

**May 29, 2025, Board Meeting Written Comments**  
**Received between Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> and Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup> Submitted via**  
**Written Comments Form**

1	I don't understand why members voted not to add an additional year to our charter schools. Lopez, thotakura and zacor are hypocrites. They talk so much of protecting but not willing to add additional year this is why they are put by the mayor
2	I think its better for Haugan to go to Aspira because there is not a lot of room here in and there is a lot kids that teachers stress a lot more to keep up with them and they have to put some of the kids in other classes that they probably dont belong in because of their level and maybe even struggle so if they turn Aspira into Haugan there would be more room for the kids and they would be able to learn at their level. I think they should do that because that would be more helpful for everyone in my opinion even if they might have a hard time getting used to it but more . And this building was promised to the students 20 years ago and it time to keep that promise because its the kids school building and home for us now a lot of years here and we deserve to keep it .
3	My name is [REDACTED]. I'm an 8th grader here at Haugan and I'm writing this because Haugan is overcrowded because of the amount of kids that there are here in this school. We don't have enough security to protect all of the students here we have at Haugan that's why we need the Aspira middle school building to help out Haugan with the amount of students we have here. We don't have lots of bathrooms here for all the students and when students try to switch classes the hallways are always full. We always have to move next to the wall and even be on the wall so other students can go through the halls. We don't have enough furniture for any new students here and the classes are overcrowded because we have at least 30 students in each classroom and we don't have enough desks or even chairs for students. We were promised this building 20 years ago and it's time to fulfill that promise. It is unfair for this building to be given to another school because of politics and the game of politics that the students are not a part of. This building was constructed with the encouragement of community stakeholders and the community of Albany Park deserves its students to get the best education. Please allow this building to be shared with North River and have the Haugan Middle School moved to Aspira and call it Haugan as it was made for Haugan to begin with. Please let us students get the best we deserve and not make us feel like we do not have a voice in this. WE, the students should be the ones who have the loudest voices and it is about our future and not the grown up who are playing political games.  Thank you for your consideration.
4	Hi my name is [REDACTED] I am a student at Haugan Elementary. I am writing this paragraph because Haugan deserves to co-own Apira Haugan and share the building with North River Elementary. This building was promised to Haugan twenty years ago and we have seen it being used by two other schools and not Haugan itself. Haugan over the years has become overpopulated. We want to make this change because students deserve to have enough space to learn and be productive. Haugan has become so overcrowded that we have run out of actual classrooms and we have transitioned some closets and storage rooms into classrooms. This situation is not fair for us. We students at Haugan are paying the price for the politics that the grown ups are playing with us. This is unfair for not only the teachers who are dedicated to provide quality education to us, but it is unfair for the community, parents and especially the students who show up to learn everyday. Please consider our request to transfer the Haugan Middle School to the Aspira building. This promise is long overdue and we deserve to have that building, even if it is being shared with North River.  Thank you.
5	Hi My Name Is [REDACTED]. I am a student at Haugan Elementary. I think Haugan does need more space because of the population of the students, So what i'm trying to say is that Haugan is overcrowded, So please don't give Aspira Haugan to other people, Because then we will not have more space and students have to travel far to get to their schools.
6	As we all know Aspira is closing down and there is going to be empty space for another school to use. Now as the students of Haugan we believe that the free space should go to us because over here at Haugan we are starting to get really overcrowded. For example a storage room on the

