

**September 22, 2021 Board Meeting Written Comments  
Received between Monday, September 20<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>  
Submitted via Written Comments Form**

1	Please remove mask from our children. Mask during lunch is unethical our kids are not treated with respect . Stop this please.
2	Cyrus McCormick elementary school does not allowed students to go to the bathroom unless a teacher goes with them causing teachers to constanly denied the student to attend the bathroom. My 7 yr old daughter peed on her self because of this ridiculous rule. Students shouldnt have to wait till bathroom break to use the bathroom. If the school has a problem with students destroying the bathroom thats on the school, punishing the entired students body for this is riduculous . The younger students are now being buillied for this reason peeing on them self when is the school neglecting the students.
3	See attached.
4	Please help us to have school bus for my son. We are so difficult
5	Throughout the summer, CPS made a commitment to prioritize re-engaging and re-enrolling students. In fact, these reengagement efforts were part of a broader \$525 million “Moving Forward Together” plan. With all this emphasis on re-enrollment and engagement, I can’t understand why CPS has so actively worked to block my children from participating in school. I am the mother of three CPS students who were forcibly unenrolled from their neighborhood elementary school. Consistent with the CPS attendance policy that outlines considerations for excused absences, I informed the school that my children would be absent due to my concern for their safety and health as a result of high community spread of COVID-19 and the contagiousness of the Delta variant. Although I was in constant contact with school administration and my children’s teachers, by the fourth day of school, my children were all unenrolled and they were locked out of their CPS accounts. When I questioned the school about this, I was contacted by the school administration and asked to write a letter saying I would be homeschooling my children. Since this time, I have reached out on numerous occasions to the administration at my children’s school, the network chief, and the manager of attendance and truancy at CPS asking to see the policy that permits this action. No one is able to provide this for me. What has been represented to me is that my children were unenrolled from school because they were absent on the first day and this has been referred to as “did not arrive”. However, no CPS official has identified a policy that provides that any child can be unenrolled without due process—without notice and a hearing—for missing a single day of school. I have done my best to research this issue, and all of the statutes, regulations, and CPS policies I can find on this topic directly contradict the information that CPS has communicated to me so far. This is troubling to say the least. For example, a statute concerning the enrollment of pupils who are not of

compulsory school age provides for extensive due process before a student who is 17 years of age or older may be denied enrollment. The student may be unenrolled only if all of the following conditions are met: • the student is “absent without valid cause for 20% or more of the attendance days in the semester immediately prior to the current semester,” • the student and the parent are “given written notice warning that the student is subject to denial from enrollment for one semester unless the student is absent without valid cause less than 20% of the attendance days in the current semester,” • the student’s parents are “provided with the right to appeal the notice, as determined by the State Board of Education in accordance with due process,” • the student “is provided with attendance remediation services, including without limitation assessment, counseling, and support services,” and • the student “is absent without valid cause for 20% or more of the attendance days in the current semester.” 105 ILCS 5/26-2(c). If a 17-year-old (who is not of compulsory school age) who misses 20% of attendance days in the prior The administrative code also explicitly states that my daughters who are less than 7 years old are entitled to due process before being unenrolled, stating that: “A parent or guardian who receives notice of a school board’s intention to deny enrollment to a student for either of the reasons specified in Section 26-2(c) of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/26-2] may appeal the determination to exclude the student.” Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 1.242. The regulation continues: • Upon the request of the parent or guardian, the school board or a hearing officer appointed by the board shall hold a hearing to review the board’s determination. • The parent or guardian shall have the right to appear at the hearing and discuss the board’s determination to exclude the student with the board or its hearing officer. • If a hearing officer has been appointed by the board, he or she shall provide to the board a written summary of the evidence heard at the hearing. • After the hearing, if held by the board, or after the board’s receipt of the hearing officer’s written summary, the board may take the action it finds appropriate. • Any appeal requested by the parent or guardian must be heard and a final determination made under subsection (d) of this Section before the student may be denied enrollment under Section 26-2(c) of the School Code. Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 1.242. I have never received notice that the school board intended to unenroll my children. Instead, I was locked out of my children’s Aspen accounts without notice and informed by the school administration that my children were unenrolled. I asked to be shown the policy permitting such unenrollment, and instead of receiving such a policy, all I have received is pressure to sign a statement saying that I am choosing to homeschool my children, which I have made clear is not what I intend. As for my oldest child (8 years old) who is subject to compulsory school attendance, CPS’s own publicly available policies make clear that she does not meet the criteria for unenrollment. Section 703.1(VII)(D)(1) of the Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual provides that “Students may not be removed from enrollment solely because of excessive unexcused absences, i.e., truancy, (for example, 20 consecutive unexcused absences).” If students cannot be unenrolled solely because of missing 20 consecutive days of school, how can they be unenrolled solely for missing the first day of school? Even students with “excessive absences” may be removed from enrollment only if “their whereabouts cannot be determined,” which is not the case here. CPS Policy Manual §703.1(VII)(D)(2). As far as I can tell, by unenrolling my children from school, CPS is currently violating Illinois statutes, Illinois administrative codes, and its own procedures—and depriving me and my children of our right to due process. I bring this to the Board’s attention today because I am not alone in having this happen to my children. I shared my story on social media and parents from across the city have been reaching out to me to tell me their version of this same story that resulted in their children being unenrolled from a CPS school. Our children have a right to a safe public education, and they are currently being deprived of that right.

