



Board of Education | City of Chicago

Board Meeting Written Comments

August 27, 2026

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August 27, 2026, Board Meeting Written Comments
Received between Tuesday, August 25th and Friday, August 28th Submitted via
Written Comments Form

1	My family resides in the neighborhood boundary for Carl von Linne Elementary School. I'm expressing frustration – not just from my family, but from other neighborhood families - about placement into the Dual Language Education (DLE) program at Linne. I raised this with Principal Parra last spring and learned this may reflect a broader, system-wide issue of unclear and inconsistent processes. Before pre K, we attended a DLE orientation and were told there was a clear priority order for placement: native Spanish speakers/English Learners first, then students with siblings in the program, then in boundary neighborhood students, and only then out of neighborhood students if seats remained. We did not get into DLE for pre-K. We again indicated DLE as our preference for kindergarten. Because we are in-boundary, we could not complete a GoCPS application. We later learned that out of boundary families could apply directly to DLE at Linne through GoCPS and received DLE placement notices in March—ahead of the neighborhood families who were repeatedly told they would have priority. This is fundamentally unfair. If neighborhood families had been allowed to apply the same way and on the same timeline, we would have. Instead, the process has been opaque: families are told one priority system, but outcomes suggest another. We've also been told that because GoCPS decisions come earlier, if enrollment shifts—i.e., new English Learner families move in to the attendance boundary—neighborhood children are displaced, not earlier out-of-neighborhood GoCPS admits. That undermines the "neighborhood priority" families relied on when choosing to live here and attend their neighborhood school. The DLE program FAQ's on Linne's school website specifically state that for those that live outside the attendance area, once the child is offered a seat to Linne, the family would need to first register their child and then IF there's availability, an offer MAY be made to the DLE program. And that is how it should be, with out-of-neighborhood students receiving an offer for the SCHOOL rather than a specific program and continuing the same process as all other families. As written, the placement policy contradicts what we have seen. GoCPS applications are being reviewed and accepted prior to neighborhood seats and not only "if remaining seats" are available. The lack of transparency surrounding the admission process has caused distress for neighborhood families wondering why their children were excluded from the program. While my son was lucky enough to receive a seat in the DLE program this year, I know of at least 2 in-neighborhood families that did not receive seats. This is in favor of no less than 4 out-of-neighborhood students that were accepted to the DLE program through GoCPS that have no factors that should prioritize them over neighborhood kids. Specifically, non-Spanish-speaking/heritage families with no ties to the school have been accepted through GoCPS applications, while neighborhood kids are not getting into the program due to space restrictions.



	Families in the neighborhood are beginning to consider leaving their neighborhood school in order to access dual language programs in other communities because neighborhood kids are not receiving prioritization over out of neighborhood families. I'm asking the Board for clear answers and action: 1. If a school communicates a priority process in writing, is it required to follow it—and what recourse is there when it doesn't? 2. Do schools have any ability to adjust program placement after GoCPS acceptances to protect neighborhood access? 3. How exactly is neighborhood priority applied when GoCPS placements are made earlier and treated as binding? In order to ensure that neighborhood kids get priority, schools should be held accountable for leaving enough spots for neighborhood kids in a program, or switching a DLE GoCPS applicant to monolingual if the school has miscalculated how many seats are available.
2	Good afternoon , members of the Board. I stand before you on behalf of my son, [REDACTED] a deaf and hard-of-hearing freshman with a limb difference and an IEP. [REDACTED]'s transition meeting was May 15th. CPS knew his needs then and he should have received placement in that meeting yet I did not receive his placement until the Friday afternoon before school started. For months, I called, emailed, researched , and advocated. I was passed from person to person without clear answers or direction. During this time, CPS removed the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Manager position, leaving families like mine without clear DHH leadership. CPS also suggested more restrictive school placements without explaining what in [REDACTED]'s IEP justified a more restrictive environment. I eventually had to hire an attorney with money I do not have and borrow from family just to get movement. The last time I fought CPS over appropriate placement for [REDACTED] I accumulated over \$30,000 in legal debt and faced eviction. Within 30 minutes of receiving [REDACTED]'s placement, I went to Whitney Young and learned they did not have the staff necessary to fully implement his IEP. I was told [REDACTED] could not start Monday. [REDACTED] missed his first day of high school. Today, [REDACTED] still has classes without an interpreter. For my deaf child, no interpreter means no access to language or meaningful instruction.