	<p>third floor is slowly being cleared out to make room for another class next year. If we do not get this extra space, classrooms next year may be much bigger. Instead of 30 students per class we may have 40 students per class. This will make it harder for everyone as it may be harder for teachers to teach with such a big class, and there may not be enough learning material for every student. I truly believe that Haugan will put this space to good use, so please help Haugan out and give us this extra space.</p>
7	<p>I truly believe that Haugan should utilize the space that Aspira will give. I have been noticing that Haugan's student population has been increasing and I'm glad to see that. The problem is that there is limited space now and there can really be a positive effect if Haugan can use that space. If we do not receive that space, the students in each classroom would then increase by 35-40 students. This would make teacher's jobs even more difficult due to them teaching/monitoring a big amount of students all at once. This is just one reason out of multiple that show why Haugan should be allowed to use this space. Haugan is an amazing school and I would love to see it grow even more.</p>
8	<p>In my humble opinion I think that Haugan Elementary should get the other side of Aspira because Haugan is using every room available and is unsafe when E.L.S.A Takes place. This is also dangerous because some of these rooms were meant to be used for storage and have exposed pipes that are also hazards and since Haugan is being over populated they are forced to use those dangerous rooms. Another reason why Haugan needs this place in the building is because Haugan has AMAZING success rates of getting into great schools like Northside College Prep, Lane Tech, Von Stuben, and more! My Fourth reason why I think that Haugan deserves This half of the building is because When students what to join After school but a ton of student get waitlisted because there is no space at all.</p>
9	<p>Guest teachers (substitutes) need a living wage. Most substitutes earn less than \$25,000. Restore the monthly incentives. Also, the vaccine program is inadequate.</p>
10	<p>To whom it may concern,  I am a resident of Albany Park and a student at Haugan. I am writing with concern about the Aspira Middle school. Which is located at 3729 W Leland. This building is being given to a different school, North River. We students at Haugan would like part of this school to be shared with the Haugan community. We have seen an increase in students who have been attending Haugan. As the years pass by and more and more people come to Chicago. There will be an increase in the number of students at Haugan year by year. We have already seen signs of this issue such as running out of space to install new classrooms. This has led to classes being packed and full of students, while not having the amount of room and teachers needed. It is due to these reasons that us students at Haugan believe that we should have part use of the Aspira building. This will help us greatly as it can house more students as more come in. The building of Aspira could provide a place where we can send students and teachers. This will help alleviate the packed classrooms of Haugan. Which will lead to less packed hallways and more space. This extra space can make sure that teachers aren't being overwhelmed by the great amount of kids they will have to teach. This will help guarantee that each and every student can build a personal one on one relationship with each student. This could lead to better performances on tests and higher understanding of the courses they are taking. With these requests please consider having North River share the school of Aspira with Haugan.</p>
11	<p>I'm a CPS substitute teacher and a graduate student at DePaul, working toward my master's in elementary education. I'm writing to ask the Board to reconsider how substitute teacher pay is structured.</p> <p>Right now, CPS offers a tiered pay system, but unless you've already completed a degree in education, you're locked into the base rate. That leaves out people like me: future educators who are already working in CPS schools while also investing time, energy, and money into becoming certified CPS teachers.</p> <p>At \$140 a day, I'm barely scraping by. Between rent, food, and tuition, it's incredibly hard to stay afloat. I'm doing this work because I believe in public education and I believe in this district. But it's tough to feel valued when the system doesn't recognize the work I'm already doing or the</p>

commitment I'm making. If we want to keep passionate, driven educators in CPS, we need to support them while they're preparing, not just after the degree is done.

Please consider allowing education students like me to qualify for the higher daily rate. It would make a real difference, and it would send a message that CPS values the people working toward becoming its next generation of teachers.

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12 My name is Markeyla Henton. I am a former educator and the parent of two scholars at William E. Ray Elementary School in Hyde Park. I would like to submit my concerns on school nurse policy and enter a comment on Section 704. 9. I am dismayed that there are more policies and rules concerning an active shooter than there are about when a student should be sent to the nurse. While the instances should be common sense, I would like to present proof that the lack of protocol is creating a deficit in the schools in our city.

On February 11th, my son came out of the building crying. He had done so many days before as a result of fighting a young boy in his class. We chatted, he calmed down and we went home. Hours later, my son began crying and screaming saying his head hurt. I went to console him only to find he had a large knot on his head. My son has an afro on his head and I couldn't see the knot until I parted his hair. As I stared at the bump, I asked, "What happened?" My son had been home with me for nearly four hours and I didn't know he was injured. My son explained that the same boy who had choked him, kissed him on the cheek, and punched him prior had pushed him into a wall resulting in the knot. During a consequential parent conference, it was revealed that the attendant asked him, a 6-year old, if he wanted to go to the nurse or to recess. No one checked my son for a concussion. He hit his head. He complained of a headache and yet no one engaged the nurse or any other medical professional in the building because "boys fight."