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6

If you can please check into William Penn Nixon School staff. Make sure they are following protocols in regards to covid 19 guidelines. Have more support in staff for our children and have the opportunity to do remotely learning at home for the sake of the health of our children please. Give us that option to the parents that can stay home with our children 🙏🙏

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7

See attached comments

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# ATTACHMENTS

I am a CPS parent of two students, and during the first week of school all families were sent this [attestation form](#) that they had to sign where they “acknowledge and agree that my child will not be permitted to enter” a school if they met any of these six criteria for quarantine.

Parents signed off, and then what happened after that was confusing, chaotic, and inconsistent. This is a copy of the [CPS flowchart](#) of the contact tracing process, pieced together by Lauren Bryant and Cassie Walker Burke for Chalkbeat Chicago. (see attachment)

Of those six reasons listed on this form, CPS only offers remote learning for two of those. If a student has a verified positive test, OR if they have a verified close contact at school, as determined by the contact tracers.

- If a student travelled to a place on the advisory list? - no remote
- If a parent tests positive, and quarantines their child? - no remote
- If one child has a close contact, and the parent decides to quarantine their siblings? - Those siblings get no remote
- If a student has a close contact outside of school? - no remote

In addition, there are reports of parents receiving a call from contact tracers 10, 12, or even 14 days AFTER the exposure. So if a student has to wait in quarantine until they get that call from CPS, they are not able to access remote learning.

CPS started school on August 30th in part to help “minimize learning loss” - but what we are seeing is a complete abdication of responsibility by district leadership to ensure that that happens. This policy is purely punitive - To deny remote learning in an attempt to force an exposed child to return to the school building as soon as possible, prolonging the pandemic and putting other children in danger.

Students in quarantine for one of these other reasons, including my own, have been denied access to remote learning for the past 17 days, and have been marked absent or even unenrolled instead of being allowed their rightful access to public education. This is wrong and directly contradicts the ISBE resolution that a “**continuity of learning**” must be provided during this pandemic.

If a student is being excluded by CPS from a school for one of these reasons, then why can they not access remote learning? Today, I ask the Board to move to ensure that CPS meets the requirements of the [September 7th, 2021, resolution from ISBE](#) that includes the statement “remote instruction **must be made available** for students excluded from schools who are under isolation or quarantine.” I have included the full resolution for your review in the written comments, in case you missed it.

Last week CPS stated that they gave principals the authority to “flip” an entire class to remote as soon as a possible case is reported, while the contact tracers go through their process. This shows that the district can act quickly to modify guidance in response to changing circumstances.

We ask simply that principals be told that they are also allowed to flip an individual student to remote if a parent or guardian reports the student is in quarantine, for any of these six listed reasons. Right now admins are told to say “No” unless it is a “CPS-mandated quarantine” coming from the contact tracers. What parents have signed-off on, and what is actually implemented should be the same and should comply with ISBE guidelines.

