

April 25, 2024 Board Meeting Written Comments
Received between Tuesday, April 23rd and Friday, April 26th
Submitted via Written Comments Form

1	<p>Sabin dual language has received on the largest number of new arrivals. Since they come throughout the year our enrollment numbers are significantly higher than the 27 day count. What can we do to adjust that?</p>
2	<p>We at Poe Classical Elementary would like our classical funds reinstated at the \$1000 per student rate we have received in the past. It was stated from CEO Martinez that we would not lose anything but we did not receive those funds for 2025 and we also lost our Interventionist position. We want these back!!!</p>
3	<p>CPS's proposed budget allocation for LLA disproportionately impacts the entirety of our unique, diverse community. With limited time and limited discretion, our Principal and LSC are being forced to make impossible choices. We are facing decisions that will both undercut our 50-year world language program AND eliminate our chance of progressing on the school's CIWP. The World Language Magnet program is a core subject for our students that furthermore is inextricably intertwined with the entire school's curriculum. So it's not just about cutting a program wherein your kid can't take Spanish daily, it's about fundamentally altering the entire school curriculum.</p> <p>It's important to recognize that a majority of students at LaSalle are students of color -- and more than half come from neighborhoods that CPS classifies as Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3 based on a variety of socioeconomic factors. This does not seem to be reflected in our Opportunity Index score. Multiple factors leverage the location of the school, namely Average Community Student Hardship Index and Average Community Life Expectancy. These combine to over-emphasize the school's location vs. population.</p> <p>What's more, in terms of benchmarks for programs recently assessed by the Board of Education, LLA is exceeding in all of those areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) LaSalle's diversity mirrors that of the city of Chicago, 2) Our WL program serves 100% of our student population and, 3) It has a proven track record of prepping students for HS graduation success and college readiness. All students at LaSalle graduate ready to succeed in meeting their high school foreign language requirement, and many students place into advanced course levels making them eligible for AP courses/exams. This gives them a competitive advantage for college readiness. <p>We request your full support at this time to live up to what was pledged to the LSC AB, and stated by CPS CEO Pedro Martinez:</p> <p>Our school needs more resources to meet our needs, more discretion over those resources, and more time to fairly, equitably manage the transition imposed by the new budget levels and methodology.</p>
4	<p>To: CPS Administration</p> <p>From: Parent of Two Students at LaSalle Language Academy</p> <p>Date: 4/24/24</p> <p>Subject: Urgent Appeal: Preserve Funding for LLA's World Language Program</p>

Our student body represents the diversity of Chicago, and our programs provide every child with a window to the broader world. The significance of this opportunity cannot be overstated.

As a parent at LaSalle Language Academy (LLA), I urge you to maintain funding for our World Language Program. LLA embodies Chicago's diversity, with over half of its students from varied backgrounds. This program, integral since 1977, prepares students for a globalized world, seamlessly integrated into the curriculum. While recognizing the importance of neighborhood schools, preserving funding for successful programs like LLA's ensures equitable access to quality education and upholds CPS's commitment to excellence.

The proposed budget cuts jeopardize LLA's success. Without adequate funding, you are ensuring a downward spiral effect that ultimately will result in a case of "it is not what it once was.." Prioritizing programs like ours safeguards LLA's legacy of excellence and fosters a brighter future for all students. CPS should celebrate and look emulate LLA rather than dismantle it.

Important Facts that make LLA unique and a case study for success:

a) The diversity of LaSalle's student population reflects that of Chicago: 36.3% African American, 33.6% Caucasian, 18% Hispanic, 6.4% Asian, and 5.6% Multi-racial.

b) 31% students qualify for school fee waivers – 52.5% of students come from neighborhoods CPS classifies as Tier 1, 2, 3 – and 47.5% of students come from Tier 4.

Sincerely,
Parent of Two Students at LaSalle Language Academy

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Dear CPS Board,

La salle Language Academy is a special school where Kids can feel themselves while receiving an education adapted to their learning level. I have two daughters who were able to attend the school after being chosen by the lottery and it gave them the opportunity to experience the diversity of Chicago. La salle is not a neighborhood school so it represents the diversity of Chicago and exposes kids to different culture. The language program is so special in the sense that it creates a better community while exposing the children from day one to other cultures. This is one of the best program in the city even better than in some private schools and it gives the opportunity to many to be exposed to other learning methods. La Salle drives a wide range of kids and the community is very tight. By cutting down on budget funds the school will not be able to support all kids from the city the same way. There should be a reward for schools who thrive while enforcing diversity and many programs to help the kids grow in many varied area such as STEM, language. Success should be a factor to drive budget to continue to support the effort made by CPS teachers and principals. The kids make friends very fast and learn from each other. It is sad to hear that CPS wants to stop something that works. The model of La salle should be recognized as a model for other schools to improve and reach certain goals. Chicago needs to shine and support all kids, academically and with dedicated programs at all levels. La salle does that and more.

6

I am a parent of two students at LaSalle Language Academy, a CPS magnet school that specializes in world languages. LaSalle is a high performing school with a 50 year old

language program that draws children from all over the city. As a result we have one of the most racially and economically diverse student bodies in the district and a school that serves as a model of Equity in public education. Unfortunately the new budget formula disproportionately impacts our school, specifically the world language program. Please reconsider the new budget formula to include support for schools like LaSalle so it can continue to serve our diverse student population with its robust and successful world language program.

7 Good afternoon, I'm going to keep this short and to the point,

The goal of better serving students and families who are facing greater financial hardships and inequities is one that CPS should be pursuing, however targeting the budget at Magnet school like LaSalle Language Academy (LLA) is not the best way to redistribute funds.