The consensus from the leadership at Ray Elementary school is that boys rough house and fight. The leaders accepted the violence that sent my son home crying and ultimately led to a documented injury as "normal." While I am furious at the assumption that our young boys are predetermined to be violent, I am more so upset that there was no protocol that I could lean on for how my son dealt with a headache for hours without me knowing.

My story could have been a tragedy ending in death. Thank God it is not. But, my story is not unique. My son escaped a concussion, but the reality of him having a head injury is a serious matter. Teachers and school staff should not ask a child if they want to be seen by a nurse. If the standards of Section 704.9 are to be maintained, any child who injures their head and complains of a headache should be assessed. But, my son was not. I have lost so much sleep over because there are no clear guidelines that require CPS leaders to send students to the nurse.

I have searched. There are clear definitions for the nurses roles, clear guidelines on how they administer medication and even clear restrictions on what they can do in the event of an injury. There is not a protocol on when they should be engaged. The school staff failed to comply with section 704.9. However, Chicago Public Schools has failed to create measures that hold staff and teachers to engaging medical professionals.

I understand the nuances of nurse availability. I understand how quickly a child can go from crying to laughing and playing. I also understand how quickly an innocent accident can tragically turn the tide of a child's life. No staff should have to bear the weight of deciding if it's the right time to get a nurse. Staff should be supported by policy in their decision-making. Policies help us to feel safe. Nurses are in the building for a reason. Staff, students and parents should be clear on when the medical professionals in the building will be engaged.

The principal at Ray looked at me and said "Black woman to Black woman you went hard on me." And I want to be as difficult as I have to be to every leader I can so that students, staff and parents can trust that their children will not come home injured or otherwise.

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| ATTACHMENTS

## Dr. Angel Alvarez, CPS Board Written Public Comments 5/29/2025

Dear CEO Martinez and CPS Board:

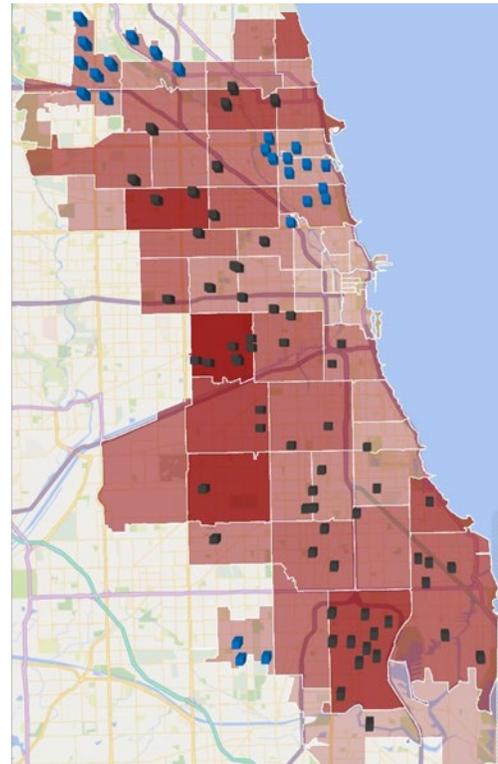
The financial projections being provided to you do not accurately reflect the serious long-term problems the District faces. I implore you to demand long-term financial projections for each school under realistic assumptions and share those results with the public.

I served on the CPS Parent Leadership Council in 2022 and lead the committees on Special Education & Transportation, Budget, and Evaluations & Accountability. We raised serious concerns that CPS will fail to properly transport students with disabilities and continue to pay more to transport fewer students. We shared concerns about the unsustainable budget practices and inaccurate cost estimates the district continually exceeds. We raised concerns over the accuracy and utility of many assessments that fail to identify effective interventions. Despite the seriousness of our concerns, the Council was disbanded in 2023 when we escalated our questions to CPS leadership.