We are so close to vaccines being available to children ages 5-12, we need CPS to do everything in its power to help our children access their teachers and classwork while they stay safe at home during quarantine. I urge the Board to take immediate action to rectify this as hundreds of waiting students continue to be denied remote access to public education right now.

I have written to the Executive Director for Regional Services at Illinois State Board of Education, Jennifer Saba, and she has been made aware of CPS’s failure to comply with this September 7th, 2021, resolution as well. Thank you.

Illinois State Board of Education



RESOLUTION

Supporting  
In-Person Learning

September 7, 2021

**WHEREAS**, the hard work of our health care professionals and the conscientious diligence of all Illinoisans who altered their lives and daily habits to contain the spread of COVID-19 have allowed Illinois to transition into Phase 5 of the Restore Illinois Plan on June 11, 2021, allowing businesses to resume normal operations and public gatherings of all sizes to proceed; and

**WHEREAS**, students and school staff have meaningful protection from COVID-19, with three highly effective vaccines widely available to all Illinoisans age 12 and older and trials underway to determine if younger children can benefit from COVID-19 vaccines; and

**WHEREAS**, our schools have the capability to rapidly identify new cases to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks and reduce the risk of further transmission, thanks to the State of Illinois providing schools free access to Abbott's BinaxNOW rapid test and offering all schools in Illinois the use of covidSHIELD tests free of charge; and

**WHEREAS**, multiple studies show that – although online classes are a far better option than no classes at all – students, particularly students who struggle academically, still learn better while in person alongside their teachers; and

**WHEREAS**, reconnecting with teachers and peers in-person is essential for students' mental health and social-emotional development, especially after the prolonged isolation of the pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, Illinois schools are receiving \$7.8 billion in federal pandemic relief funds for the safe return to in-person learning and to address learning gaps caused by the pandemic through strategies, such as tutoring, summer school, and community partnerships for mental health; and

**WHEREAS**, all Illinois public school districts are offering in-person learning consistent with Illinois State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carmen I. Ayala's declaration in July 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, in August 2021, the Illinois Department of Public Health and Illinois State Board of Education issued guidance titled Revised Public Health Guidance for Schools: Part - 5 Supporting the Full Return to In-Person Learning for All Students that provides instruction on effectively layering required and recommended mitigation strategies to protect the safety of in-person learning; and

**WHEREAS**, 77 IL Admin Code 690.30 grants Illinois schools the authority to exclude Illinois students from school due to contacts related to communicable and infectious diseases, including COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, the purpose of brief intervals of remote learning for individual students or schools pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-30 and 105 ILCS 5/34-18.66 is to keep the school community safe, provide continuity of learning, and ensure students transition back to in-person learning successfully and as quickly as possible; and

**WHEREAS**, the Illinois State Board of Education wishes to reaffirm the rights, powers, and duties of schools to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment for all students and staff, including providing remote learning for students who are excluded from school;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Illinois State Board of Education supports Illinois State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carmen I. Ayala in making the following amended declaration: Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, all schools must resume fully in-person learning for all student attendance days, provided that, pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-30 and 105 ILCS 5/34-18.66, remote instruction must be made available for students who are excluded by a school pursuant to 77 Ill. Admin. Code 690.30, or students who are under isolation, quarantine, or adaptive pause consistent with guidance or requirements from a local health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health.

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Darren Reisberg, Board Chair

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Dr. Donna S. Leak, Vice Chair

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Dr. Christine Benson, Member

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Dr. David R. Lett, Member

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Susie Morrison, Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Roger Eddy, Member