He also does not have the para support required to safely transition between classrooms.

The Special Education Coordinator at Whitney Young told me that when an IEP is not implemented because of staffing shortages, I can pursue compensatory education afterward to remedy the educational harm.

But [REDACTED] has suffered broken limbs and has been injured numerous times on CPS property.

Compensatory education cannot restore the language access he loses today. It cannot keep him safe today. And it cannot undo another injury after it happens.

My child needs his Free Appropriate Public Education and safety now, not compensation later.

If Whitney Young can fully implement his IEP, I am willing to give this placement an opportunity to work. But a placement on paper is not enough.

I am asking this Board to intervene immediately and ensure [REDACTED] receives his required interpreter, para, accommodations, and communication services, with a written staffing and backup coverage plan.

[REDACTED] cannot afford to be unheard for one more day. Hear him. Protect him. Educate him. Give him the access and opportunity every child deserves. His education should not depend on how hard his mother is willing to fight for it.

Thank you.



****ATTACHMENTS****

Good morning. My name is Jennifer Walker. My son is in Kindergarten at Carl von Linne Elementary School in Avondale and we reside in the neighborhood attendance boundary. I'm here this morning to express frustration – not just from my family, but from other neighborhood families - about admissions into the Dual Language Education (or DLE) program at Linne. After raising this with Principal Gabriel Parra last spring, I learned this may reflect a broader, system-wide issue of unclear and inconsistent processes.

Before pre-K, we attended a DLE orientation and were told there was a clear priority order for placement: —native Spanish speakers/English Learners first, then students with siblings in the program, then in-boundary neighborhood students, and only then out-of-neighborhood students if seats remained. We did not get in to DLE for pre-K.

We once again indicated DLE as our preference for kindergarten. Because we are in-boundary, we did not complete a GoCPS application. Later, we learned that out-of-boundary families could apply through GoCPS *directly* to DLE at Linne, and received DLE placement notices in March— ahead of the neighborhood families who were repeatedly told they would have priority.

This feels fundamentally unfair. If neighborhood families had been allowed to apply the same way and on the same timeline, we would have. Instead, the process has been opaque: families are told one priority system, but outcomes suggest another. We've also been told that because GoCPS decisions come earlier, if enrollment shifts—like new English Learner families moving in to the attendance boundary—neighborhood children are the ones displaced, not earlier out-of-neighborhood GoCPS admits. That undermines the “neighborhood priority” families relied on when choosing to live here and attend their neighborhood school.

The DLE program FAQ's on Linne's school website specifically state that for those that live outside the attendance area, once the child is offered a seat to Linne, the family would need to first register their child and then IF there's availability, an offer MAY be made to the DLE program. And that is how it should be, with out-of-neighborhood students receiving an offer for the SCHOOL rather than a specific program and continuing the same process as all other families.

As written, the placement policy contradicts what we have seen. Clearly GoCPS applications are being reviewed and accepted prior to neighborhood seats and not only "if remaining seats" are available. The lack of transparency surrounding the admission process has caused distress for neighborhood families wondering why their children were excluded from the program.

While my son was lucky enough to receive a seat in the DLE program this year, I know of at least 2 in neighborhood families that did not receive seats. This is at the expense of no less than 4 out-of-neighborhood students that were accepted to the DLE program through GoCPS that have no factors that would prioritize them over neighborhood kids. Specifically, Non Spanish speaking

families and non-heritage families with no ties to the school have been accepted through GoCPS applications, while neighborhood kids are not getting into the program due to space restrictions.

Families in the neighborhood are beginning to consider leaving their neighborhood school in order to access dual language programs in other communities because neighborhood kids are not receiving prioritization over out of neighborhood families.

I'm asking the Board for clear answers and action:

1. If a school communicates a priority process in writing, is it required to follow it—and what recourse exists when it doesn't?
2. Do schools have any ability to adjust program placement after GoCPS acceptances to protect neighborhood access?
3. How exactly is neighborhood priority applied when GoCPS placements are made earlier and treated as binding?

In order to ensure that neighborhood kids get priority, schools should be held accountable for leaving enough spots for neighborhood kids in a program, or switching a DLE GoCPS applicant to the monolingual program if the school has miscalculated how many seats are available.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to a transparent, consistent process that honors stated priorities and protects neighborhood families.