The problems warned about have worsened. In January of 2021, I shared with the Board my predictive analysis of the schools that were going to experience the greatest learning loss ([January 27, 2021 Alvarez Board Comments, p54-56](#)). The impact of the pandemic on these students was exacerbated by the poor response by the City's public health officials that failed to allocate resources based on risk.

These inequities are not new. However, despite CPS's large budget increase, we do not see a closing of the achievement gap. Large disparities persist in the schools I identified, despite millions of additional investments. We need to be transparent with the specific resources each school received over the past several years so we can identify the most effective interventions. CPS is not making these records available.

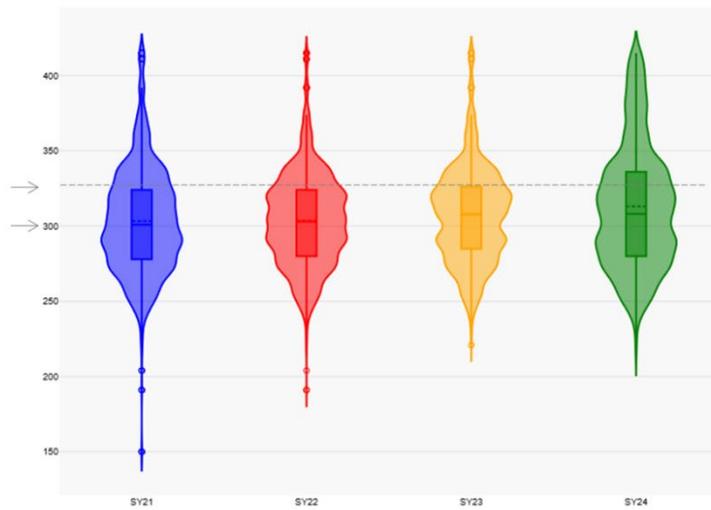
My analysis highlights the impact of the district's poor planning and lack of accountability regarding resource allocation. The gap in proficiency increases the longer students are in CPS. These gaps are often masked by changes in approach that mask how behind some students are. For example, scores on the CPS Algebra exit exam have increased over the years. However,



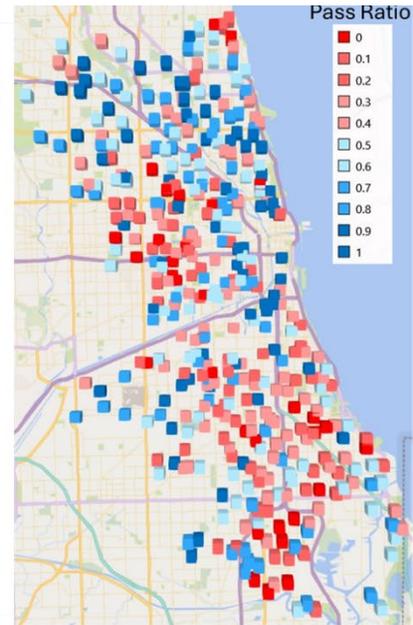
Alvarez analysis of schools with greatest risk of pandemic-related learning loss (black). Schools at greatest risk had the highest concentration in zip codes with the highest number of COVID deaths. (Shared 1/27/2021)

schools administer multiple practice exams, which can yield higher scores on that specific test because of familiarity but not improve actual subject skills.