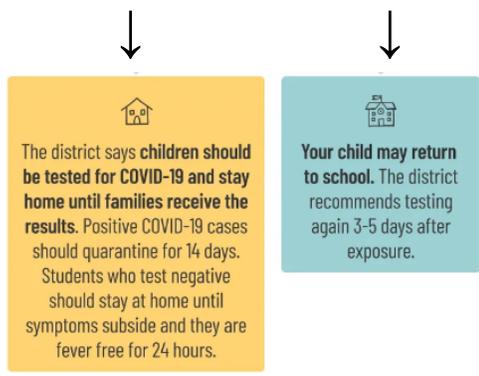
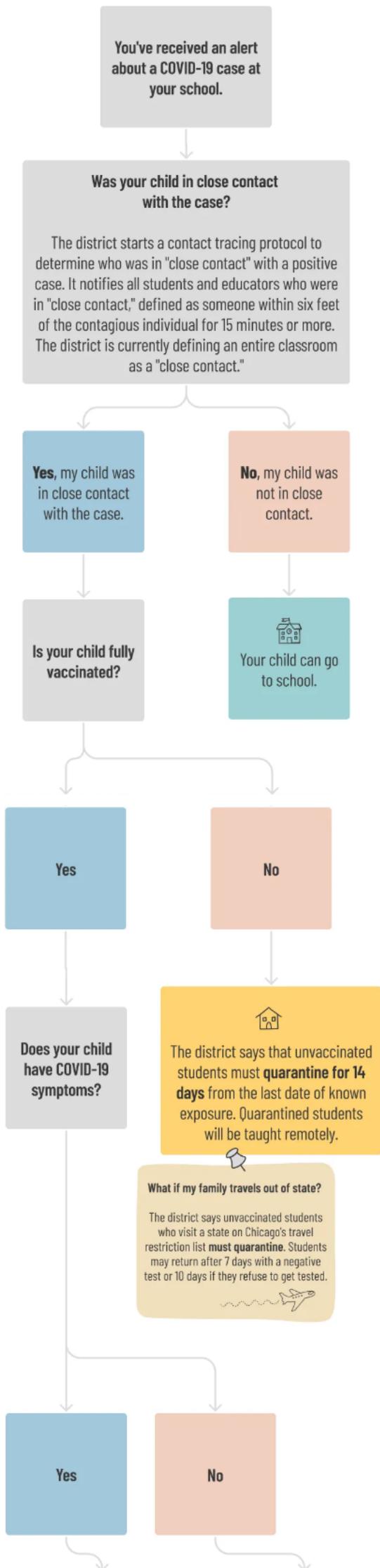
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jaime Guzman, Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nike Vieille, Member

Source:

[https://go.boarddocs.com/il/isbe/Board.nsf/files/C6MNCZ56FBA2/\\$file/In-Person%20Learning%20Resolution%2009.07.2021.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/il/isbe/Board.nsf/files/C6MNCZ56FBA2/$file/In-Person%20Learning%20Resolution%2009.07.2021.pdf)

**How to know whether or not Chicago public schools will require your child to quarantine**



Source: Chicago Public Schools  
Credit: Lauren Bryant / Chalkbeat

Image source:  
<https://chicago.chalkbeat.org/2021/9/7/21303445/chicago-public-schools-quarantine-flow-chart-students-covid-19-data>



## **CPS COVID-19 Student Certification and Verification Form**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in an effort to create a safe and healthy environment for our school community, the Chicago Public Schools (“CPS”) will be following the Illinois Department of Public Health (“IDPH”) and Illinois State Board of Education’s (“ISBE”) guidance regarding who should be present onsite in our schools and requiring each student to undergo a daily health screening prior to entering their school building. In accordance with this guidance, parents/guardians must conduct a daily health screening prior to their child departing for school each day. Parents/guardians must report consistent with the instructions outlined below, unless otherwise notified by CPS. This form must be completed and submitted to your child’s school by September 3, 2021 and will be in effect for the first quarter. Parents will be asked to complete this form again for each of the remaining quarters during SY21-22.