Schools like LLA are some of the most diverse schools in Chicago. Our school serves students from all across the city with not only racial diversity (36.3% African American, 33.6% Caucasian, 18% Hispanic, 6.4% Asian, and 5.6% Multi-racial) but also socioeconomic (31% students qualify for school fee waivers 52.5% of students come from neighborhoods CPS classifies as Tier 1, 2, 3)

Our language program is for every student at the school and is a daily 1hr class, removing this budget will dramatically change the culture and the purpose of LLA. This budget cut would eliminate funding for this entire key program overnight.

Furthermore, our student body is drawn from the entire city of Chicago, yet using the proposed opportunity Index for funding based on location of the school will negatively affect funding for all students at our school. The school's location does not reflect the makeup of our student population, nor of their diverse background or needs.

Finally, all of this is not just representation for the sake of representation, our school and others like it also delivers results for all of its students. We are also a school where all students and families have chosen to be at this school and that comes with a certain level of commitment, and sacrifice for some of our families with travel time, many of our students have lost access to school buses. Whilst the need for funding all of our school is important, I am asking that you don't target some of our most diverse schools that already provide great results for all of their students, regardless of racial and socioeconomic background.

Thank you

8 I am the parent of a LaSalle Language Academy student and I am writing to voice my concerns over how the district's new funding formula will disproportionately affect our unique, diverse community as well as those at magnet programs across the city.

In its current state, our budget requires major cuts that would drastically impact our World Language Program which is one of the cornerstones of student learning at LaSalle. As a World Language Magnet school, our language programming cannot be untangled from our core curriculum. Our language program and curriculum work in tandem and this serious cut in funding will fundamentally change student course of study not to mention the climate and culture of our school community.

There have been many media statements claiming that no particular schools or programs will be disproportionately affected by using the new budgeting calculations. Not only will LaSalle be forced to make major changes to our school programming, our school administration and Local School Counsel were also given little time to make these critical decisions.

Magnet schools provide unique educational opportunities to students all over the city. These students should not have these opportunities taken away from them and on such short notice at that. I ask that you take a deeper look into how the new budgeting formula will disproportionately affect magnet school programs and consider the children who will be most impacted by these harsh budget cuts.

9 Dear Chicago Board of Education:
As a parent of a kindergarten student at LaSalle Language Academy I am distressed by the drastic and abrupt change in funding to our school. The new funding formula, introduced in the name of equity, will have irreparable negative impact on our diverse and thriving school community. The proposed funding formula jeopardizes the core program and mission of our school. Instruction in foreign language is not a perk at LaSalle Language Academy, it is a core part of everyday of every student's nine-year education at the school. Daily foreign language instruction is essential to the very being and mission of the school and what makes it possible for students of all backgrounds to excel.

For 50 years, LaSalle Language Academy has educated a diverse student body and prepared young people from all economic, social, and cultural backgrounds to be true citizens of the world, many fluent in another language by the time they graduate from 8th grade. With an unparalleled foreign language program, open to students from all over the city, whatever their families' economic resources, LaSalle Language Academy should be supported as a standard of the level of education that should be offered to every child in Chicago, instead of decimated in the name of progress. LaSalle Language Academy proves that it is possible to serve a diverse community that mirrors the population of Chicago—to provide an excellent education and life skills to all our citizens and ensure a more equitable and inclusive future for our city.

I respectfully request that CPS support LaSalle Language Academy and that the budget of our school ensures its core program and mission. Together, LaSalle Language Academy's community of students, teachers, staff, and parents, contribute to the vitality and viability of Chicago. Frankly, the city of Chicago cannot afford to lose such a program.

10 As a parent of a kindergarten student at LaSalle Language Academy, I am distressed by the drastic and abrupt change in funding to our school. CPS's new funding formula, introduced in the name of equity, cuts right to the core of LaSalle's mission to educate students in a second non-English language. The change in formula will result in a decrease in essential funding of the school's core curriculum, and will irreparably harm our diverse and thriving school community. Instruction in a second language is not a perk at LaSalle Language Academy. It is an essential and daily part of every student's nine-year education at the school. It is foundational to the very being and mission of LaSalle and what makes it possible for students of all backgrounds to excel.

For 50 years, LaSalle Language Academy has educated a diverse student body and prepared young people from all economic, social, and cultural backgrounds to be true citizens of the world. Many are fluent in a second language by the time they graduate

from 8th grade. With an unparalleled foreign language program, open to students from all over the city, whatever their families' economic resources, LaSalle should be supported as representing the standard of the level of education that should be offered to every child in Chicago, instead of having funding for its core program decimated in the name of progress.

Indeed, in a city where many schools, including LaSalle, are resource-starved and forced to rely on parents and outside organizations for fundraising dollars and in-kind gifts for even the most basic classroom supplies, it is inconceivable that one could interpret such threats to our school's core curriculum as progress or as equitable. The implication of this new funding formula is that some schools are somehow flush with funds that they can spare, which would be easy to laugh off as absurd except for the existential threat it represents. Instead of stirring up such a "Hunger Games scenario"—a term Mayor Johnson himself used during his election campaign to describe this kind of pitting schools against each other for what he described as "leftovers"—why not find a way to shore up a baseline level of funding for all schools, advocate for difficult tradeoffs elsewhere in city and state budgets to enlarge the pie for public education (if, as the Mayor says, public education truly is a priority), and then work to allocate the increases in CPS revenue to build the kind of equity the administration aspires to? I too am a strong believer in the ideals and promise of public education, but why not work toward this goal in a way that is genuine and positive?