CPS SY21-SY24 Algebra Exit Exam Results



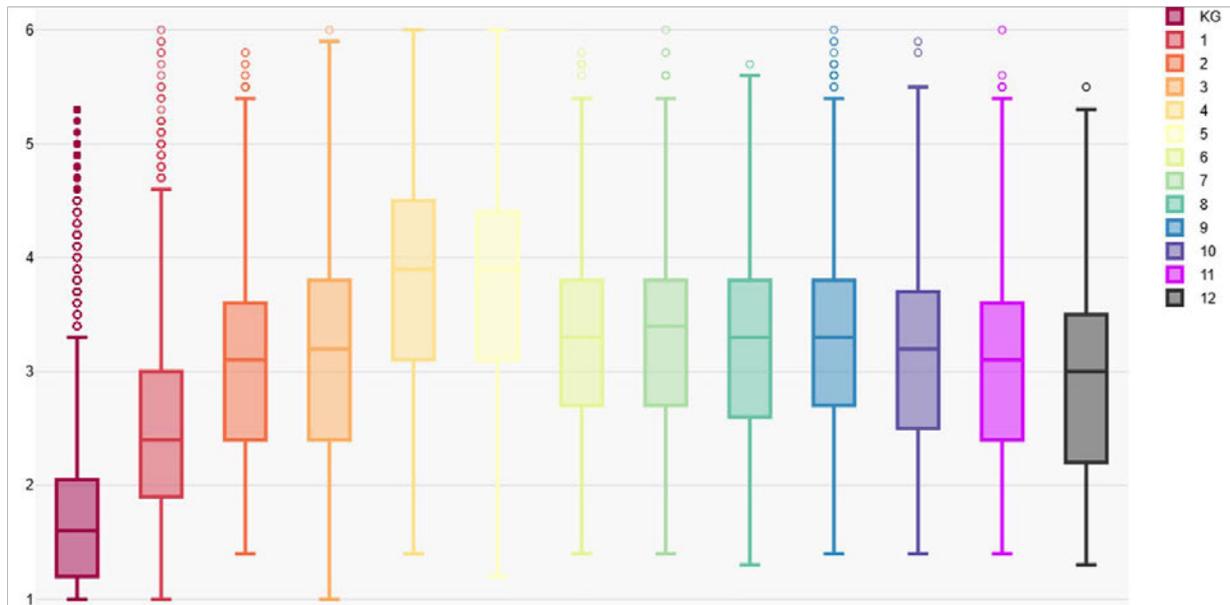
Pass = 300, High Pass = 328



Alvarez analysis shows Algebra exit exams scores have increased, but this may be due to schools implementing multiple practice exams. There are many schools on the South and West sides of the city that have a zero percent pass rate.

Latino student gains have lagged and English proficiency rates for English language learners begins to decline after the 4th grade. This is because of racially discriminatory manner in which school budgets are allocated.

CPS English Proficiency Results



Alvarez analysis of English proficiency scores by grade for CPS English language learners reveals inadequate instruction for students beyond the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

Multiple equity initiatives had unintended consequences of exacerbating inequities. There will also be significant unintended consequences with the legislation that aims to reduce testing and selective enrollment school seats.

We need school-level funding transparency and LSC empowerment. CPS acknowledged the funding was discriminatory yet still utilizes new funding metrics that inappropriately perpetuate racism.

I was elected president of the CPS Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) Family Advisory Board. I take this opportunity to serve as an honor and hope we can implement changes that empower our students and families to reach their potential. In the past, councils have failed due to unclear priorities, a lack of structure, being given misleading information, gatekeeping, and meetings that are difficult to schedule and unexpectedly canceled. When the Parent Leadership Council began to make progress in addressing problems that were hurting students, the Council was dissolved by CPS leadership. I hope the OSD Family Advisor Board does not suffer the same fate as the PLC. However, our ultimate success will depend on CPS Board members and the new person you put in charge to lead us. This person should have three basic qualifications:

1. A proven track record of managing a large and diverse urban district, because our more than 320,000 students deserve someone who knows what they are doing with a \$10 billion budget.
2. Proven experience of reducing large budget deficits and effectively managing resources, because we need someone who can do more with less.
3. Evidence of improving outcomes for all students with transparent data to confirm those results, because CPS has failed to make significant gains for our students that are low income, Black, Latino, English language learners, and those with disabilities despite large financial investments.

The names being floated have not demonstrated these needed skills. I want to work with you to solve these problems and advocate for our students. The years of reporting and policy recommendations show I am informed and committed. I will continue to fight for our students, and I hope you will fight with me moving forward.