### **Procedures for Certification and Verification of Daily Symptom Screening and Other Related COVID-19 Exposures**

As the parent/guardian, I or an adult caregiver for my child, will conduct a daily symptom screening of my child to determine if my child is currently experiencing any of the following COVID-19 symptoms which cannot be attributed to another health condition:

- Fever (100.4 degrees or higher) or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle and body aches
- Headache
- Sore Throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Diarrhea

I acknowledge and agree that my child will not be permitted to enter upon a Chicago Public School and will notify the school that my child will be absent on that day, if:

- My child’s daily symptom screening reveals that my child is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms which cannot be attributed to another health condition.
- My child tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 10 days.
- My child is waiting on the results of a COVID-19 test (excluding CPS school-based screen program).
- My child is not fully vaccinated and within the past 14 days had close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19. (Outside of the classroom setting, the CDC defines “close contact” as “someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.”)
- My child is not fully vaccinated, within the last 10 days my child traveled to a state or territory identified as ORANGE or RED in the City of Chicago Travel Advisory, and my child cannot produce a negative COVID-19 test or qualify for an exception as listed in the Advisory. (Chicago’s Travel Advisory can be found here: <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/covid-19/home/emergency-travel-order.html>)
- My child is not fully vaccinated, and my child traveled internationally within the last 10 days (or 7 days with a negative COVID-19 test upon return).

### **Collective Responsibility**

As our students return to in-person learning five days a week, everyone must do their part to keep our community safe. This means that everyone in the CPS family, including students, parents/guardians, teachers and staff must practice the same safety measures that our students are using in-person at school. Therefore, in order to keep our school communities safe, you agree to the following:

- Adhere to social distancing, wearing cloth face coverings or masks, and practicing good hand hygiene at school or home and in your social pods and community;
- Adhere to quarantining requirements for the appropriate number of days depending on the travel location;
- Observe and teach the same healthy hygiene habits we use at school at home: 20-second hand washing, appropriate use of face coverings, catching coughs and sneezes in a tissue or your elbow;

- Make the decision to stay home if you are sick or awaiting COVID-19 test results; and
- Be an example for your children and neighbors in modeling safe, responsible behaviors and compassion for others.

By signing below or sending my child to school, I agree and certify the following:

- As the parent/guardian, I or another adult caregiver, will conduct a symptom screening of my child each day and follow the appropriate procedures listed above prior to my child entering a Chicago Public School.
- If my child is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms or any other COVID-related exposures listed above, I will not send my child to school and will notify the school of their absence.
- If Chicago Public Schools staff contacts me to gather additional information related to the results of my child's daily screening, I will cooperate and provide the necessary information as requested.
- Comply with the collective responsibility procedures outlined above.
- My student must be symptom free in order to participate in in-person learning or any other CPS sponsored event.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Source:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1seE1bDL6WvKz-sfYouJW9ug6AA1faVCiqVNBAlOifFc/edit>

Throughout the summer, CPS made a commitment to prioritize re-engaging and re-enrolling students. In fact, these reengagement efforts were part of a broader \$525 million “Moving Forward Together” plan. With all this emphasis on re-enrollment and engagement, I can’t understand why CPS has so actively worked to block my children from participating in school.

I am the mother of three CPS students who were forcibly unenrolled from their neighborhood elementary school. Consistent with the CPS attendance policy that outlines considerations for excused absences, I informed the school that my children would be absent due to my concern for their safety and health as a result of high community spread of COVID-19 and the contagiousness of the Delta variant. Although I was in constant contact with school administration and my children’s teachers, by the fourth day of school, my children were all unenrolled and they were locked out of their CPS accounts. When I questioned the school about this, I was contacted by the school administration and asked to write a letter saying I would be homeschooling my children.

Since this time, I have reached out on numerous occasions to the administration at my children’s school, the network chief, and the manager of attendance and truancy at CPS asking to see the policy that permits this action. No one is able to provide this for me. What has been represented to me is that my children were unenrolled from school because they were absent on the first day and this has been referred to as “did not arrive”. However, no CPS official has identified a policy that provides that any child can be unenrolled without due process—without notice and a hearing—for missing a single day of school. I have done my best to research this issue, and all of the statutes, regulations, and CPS policies I can find on this topic directly contradict the information that CPS has communicated to me so far. This is troubling to say the least.