LaSalle Language Academy proves that it is possible to serve a diverse community that mirrors the population of Chicago—to provide an excellent education and life skills to all our citizens and ensure a more equitable and inclusive future for our city. I respectfully request that you support LaSalle Language Academy and that the budget of our school ensures its core program and mission. Together, LaSalle Language Academy's community of students, teachers, staff, and parents, contribute to the vitality and viability of Chicago. Frankly, the City of Chicago cannot afford to lose such a program.

11 My name is Melina Pereyra.

Mother of a second-grader at Acero Sandra Cisneros elementary School.

On January 31, 2024, our school was told like the other Acero schools to implement the GENDER INCLUSIVE BATHROOM. That is creating confusion in our school. The idea of having these bathrooms is great, and this is coming from a mom with a NON BINARY child, but Acero schools are not ready.

We want to know the step by step plan. Because Acero staff, teachers and parents are still trying to figure out the guidelines about this. It was easy for you to demand to add papers on the walls, and let the schools figure out for themselves what to do with those signs.

Mentioning "It's the law" and that you can't do anything about it, it's not helping. And because of these, Now every student is at risk, not only transgenders, non-binary or non conforming gender students. EVERYONE.

While these bathrooms are for those who identify as transgenders, non-binary or gender non-conforming, The truth is that anyone can use them whatever they like and there is no supervision. A real-life example: An 8th grader female student (That identifies as a girl) was using the BOYS+ restroom because she needed to change clothes since the girls' restroom was occupied, and because for her, the BOYS+ means UNISEX. So, now

imagine, my 8 year old son using the same restroom, and this girl coming out and catching my son by surprise. Where would be my son's privacy, safety and comfort to use the boy bathroom now? Other examples are kids entering the opposite bathroom just for curiosity, because they think this is a game, meanwhile other students are waiting outside the restrooms because they don't feel comfortable when this is happening. Even adults, use the BOYS+ and GIRL+ bathrooms.

Our bathrooms are not prepared to bring privacy and safety to our students. Did any CPS representatives visit each ACERO school and inspect the restrooms? Our bathrooms are outdated. These bathrooms should have floor to ceiling stall dividers, a better locking system, and a cover that ensures that no one can see through the space between the stall divider and the door. They shall not contain urinals.

Acero representatives only keep suggesting to communicate with CPS, but we received only empty answers. I hope you listen to our concerns, and understand that before we can implement the Gender Inclusive Bathrooms, we need to work together to get this done the right way. But for now, we request to let ACERO schools come back to our boys/girls only and all gender neutral single bathrooms.

THANKS.

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- 12 I'm concerned about the ability of Chicago to deliver top level education as a result of the new budgeting approach. This has implications on the students who live in the city and the education they get as well as how many families choose to avoid Chicago for their children's education. LaSalle Language Academy (LLA), and my family, are representative examples of the potential downfalls of the new budgeting approach.

LLA is a school that has historically had 8 language teachers to provide one hour of foreign language education, per day, for all students. While this is less language instruction than an immersion program would offer, it is still sufficient to drive high achievement. This is evidenced by the strong recent performance at LLA in the national Grand Concours test. 40,000+ students from across the nation participate in this test each year across all ages and ~150 score perfect on it nationwide. This year, 3 students at LLA scored perfect. So ~2% of the total perfect scores came from LLA, while LLA represents less than 0.2% of the students taking the test. That dramatic level of overachievement shows how strong the French language program is at LaSalle. It's best in class. Other languages taught at the school have similar levels of performance. This is the reason people choose to come to LLA and cannot be replicated by having less than 1 hour per day of foreign language instruction. It's not just the results of the language instruction as study after study has shown that foreign language education has spillover benefits to educational performance in all other subjects. These outcomes are demonstrated by the high performance of graduating students at LLA in their high school placement exams.

A benefit of this strong education system at LLA is the type of population it attracts. At LLA, there is generally an equal split across demographics with 1/3 being White, 1/3 being Hispanic, and 1/3 being Black. In a segregated and divided city like Chicago, where we live in little silos where Black, White, and Hispanic people are seldom neighbors, and when the majority of CPS schools have at least one racial demographic representing 80+% of the population, LLA's racial mix should be our model, not one that we put at risk. We need to encourage multiculturalism, respect for our heritages, and

build connections across communities and we do not do that by defunding schools that bring us together and force us back to our highly segregated neighborhoods.

And we should be clear on our expectations, if we defund the language education program at LLA and limit language instruction to less time than it currently is, we will not have an offering that people see as desirable to travel for. We will lose LLA's beneficial demographic mix and enrollment and education will suffer. We will increase segregation in our city. All undesirable outcomes.

This is my broader concern about defunding language at LLA. Chicago public schools have seen enrollment decline from 400k+ students in 2011-2012 to ~320k students now. That's a ~20% decline in just over 10 years. Parents are telling us they don't like the education we provide. When my eldest child was finishing kindergarten, my family moved from Pasadena, CA to Chicago. My daughter was enrolled in a French immersion public school in Altadena (a city with a population of 42k) and I had taken French immersion in a public school growing up (in a city with a population of 60k). LLA was the closest we could come to attending a French immersion program in Chicago Public Schools and so we had essentially decided it was LLA or the suburbs for our children. It's remarkable that cities with only 2-3% of the population of Chicago can offer French immersion programs, yet Chicago, an international city and a sister city to Paris, cannot. How many more families will face decisions like mine, and now decide to leave the city because we do not offer education opportunities available elsewhere?

13 Regarding the new CPS budget and its affect on LaSalle Language Academy. Please save our World Language Program!

My daughter attends LLA and is excelling at learning a second language.