Finally, I want to take the moment to again thank the Board for your continued service and to wish CEO Martinez the best. Although we have disagreed in many areas, these disagreements were generally about strategy and not objectives. I know where your heart is, and I will keep you and your family in my thoughts and prayers.

Thank you so much for your service.

Dr. Angel Alvarez

email:

phone:

Original 2 minute address to Chicago BOE 5/29:

My name is Paul DeRonne and I've taught Math and Engineering at Lindblom for 9 years.

Educating students to use technology is fundamental and we need to be thoughtful about how to both implement and restrict access to technologies.

I have 5 things to bring to your attention and I will follow up with an email. The first three items are about the misalignment between IL SOPPA law and CPS policy and implementation. SOPPA is the Student Online Personal Protection Act.

- 1) In the Board's SOPPA policy, Ed Tech operators are prohibited from using persistent unique identifiers for students. The state law states the same, EXCEPT in furtherance of k-12 school purposes. That exception line from state law is missing from the board's policy.
- 2) The board's policy requires that operators become VENDORS with CPS. There are lots of EdTech providers that aren't trying to sell anything and do not want to go through that onerous process. Other districts do not require this and neither does the state law.
- 3) There are certain websites and platforms that the state law defines as "General Audience". These are professional platforms not primarily for K-12 purposes and are exempted from state SOPPA law, even if login credentials are needed. But CPS blocks these platforms too!
- 4) Item 4 is about CPS's firewall which is used to block images and webpages. This is a good thing generally, but some websites that teachers use are still blocked and it can take months to unblock them... Another example is wikipedia's images and formulas do not load. We need better image blocking and a faster process to white-list websites.

The first four items were about providing access to great tools (so students can be doing, making, building) we also need to restrict certain technologies.

- 5) There should be a district wide, 8am to 3pm student cellphone ban. And this change will need to be followed up with money for implementation.

Thank you for your time. I'll send you all an email with these points and further details.

Expanded and detailed version of Paul DeRonnies 2 minute address to the Chicago BOE.

It's important to note the first four items here do not cost any money, and will lead to better outcomes for students. These are policies the board can change immediately which will have an impact on technology use in the district.

- 1) The board's SOPPA policy 604.10 section III, Operator Requirements, Subsection: b, 2 does not align with (105 ILCS 85/10) Operator Prohibitions subsection 2. Operators are allowed under state law to use persistent unique identifiers and amass a profile *IN FURTHERANCE OF K-12 SCHOOL PURPOSES*. This italicized line is missing from the Board's SOPPA policy.
- 2) Some examples of free ed-tech software my colleagues would use if they could:
  - a) [code.org](http://code.org) (a new contract with this organization is currently in the works)
  - b) [scratch.mit.edu](http://scratch.mit.edu)
  - c) Canvas LMS
  - d) Canvas Studio
  - e) TinkerCAD
  - f) Womp
  - g) Cisco Net Academy

The board's vendor process includes establishing various levels of insurance, business references, financial information, and involves the Procurement department which is not related to technology use in the classroom.

- 3) Examples of "general audience" platforms that teachers would use if available:
  - a) Autodesk Fusion 360
  - b) Revit
  - c) Github
  - d) Amazon web services
  - e) Pixlr
- 4) CPS uses a firewall to block websites and images from loading. The process to unblock websites takes months and does not work for most teachers' planning timelines. There currently isn't a process to unblock wikipedia's images. Teachers should be notified if future websites will be blocked.
- 5) The cellphone ban will be controversial, but is necessary to free student's minds from social media and endless feeds. We do not want our students learning to emotionally react to a 15 second video and then move on to the next one. School level policy may be enough, but a larger national reckoning is underway with [New York](#), [Oklahoma](#), [Virginia](#), [North Dakota](#) implementing Bell-to-Bell bans soon, and [Governor Pritzker](#) is on board. [Los Angeles Unified](#) has a current cellphone ban. This new policy should be followed with funding to allow schools to implement safe storage away from students during the day. This is the only proposal here which will cost more money.