For example, a statute concerning the enrollment of pupils who are not of compulsory school age provides for extensive due process before a student who is 17 years of age or older may be denied enrollment. The student may be unenrolled only if all of the following conditions are met:

- the student is “absent without valid cause for 20% or more of the attendance days in the semester immediately prior to the current semester,”
- the student and the parent are “given written notice warning that the student is subject to denial from enrollment for one semester unless the student is absent without valid cause less than 20% of the attendance days in the current semester,”
- the student’s parents are “provided with the right to appeal the notice, as determined by the State Board of Education in accordance with due process,”
- the student “is provided with attendance remediation services, including without limitation assessment, counseling, and support services,” and
- the student “is absent without valid cause for 20% or more of the attendance days in the current semester.”

105 ILCS 5/26-2(c).

If a 17-year-old (who is not of compulsory school age) who misses 20% of attendance days in the prior semester gets this level of due process, what is the basis for telling me that my children can be unenrolled for missing one day of school, after having nearly perfect attendance last semester?

Board of Education Written Statement for Meeting on 9/22/2021  
Prepared and submitted by Cortney Ritsema, parent of 3 CPS students

The administrative code also explicitly states that my daughters who are less than 7 years old are entitled to due process before being unenrolled, stating that: "A parent or guardian who receives notice of a school board's intention to deny enrollment to a student for either of the reasons specified in Section 26-2(c) of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/26-2] may appeal the determination to exclude the student." Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 1.242. The regulation continues:

- Upon the request of the parent or guardian, the school board or a hearing officer appointed by the board shall hold a hearing to review the board's determination.
- The parent or guardian shall have the right to appear at the hearing and discuss the board's determination to exclude the student with the board or its hearing officer.
- If a hearing officer has been appointed by the board, he or she shall provide to the board a written summary of the evidence heard at the hearing.
- After the hearing, if held by the board, or after the board's receipt of the hearing officer's written summary, the board may take the action it finds appropriate.
- Any appeal requested by the parent or guardian must be heard and a final determination made under subsection (d) of this Section before the student may be denied enrollment under Section 26-2(c) of the School Code.

Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 1.242.

I have never received notice that the school board intended to unenroll my children. Instead, I was locked out of my children's Aspen accounts without notice and informed by the school administration that my children were unenrolled. I asked to be shown the policy permitting such unenrollment, and instead of receiving such a policy, all I have received is pressure to sign a statement saying that I am choosing to homeschool my children, which I have made clear is not what I intend.

As for my oldest child (8 years old) who is subject to compulsory school attendance, CPS's own publicly available policies make clear that she does not meet the criteria for unenrollment. Section 703.1(VII)(D)(1) of the Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual provides that "Students may not be removed from enrollment solely because of excessive unexcused absences, i.e., truancy, (for example, 20 consecutive unexcused absences)." If students cannot be unenrolled solely because of missing 20 consecutive days of school, how can they be unenrolled solely for missing the first day of school?

Even students with "excessive absences" may be removed from enrollment only if "their whereabouts cannot be determined," which is not the case here. CPS Policy Manual §703.1(VII)(D)(2).

As far as I can tell, by unenrolling my children from school, CPS is currently violating Illinois statutes, Illinois administrative codes, and its own procedures—and depriving me and my children of our right to due process.

I bring this to the Board's attention today because I am not alone in having this happen to my children. I shared my story on social media and parents from across the city have been reaching out to me to tell me their version of this same story that resulted in their children being unenrolled from a CPS school. Our children have a right to a safe public education, and they are currently being deprived of that right without due process.

Dear CPS Board Members:

Failing to invest in equity today will cost us more in the future. I have previously spoken and written to the Board regarding disparities in CPS, including in opportunities for accelerated instruction. Brief excerpts from my spoke and written comments (that are no longer available on the CPS Board website) are below and are still relevant in light of CPS's Resolution Regarding Accelerated Placement Policy in Response to COVID-19 (21-0922-RS2).

"...when it comes to the right to education for our academically gifted students, we make the erroneous assumption that because they are smart, they will be fine. Doing nothing is not the same as doing no harm. Accelerated instruction, including grade skipping, has tremendous benefits to eligible children at virtually no additional cost to the schools. The research over the past half-century is definitive, not placing children in educational environments commensurate with their abilities causes them to regress and places them at risk of developing social and emotional problems. It is clear this is not in the best interest of the child."