CPS new budget allocation DISPROPORTIONATELY impacts 100% of LaSalle Language Academy's unique, diverse student pop. Does not meet our needs as pledged: decimates 50yr world language program AND HURTS our chances of progressing on school's CIWP.

60% of our students come from all over the city and even considering the entire student body, more than half reside in neighborhoods that CPS classifies as Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3. Opportunity Index doesn't reflect this.

Based on benchmarks assessed by BoE 4/17: 1) LaSalle's diversity mirrors that of the city of Chicago, 2) Our WL program serves 100% of our student population and 3) It has a proven track record of prepping students for HS graduation success and college readiness.

Thank you.

14 Good afternoon, I'm going to keep this short and to the point,

The goal of better serving students and families who are facing greater financial hardships and inequities is one that CPS should be pursuing, however targeting the budget at Magnet schools like LaSalle Language Academy (LLA) is not the best way to redistribute funds.

Schools like LLA are some of the most diverse schools in Chicago. Our school serves students from all across the city with not only racial diversity (36.3% African American,

33.6% Caucasian, 18% Hispanic, 6.4% Asian, and 5.6% Multi-racial) but also socioeconomic (31% students qualify for school fee waivers 52.5% of students come from neighborhoods CPS classifies as Tier 1, 2, 3)

Our language program is for every student at the school and is a daily 1hr class, removing this budget will dramatically change the culture and the purpose of LLA. This budget cut would eliminate funding for this entire key program overnight.

Furthermore, our student body is drawn from the entire city of Chicago, yet using the proposed opportunity Index for funding based on location of the school will negatively affect funding for all students at our school. The school's location does not reflect the makeup of our student population, nor of their diverse background or needs.

Finally, all of this is not just representation for the sake of representation, our school and others like it also delivers results for all of its students. We are also a school where all students and families have chosen to be at this school and that comes with a certain level of commitment, and sacrifice for some of our families with travel time, many of our students have lost access to school buses. Whilst the need for funding all of our schools is important, I am asking that you don't target some of our most diverse schools that already provide great results for all of their students, regardless of racial and socioeconomic background.

Thank you

15 To say I am disappointed with the current changes to the CPS budget would be an understatement. The proposed cuts are disheartening. I believe all children deserve a chance to have a well rounded education but, the changes being made to the budget will prove to harm many students. It seems that certain selective enrollment schools will suffer drastically under the "new equity funding formula" which should not be the case. Maintain the schools as they are. Don't let our children become collateral damage in your sad attempt to rectify an extremely broken system. The additional teachers, aids, interventionists, etc. available at our schools need to remain. These have helped our students tremendously and will continue to help them with growth and development. As a parent of a kindergarten student, when selecting an educational institution for my son it was important for my child to have opportunities in and outside of the classroom. Please reevaluate your decision to remove classical funding and additional support to these schools. Sincerely, a concerned parent.

16 What is the logic behind the new budget allocations? The new budget allocations were supposed to ensure CPS money was more fairly distributed across schools but all schools seemed to be losing critical resources (more than before). How will this issue get resolved as it will have major negative impacts across CPS?

17 April 25, 2024
REINSTATE TRANSPORTATION FOR 5,500 CHILDREN
Dear CPS Board Member and CEO Pedro Martinez,
I am totally disappointed that the Board of Education made a decision to cut transportation without any reasonable notice to over 5,500 children majority 85% low income and majority African American and Latino children. Our children were lured/recruited/ marketed to attend the magnet and selective enrollment school and with only a week or two weeks notice the transportation was cut. CPS Parents from Buses has done everything CPS has asked us to do. We even got meetings with Secretary of State, State Legislators, Alderman and the Mayor's Office. When are you going to help our children and families.

Why are over 650 buses roaming around the City with majority empty seats? CPS blamed the bus driver shortage but what is really a shortage is CPS effort to figure hubs to take general populations so that CPS could keep with the 60 minutes guidelines for the children with disabilities.

My grandson has been at his schools since he was four years old. He loves his schools. He loves the diversity. I understand the CPS Board want to reinvest in neighborhood schools. I totally support that but our children were not given a transition. If we knew that CPS was going to cut transportation; it would have effected our decision about which school my grandson would attend. He is one of the 5,500 children that are having to leave their beloved schools or having long difficult unstable transportation every day to get to and back to school.

Why can't CPS fill those empty seats on the school buses and take our children hubs like other schools and parks? CEO Martinez will you meet with us on Tuesday, May 7 at 2:00 pm?

Sincerely,
A concern grandparent

18 I am the LSC Chairman and also a proud parent of a Poe Classical Elementary School student. We have not heard if we continue to be a Classical school, if so, as promised, why aren't we getting the \$1000 per student? These are major funds that are missing from our budget!!! We are in a deficit and it was said by the CEO that we would not lose anything???

19 Why are PSRP not allowed to be part of the BOG/LSCs , like a regular LSC does.

20 You say that you aren't closing selective enrollment schools, yet you already closed selective enrollment schools to many students last year when you cut busing to them. You say that it is the admissions process that is making them segregated? How about the lack of busing? How does it make any difference if you are able to reexamine the admissions process to these schools if students cannot physically get to these schools anyway because CPS cut busing? For students whose parents can't afford to quit their job to take their kids to school each day, it's not going to make a difference whether or not you make the admissions process more equitable if they can't accept the offer once they get in because CPS cut busing and their families can't afford to get them there.

You say that "Low-income students make up nearly 70% of the district population, yet they only make up 30-40% of students in selective schools." Cutting busing decreases the number of low-income students at these schools and makes them less diverse. You should be just as concerned about the bus cuts as you are about the admissions process.

