and parents have worked hard to make Cooper a great school. They have continually asked why Cooper has not offered grades 6th through 8th. Parents have said they are grateful and have established a great relationship with teachers. Cooper offers a rigorous education. Parents' concerns are very important and they must be a part of the choices made for the school. The parents want continuity for their children. They want Cooper to offer a dual language program that runs through 8th grade. He is sure staff will work hard to make this initiative a success.

Maribel Alquisino: Parent of 5 children who have attended Cooper. She is very excited that Cooper will run through 8th grade now. She feels that Cooper has the best teachers. She is glad that she won't have to struggle to take her kids to different schools. She supports the initiative.

Marisa Santiago: Parent and member of the Orozco LSC. She was made aware that there were over 120 new student applicants. Of the 120 student applicants, 85 kids were not accepted. Many student applications were not accepted. She is from McKinley Park and the opportunities for gifted programs are limited in McKinley Park. She is in support of the action.

Guadalupe Carreon: Parent of Cooper student. Her children attended catholic schools, then charter schools, and finally public schools - they are at Orozco. When her children started going to Orozco, she saw a big difference. Her kids are now attending a university. At Orozco, there are full-time counselors, after school activities, socio-emotional initiatives and she is very happy about this. She wants students from the Southwest side to have these kinds of opportunities.

Marisol De Paz: She is in support of the proposal. She is asking CPS to approve the proposal because it is very important for the children. She left Cooper crying once because found out she could not enroll her children into Cooper because it did not go past 5th grade. She believes her children deserve to graduate in 8th grade at Cooper. Cooper is like family. She says this is a right for the kids. Most schools have this opportunity and Cooper should have this opportunity, too.

Teresa Fraga: Member of the Board at Pilsen Neighbors Community Council and Pilsen Planning Committee. She is in complete support of the Cooper school expansion. She believes this is a win-win for Orozco and Cooper. She is moved because Cooper means a lot to her. This is a school where her 6 children attended, where she got her GED, and her children participated in painting the murals within the school. She has a lot of fond memories here. She is glad to see that under the leadership of Ms. Alba that this school is still moving and finding ways to serve the parents in the community. She feels this school still has the spirit that existed here many years ago.

Monserrat Hernandez: She is parent and member of the Cooper LSC. She wants to touch on the fact that many parents have been asking for a long time why Cooper hasn't offered grades 6th through 8th. There is something very special about Cooper, there is a group of teachers that work very hard, way beyond what they have to. As an art teacher, she heard it from the kids as well. It's due for an upgrade to offer grades through 8th. We should also support the kids because if we can offer them support to keep them in the place where they already feel happy as they are becoming teenagers. The teachers have a lot of love for the students. The Principal is always open to listening to the parents. She supports the proposal.

Maria Ramirez: Parent of Cooper/Orozco students and member of the Cooper LSC. She is supporting this proposal. Even though her children are no longer here, this is the first place that supported her. She was a volunteer for 13 years and she knows this school very well. She has worked in the classroom and with the parents and this is the first place that offered her first job. This school is not only for the kids but it is also for the parents. But also Cooper has shown us how to educate our kids. This will always be like my home. She also supports Orozco because her kids graduated there.

Claudia Molina: Cooper parent. Her son started here since Pre-K. She feels very emotional to see the development of her child. She thanks the teachers and the principal for supporting the children. Her petition is for it to be extended through 8th grade because it is very difficult for students to go through a transition from one school to another. When they are here, they feel like they are at home. The way that the teachers teach motivates the kids to be better. They motivate them in a way that makes her feel very proud to be part of Cooper.

Efrain Martin: Principal of Orozco: He wants to share that he is very happy to see that parents from Orozco and Cooper are supporting each other. He says it is great to see how much they are joining together and supporting these initiatives.

Martha Alba: Principal at Cooper: She says she does not have to say much because students and parents have shared why they want to support the expansion. She would like to clarify that this is going to be a process and that each grade will be added year by year, not all at once. Parents will continue to support their kids and she will continue supporting the kids and parents. She is excited for both schools and believes this is going to be excellent for the future.

Theresa Mah: Illinois State Representative. She is very happy to support the proposal. She was very happy to attend the CPS Board meeting where she spoke on behalf of the parents and students to support

the expansion. The ideas came from the parents and the community after several years of discussion where parents and LSC members came together and were involved in this process. They saw this as a vision for their community. She applauds the community members, parents and principals. She supports this all the way.

Ms. Carreto reminded attendees that the final public hearing portion will be on Thursday, January 31, 2019 at CPS Central Office, 42 W. Madison from 6-8 PM. If someone did not have an opportunity to make a public comment, they have an opportunity to send an email to transitions@cps.edu.

Public comments ended at 6:50 PM