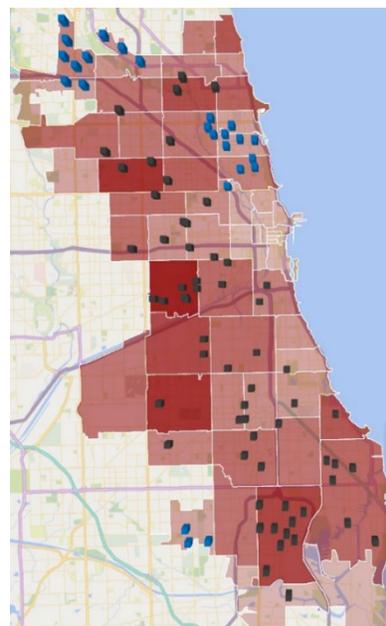
"Providing access to accelerated instruction to students that need it "is also in the best interest of society. Without the opportunities for advancement and transparency afforded under the law, underperforming schools have a perverse incentive to deny the advancement of gifted students to increase their test scores at the expense of educating their most talented students. This is of particular concern for children from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, persons with disabilities, and students of color."

The decision to further limit access to appropriate instruction will exacerbate disparities made worse by the pandemic. The policy adjustment misinterprets Section 14A-32 of the Accelerated Placement Act, which does not necessitate the use of either IAR or NWEA MAP testing to determine eligibility. The Board also implicitly acknowledging the significant limitations of their adopted STAR 360 assessments, which may not be able to accurately assess students' academic functioning. I have submitted reports to the Board on the disparities in CPS on multiple occasions, including the January 27, 2021 Board meeting and the July 21, 2021 Budget hearing and have shared recommendations on how to improve equity for our students.

<https://www.cpsboe.org/meetings/presentations-to-the-board/1305> (p54)

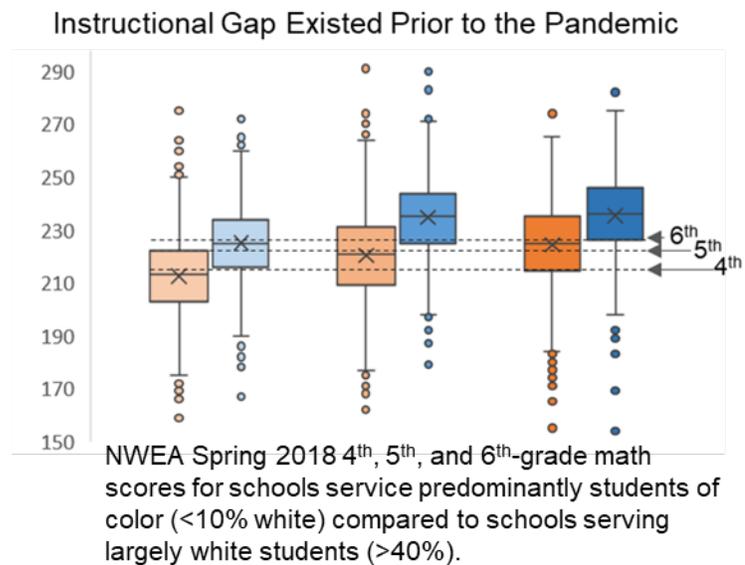
<https://www.cpsboe.org/meetings/presentations-to-the-board/2319> (p7)

I recommended greater resources for schools in communities impacted the most by COVID, because these students have experienced more trauma and have far more reluctance to return to school. I applaud the initiatives the Board has taken to offer more resources to schools in communities that have been harmed more during this pandemic. My research has shown that schools in communities with the highest COVID-related deaths are the most reluctant to return to school (see figure 1). Today, most children and in school and adhering to appropriate



safety standards (although there is still needed improvements for testing, safety protocols, and tracking).

The instruction and achievement gap that existed prior to the pandemic will grow without appropriate investments and policy changes. The use of low-quality testing that is unable to adequately measure performance solve the problem of inequity, it allows it to fester. Just as not performing diagnostic tests doesn't cure disease. We must acknowledge the opportunity gap within our schools and work to close it. My analysis shows students of color receive instruction that's two years below what is provided in schools that serve primarily white students (figure 2). This is wrong and greater opportunities to achieve their potential must be offered to all students.