You also say, "These schools are well-enrolled." Let's think about this for a second. Many students from low-income families had to or will have to leave these schools because CPS canceled busing for them. But the spot doesn't remain empty - another family with the means and money to get their kid to that school swoops in and takes the place of the student from a low-income family. Soon these schools become even less diverse, and the percentage of students from low-income families dips even lower. It's not rocket science. How is it that the reinstatement of busing still is not a priority for this board? On the exit survey when a student leaves a school, lack of busing isn't even an option for them to select. Do you even want this data?

My final question is this: I hear you say so much about transparency and community engagement, yet in the past year, we have witnessed some of the most opaque decision making ever. Why is there a refusal to release the budgets publicly in April as in previous years? Why are the budget formulas and those used for opportunity index calculation not shared? Listing categories on a PowerPoint slide is not a formula. Why are predominantly Black schools like Bronzeville Classical needing to look into fundraising just to be able to afford paper for their copiers now?

The cancellation of busing is just one example of how the opacity of decision making and budget management is hurting CPS students. Let kids on those nearly empty buses that are running all over the city now at hubs before students with IEPs so you don't increase their travel times, and release the budgets and formulas.

CPS Parents for Buses are hosting a forum for school board candidates this Sunday at 8pm. You all are welcome to join. Thank you.

Erin Schubert
CPS Parents for Buses

21	Please release budget for each school. At CPS's 5-year strategic plan discussion meeting hosted virtually on 4/20/24, almost all the attendees there said their school budget got cut. The CPS staff, after hearing the comments and the feedback at the meeting, emphasized that the overall CPS budget remains the same. Where did the extra \$\$ (from the cut of those schools) go? Please publish the data.
22	The proposed budget that defunds selective enrollment elementary schools is unjust. It shifts money away from schools with high enrollment to schools with lower enrollment which is unconscionable. This budget formula adversely impacts the quality of education for all CPS students in selective enrollment elementary schools - all races and ethnicities, including Black, Hispanic, and Asian. School funding should revert back to an enrollment based approach so that funds are where the student are.
23	Despite CPS' claims that schools would not bear the brunt of budget cuts, the two schools my children attend (one SEES and one magnet elementary) will be cutting staff positions and utilizing all available flexible funds to keep critical positions open. CPS is taking funding from selective enrollment schools and magnet schools to help properly fund neighborhood schools rather than seek additional funding to ensure ALL schools are properly funded to serve all of Chicago's youth. To dismantle high performing schools to help neighborhood schools is inappropriate and pits parents and communities against each other.
24	If there are not enough school buses for selective enrollment schools, has CPS considered using private school bus services like the ZUM app used in other states to help relieve the school bus shortages to solve the same problem in Chicago. It's worth a try.
25	Selective enrollment schools remain critical to meet the unique academic and social needs of all Chicago students. Bored students are not happy students. There may be a higher proportion of neurodiverse learners in selective schools, whose unique approach to social situations may put them at increased risk of bullying in neighborhood schools. If we want to integrate neighborhoods and redistribute resources across different neighborhoods in the city, why not relocate selective enrollment schools to a wider range of neighborhoods?

	Why does Lincoln Park have the top notch selective enrollment schools of Skinner North and Walter Payton alongside their excellent neighborhood schools? Why not relocate the selective enrollment teachers and programming to a different neighborhood?
26	You are robbing my kids of an education that can support their growth . By cutting the buss and now the cuts in budget you have declared a war against kids that have a capacity of filling your shoes .
27	How much of the CPS Budget Deficit is due to CTPF, to funding SE schools vs neighborhood schools, to loss of enrollment, and/or due to overspending/discretionary spending? Didn't and shouldnt have the loss of spending on public school buses/drivers help the deficit? How much is the budget inflated? What was the Budget vs Actual Spending in the past year?
28	Dear School Board, My name is xxx and I go to LaSalle Language Academy. I am nine and in the fourth grade. I am currently enjoying my school and forever will. I am writing to you because of an obvious problem. Money. LaSalle's low budget is troubling our delightful staff. When our magnet line was cut, it put our World Language teachers at risk of being cut, too. Our World Language teachers have impacted our school in numerous excellent ways. I, for one, take French, and every year I enter the Grand Concours, a national Frnch competition, and I always get awards. My two French teachers have taught me so much over the course of my 4 years as a student (I entered LaSalle in 1st grade). It would be a terrible loss to see them go. I came to LaSalle because of its excellent French program, and I was - and still am - excited to try my hardest to learn as much French as possible. I know all my friends love their language teachers as much as I do, too. If we lost our language programs, that would defeat the purpose of why hundreds of kids went to LaSalle. Our school would never be the same again. Thank you for reading my letter about the heartbreaking problem that would destroy my favorite part of LaSalle Language Academy. Sincerely, XXX
29	CPS needs to release their financial statements. The public needs to see data, not only words but numbers.
30	School budgets should be shared as they were in past years. The minimum 10 classroom teacher rule is fine, but elementary schools that are both neighborhood and selective enrollment are receiving fewer than one teacher per classroom unless they have very high enrollment, since they really need minimum 18 core classroom teachers (two sets of k-8)
31	Bring back the transportation for selective enrollment and magnets. You are killing these schools.
32	DO NOT CUT FUNDING FOR SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT OR MAGNET SCHOOLS AND BRING BACK SCHOOL BUSES.
33	As a CPS employee and a full-time working parent, I have not felt supported in either side. While working in the city and doing the best I can for the families I serve, I am constantly left feeling like my own children are getting shortchanged. When I accepted my child to receive the opportunity to get an options education, I assumed all the conditions were guaranteed until my child finishes their 8th grade year, including busing. It's been a real struggle to maintain my commitment to work while juggling drop off/pick up for my own child, too. I no longer have the extra 30 minutes every morning at work to meet with my students because I have to drop off my own child at school. I run out when the school day ends most days of the week to pick up my child. This prohibits me from getting involved in extracurricular activities to enrich my students' school experiences. Why should I be in this predicament? I understand that my struggles are no where near as dire as some other families, but it is a struggle that impacts my loved ones and my

community. When will the playing field be evened out for the city's employees and their families? We do not have the option to move out of the city to get our children the educational opportunities they deserve. We don't get paid enough to provide private education to our children in the city. Just as I have strived to serve my students and my school community over the years, I need my employer to have my back and provide my children the education they deserve.