Resolution 21-0922-RS2 eliminates even more opportunities for underserved children to be taught at their level. "The pernicious effects of how CPS implements and adheres to policies means gifted children will continue to be underserved and underreported. Parents with the financial means to provide a better education for their children will move to other districts or invest their resources into private schools, exacerbating economic schism between neighborhoods and add barriers to escape the cycle of poverty. Moreover, the low numbers of gifted students in under-resourced schools may be used by unscrupulous individuals to perpetuate stereotypes of racial and ethnic inequality. This must not be allowed to happen."

Eliminating opportunities to underserved children also causes long-term harm to the goals of this Board. By limiting opportunities to underserved students, how will CPS and the city meet its goals to diversify the pool of high-quality teachers at CPS? How will CPS improve the poor quality of its Skyline curriculum? How will CPS solve the complicated problems in transportation? The reason we face these problems in the future is that we did not invest what was needed in the past.

Transportation is another problem that has not received proper attention and lacks sustainable solutions. CPS awarded Christopher Toczycki, Inc multiple contracts for transportation consulting for an estimated \$2.2 million since 2019 (summarized below). Details of CPS's transportation expenses are included in the FY21 Budget Book (<https://www.cps.edu/globalassets/cps-pages/about/finance/budget-2021/docs/fy21-budget-book-v22.5-final.pdf> -Budget p179, file p185). CPS spends approximately \$120 million on transportation. The report goes on to explain the District has saved \$2 million by "optimizing

routes", reduced expenses by \$150k by increasing "pairing percentage", and eliminated 267 school stops to save \$1.8 million. Those alleged cost savings amount to an estimated 3% improvement in operations potentially stemming from consulting from Christopher Toczycki, Inc.

Summary of recent contract agreements with Christopher

Board Report 19-0227-PR15, February 27, 2019 consulting agreement for \$450,000.

"Christopher Toczycki Inc. shall continue to provide transportation planning and support services used to transport CPS students. Services specifically include the following: run tiering (scheduling of bus runs into routes minimizing complexity, equipment and bus aide utilization), vendor assignment (assigning of bus routes to vendors per established constraints and cost minimization objectives), summer school start time determination (determination of school start times from projected enrollments to help maximize run tiering for summer school routes), and operational support (ongoing support of analytics, reporting, and data interfaces used to manage student routing)."

Board Report 21-0623-FN1, June 23, 2021 1,080,000 (link to contract 20-0624-RS1, Original Board Report 19-0227-PR15) "First Amendment to Agreement Exercising First Option to Renew Consulting Services Agreement."

Board Report 21-0623-PR28, June 23, 2021 consulting agreement for \$677,500. "Vendor shall provide transportation planning and support services that will be utilized to support transport of CPS students. Services shall include the following: run tiering (scheduling of bus runs into routes minimizing complexity, equipment and bus aide utilization), vendor assignment (assigning of bus route to vendors per established constraints and cost minimization objectives), summer school start time determination (determination of school start times from projected enrollments to help maximize run tiering for summer school routes), and operational support (ongoing support of analytics, reporting, and data interfaces used to manage student routing)."

Despite a budget of \$120 million dollars annually and large expenses paid to consultants, many CPS children, particularly those with disabilities, are not able to "self-transport."

Recommendations to have children take Uber fail to acknowledge that cars are not always accessible, children are not allowed to ride alone, and Uber drivers do not have the required vaccinations or criminal background checks that would make it remotely appropriate to be a viable option. I maintain that if CPS provided greater opportunities for appropriate instruction in the past, there would be a greater talent pool able to solve the problems it faces today. For example, I know a little girl that would probably be able to solve the network optimization and graph theory problems needed to improve student transportation if you actually were willing to educate her (and she would not charge \$2 million dollars to help you).

Why is there such little scrutiny the more expensive something is? CPS spends \$120 million a year on transportation and fails to adequately provide it. However, you offer the families of children with disabilities very little. I continue to offer my assistance to make CPS the exceptional and equitable system it can be.

Be well, Dr. Angel Alvarez