34 It was great to hear that Pedro Martinez is still searching for transportation solutions, but for everything he's announced you have still not restored bussing to a single student.

35 May 17 is the 70 years anniversary of Brown v. Board of education decision and it kicks off years of commemoration by inviting CPS students to interview the impacted group age 76-84. I am the founding president of the global committee commemorating kings days, we were chartered in 1984. Goal is to allow CPS students the opportunity to interview the impacted group to gain more information and first hand experiences. I believe students would be very excited to learn more about this decision and growing up in the days of segregation laws. I think students are able to grasp and understand and add to the conversation important topics and ideas.

ATTACHMENTS

Good evening President Jianan Shi and members of the board, CEO Martinez, and CeDo Chkoumbova,

Thank you for your leadership in our school district. We appreciate all that you do on behalf of our schools. We need your support to restore the needed funding to Peck Elementary STEM school. I am deeply concerned about the potential repercussions that the school year 24-25 budget cuts will have on the Peck community.

The funding reduction lacks fairness and is not aligned with the genuine needs of students at Peck. I am seeking your help to restore all budget cuts to our school so that we can continue to offer the families of Peck the numerous student, parent, and community programs they have come to rely on. Any kind of interruption to the current plan at Peck to provide an equitable learning experience for kids will create a disastrous outcome.

As a Title I School, we should be allocated a minimum of \$769,000 dollars from the federal government to provide supplemental programs and services to our students. Regrettably, these funds are not currently allocated within our existing budget framework, and I kindly request their reinstatement.

Under the new budget allotment, CPS schools are assigned one school counselor for every 450 students or less, regardless of school size. Due to Peck's enrollment nearing 800 students, I am requesting your support to have our current School Counseling Assistant position reinstated or to provide a second full time counselor to address the needs of our large school and the Preschool Branch that serves 200 students.

Peck has benefited from having a full time nurse for 16 years to address students' medical needs and well being. With this new budget, we are forced to cut this position in order to balance the budget. I am asking for your assistance in getting this allocation reinstated for our school or in finding a centrally funded nurse to serve our student population.

With the new budget, we will go from a 1.0 full time allocation to a 0.5 part time allocation of our Case Manager. This role is critical to supporting the increasing number of students who rely on specialized services. Additionally, Peck will open a new Cluster Program at our Preschool Branch next year which will require the expertise and time of a full time case manager. I am requesting your support in changing this allocation to more accurately reflect the needs of our school community.

We are forced to cut multiple Teacher Assistant positions in order to balance our budget. These individuals play a vital role in our classrooms by providing invaluable support to students, allowing teachers to give more individualized attention to students. Today, I am seeking your assistance in advocating for the reinstatement of these positions.

Peck was the first elementary school to receive the STEM certification at a national level. In order to balance our new budget, we are forced to cut one of our STEM specialist positions, directly impacting school programming and limiting student exposure to learning opportunities. I kindly request your assistance in advocating for the reinstatement of this position.

As a participant of the Community Schools Initiative (CSI), Peck has received \$150,000 a year to implement a diverse array of educational enrichment, intervention, and extracurricular initiatives catering to students, extending both pre and post-school hours. However, our CSI funds are projected not to be funded next year. Peck Elementary School is committed to sustainability, yet the substantial reductions in our budget jeopardize our ability to maintain basic necessities or offer before and after school programming.

With the projected discontinuation of CSI funds next year and considering our status as a Title 1 school, it's imperative that we match the needs of our diverse student population. Our aim is to stabilize funding at Peck to ensure continued educational excellence and support for all our students. It's crucial to emphasize that we are not requesting additional funds but rather advocating to retain the current allocation and positions that have sustained us in recent years. We have worked with and have a strong appreciation for the district's budget department team, however we need your support to restore the needed funding to Peck school for the following positions: a second school counselor, a full time nurse, a full time case manager, 3 teacher assistants, a STEM specialist, 0.10 senior security officer, and to reinstate \$150,000 in CSI funding.

Additionally, a large amount of non-payroll funds were cut from non-payroll lines as well as from after school buckets. We are asking for your support to reinstate these funds.

I want to thank you for your time and understanding. I appreciate the leadership that each of you bring to our district. I hope that you will understand our concerns and do what needs to be done at Peck school for our children and families.

CPS Board Meeting Remarks | April 25, 2024

Good afternoon, President Shi, CEO Martinez, and distinguished board members.

I am Ivette Esparza, the Director of Community Affairs and Advocacy at the Acero Charter Schools. I am a first-generation Latina college graduate proud to serve our community everyday.

I began my career at Acero Schools in 2017 as the Dean of Students & Culture at Acero Garcia High School, one of our campuses. From there, I collaborated with our network enrollment team as the High School Enrollment Lead, working directly with communities to recruit scholars and promote Acero high schools.

Acero Schools is a proud partner of UnidosUS, the largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization. Through this partnership, we offer Padres Comprometidos/Digital Skills 4 Life/Cultivando Mentas Brillantes programs, aimed at fostering strong school-parent connections, teaching digital skills, and understanding diverse learning styles. Additionally, we are launching Civics For All to bridge the civic engagement gap among our families. Since 2019, we've graduated over 500 parents from these initiatives. Furthermore, we facilitate the Escalera program under UnidosUS, a high school initiative empowering students to develop leadership skills, gain college and career insights, enhance financial literacy, and explore diverse career pathways.

We at Acero, are committed to collaborating in the CPS Strategic Plan and ask for you to listen to our parents/caregivers, partners, students, and staff. We both have one purpose: to provide the best education and resources to our students and families. So let's work together - not apart from each other.

Our charter schools matter, and I invite the Board to recognize the fantastic work at charter schools like our Acero Schools. Come visit a parent or student session and hear firsthand how our schools, students, and families matter to our community.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Dear Boar Members,

We have all seen the media reports that "CPS CEO Pedro Martinez emphasized that overall magnet and selective enrollment schools will not be hurt". The initial budgets provided to schools contradict this statement. How can CPS take schools doing well and that have proven outstanding growth post-Covid and then Defund these schools? These schools are choices for brown and black children throughout the city. Children from diverse backgrounds are thriving in these choice schools. Please fund the Magnet and Selective schools that are the pride of our school district.

I am all for improving neighborhood schools which need assistance. But please do not dismantle existing programs that have proven successful.

Lasalle Language Academy (LLA) World Language program: Budget Gap

The budget line item funding the World Language magnet program is missing from the allocated budget. This is a shock to our community. Our principal and LSC are left to attempt, in a very limited time window, how to leverage remaining resources to meet the needs of all our students. The world language program is fully integrated into every aspect of the curriculum at LaSalle. Stripping the language piece away will have devastating consequences to the success of our school.

In terms of benchmarks for programs recently assessed by the Board of Education, LLA is exceeding in all of those areas:

- 1) LaSalle's diversity mirrors that of the city of Chicago,
- 2) World Language (WL) program serves 100% of our student population and
- 3) It has a proven track record of preparing students for high school and college success.

Please recognize that a majority of students at LaSalle are students of color and more than half come from neighborhoods that CPS classifies as Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3 based on a variety of socioeconomic factors. The diversity of LaSalle's student population reflects that of Chicago: 36.3% African American, 33.6% Caucasian, 18% Hispanic, 6.4% Asian, and 5.6% Multi-racial (*data as of Feb 2023*).

Please, I ask that you respectfully re-evaluate the budget and restore the World Language funding to Lasalle Language Academy.

It's always surreal experience to be at schools that members of my family dropped out of. If you ask them, they'll admit to you that they made mistakes and poor decisions. They weren't alone.

They made mistakes, so did CPS. CPS made mistakes regarding a lack of transparency and budget accountability. History appears to be repeating itself once again. CPS is not being transparent about their new budget, school funding formula, and school-level financial projections for the future. Release those funding proposals, hold them up for accountability so the public can see how equitable they are.

There are a number of questions and unintended consequences. Under your new formula, do all white schools get a greater funding priority than diverse ones, because it sure seems that way. If you don't believe me, look at your March budget presentation, page 35, middle column, at the bottom. You need to answer for that and past discriminatory budget practices.

That presentation also focused on the report from Stanford and Harvard's Educational Opportunity Project. They claim not only did CPS have the highest post-pandemic recovery, but that our students are performing better now than before the pandemic. CPS can't stop talking about it, but you won't listen to me about the problems of the study. It took me 30 seconds of looking at their data and findings to realize they were grossly inaccurate. It was so obvious that I was worried that I made a mistake. Who am I? I'm just some kid from the Southside, and these are Harvard and Stanford. But when I asked other people to independently verify it, they couldn't disprove my findings. With just a basic understanding of mathematics, your bureaucrats should have known those results couldn't be trusted because the study also claimed that CPS students experience more than 2.5x more learning loss in the two years prior to the pandemic than from the pandemic.

With just a basic understanding of mathematics, your bureaucrats should have known the conclusions couldn't be trusted because Stanford also found that CPS students faced +2.5x more learning loss in the 2 years before the pandemic than between 2019 and 2022. You insult our teachers -all the hard work, all of the accomplishments, and all the real gains before the pandemic, this study failed to measure. It's wrong! These finds are inaccurate because of poor statistical modeling.

We're at a critical time and we need more T.L.C. TRANSPARENCY -release the budget formulas and projections. LEADERSHIP -recognize your power comes from the people and you have an obligation to be honest, nothing about us, without us. CHILD-CENTERED -solutions and accountability that focus on the educational experience of the child. If we aren't improving their future- particularly for our low-income students of color and those with disabilities, then we are doing it wrong.

Beyonce's net worth is \$800 million, CPS's budget is 12 Beyonce's but our students aren't getting Beyonce-level opportunities. Work with me, let's change that.

Chapter 5 Board Rules Comments submitted by Dr. Angel Alvarez 4/22/24

<https://www.cps.edu/sites/cps-policy-rules/proposed-policies-or-rule-changes-open-for-public-comment/>

Dear CPS Board:

Below are concerns and recommendations for the Chapter Five Rules' proposed modifications.

Sec. 5-4. Financial Oversight and Transparency.

An additional subsection should require financial transparency at the school level and public disclosure of proposed school budgets with sufficient time for LSC and public review. Significant funding disparities and misinformation are allowed to propagate because CPS has not been open about school-level budgeting decisions. Providing schools with little direction over the subsequent year funding prospects harms students by preventing schools from developing sustainable and long-term student-centered education. CPS has deviated from funding formulas in the past and harmed schools by giving little time to provide meaningful input. The Board has rightfully questioned the equity of school funding but has done so without transparency and accountability. We have a right to know how much funding is expected to be allocated to each school BEFOREHAND to ensure that these investments promote the educational experience for all students in a way that is both equitable and sustainable.

Sec. 5-5. Investment of School Funds.

These investments should be disclosed to bring accountability regarding their returns. There are plenty of people more intelligent than I am who could use their investing acumen for the public good.

Sec. 5-6. Lunchroom Receipts.

Sec. 5-7. Sale of Refreshments at Stadia.

First, I recognize you used the Latin plural of stadium, "stadia," rather than the more common "stadiums." I'm not as passionate about etymology and grammar, but if I were, I might earn more monies. The use of transporting monies via armored vehicles should be justified based on the amount needed to be deposited. Otherwise, this is another example of why we need vendor reform. If the money you collect could fill a sack with a dollar sign, then it makes sense to use an armored vehicle. However, paying more to transport cash than the amount to be deposited does make sense (just my two cents).

Sec. 5.9 Use of Roll-Over Funds.

Why is this section being eliminated? There should be a clear justification for removing a rule involving transparency and accountability.

Sec. 5-10. Reporting Fraud, Waste, Mismanagement; Whistle Blower Protection under the Illinois School Code.

I have raised concerns in the past about the importance of establishing clear protections for students and families who report misconduct within CPS. The current rule only offers protections for employees and LSC members. Policies should explicitly forbid actions against students, non-employee community members, or people no longer employed by CPS or serving the LSC. CPS must be clear that retaliation, in any form, is unacceptable and establish protection and investigatory safeguards for anyone who comes forward to report misconduct they experienced or have knowledge of. There is very little accountability for those that transgress the law regarding IEP accommodations, student records, or discriminatory practices.

Sec. 5-12. Non-Resident Pupils - Tuition.

This policy is needed to guard against residency fraud. However, the wording regarding non-resident pupils should be revised. "Pupils whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) do not reside within the limits of the City of Chicago AND who are staying in Chicago for the primary purpose of attending Chicago Public Schools shall be considered non-resident pupils." The "AND" (emphasis added) makes a two-part requirement that can easily be met by claiming unique circumstance to explain school enrollment is not the "primary" reason for their situation. Furthermore, CPS neglects to understand the economic incentives for families to manipulate the system. The value of the educational experience at some of our schools exceeds that provided by many private schools. Therefore, parents with significant financial resources and little scruples will cheat the system, knowing that if caught, the cost of an attorney and penalties will be significantly less than the >\$35k/year that many top private schools in Chicago charge. I shared my analysis and offered to help if CPS is willing to accept. Finally, District officials fail to understand that those who exploit poor oversight are benefiting from community resources without paying their fair share of taxes.

This policy also needs to take into consideration how to serve students that are homeless or in temporary housing situations. There is an important distinction between validating the residency of students and causing harm to vulnerable students.

Sec. 5-13. Foreign Pupils – Tuition.

This policy needs greater clarification for foreign students that are covered by non-F1 visas and those that are undocumented. Recent foreign migrants/new arrivals are unable to pay tuition, but those expenses should be accurately documented to request reimbursement from State and Federal funding sources.

Be well,
Dr. Angel Alvarez

Hello, I am William Guo (spelled G-U-O). Today, I stand before you to address a significant discrepancy between the reported and actual gains in student achievement, specifically from the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR), and the analysis provided by an independent study conducted by the Center for Education Policy Research from Harvard University and the Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University.

Upon independently analyzing the original data, I confirmed Dr. Angel Alvarez's conclusions and found alarming discrepancies.

The Chicago Public Schools' claim that not only are they the leader in COVID recovery among large school districts, but that students are performing better now than before the pandemic is not supported by the actual data. Let me highlight a noteworthy anomaly in the data: from 2022 to 2023, Black students purportedly gained nearly two years' worth of reading proficiency. That is an achievable goal with the correct investment and policy changes, but not an accurate finding. However, simple algebra would allow one to disprove the improbable claims being made by CPS. To believe the numbers from the Project would be to accept CPS students lost >2.5x more learning from 2017 to 2019 than they lost from the pandemic by 2022. CPS only reported the difference between two very specific time periods and ignored all other data that conflicted with their inflated claims.

Independently examining the raw data, as Dr. Alvarez and I have done, shows that students did improve from 2022 to 2023, but not to the extent claimed. A simple comparison of the Project data suggests CPS test scores decreased as CPS pre-pandemic spending increased. This too, is not supported by the actual IAR data. There are a number of technical problems that likely contributed to these inaccurate reports. We plan to prepare a publication to address them and suggest best practices. Cooperation from CPS would improve these outcomes and benefit the District and students by avoiding mistakes that stem from false assumptions.

The proposed budget is founded on these blatantly incorrect assumptions, and there is a pressing need for greater transparency regarding past expenditures and future projected funding. It is concerning that such gross errors in analysis are evident, raising questions about the accuracy and integrity of CPS leadership.

Our students deserve a curriculum and support systems that truly foster growth and development. It is essential to acknowledge the stark contrast between the promising projections and the more complicated reality.

In light of these findings, I urge this esteemed board to undertake a thorough review of its educational policies, budgetary practices, and data analysis procedures with Dr. Alvarez. We owe it to our students, parents, and the community to ensure that every decision we make is grounded in accurate information and serves the best interests of our learners.