Date/Time of Meeting: February 11, 2013, 7:00-9:00 pm

Network: Fulton

Schools represented by audience: Brown, Burr, Diego, Duprey, Herbert, Irving, Lafayette, King, Lasalle, Mitchell, Peabody, Dett, Jackson, Otis

Round: I

Disclaimer: The following are notes of the discussions in the individual break-out sessions. They do not provide verbatim records or a comprehensive summary of what was said. Also, these notes do not represent the point-of-view of the facilitators or of CPS personnel. Any questions about these notes should be addressed to CPS staff.

General Learning

- (Alderman 2nd ward) Schools serve all income households. People in this community truly value schools. Schools are the most important asset in this community. Where are Board members tonight? They have been absent from all these meetings. They need to feel and see, hear the spirit of the room, and what these people have to say. We are fighting for the future of our kids here. Neighborhood schools are public resources. We can’t improve schools if they are shutdown.
- Last audit showed 400 million surplus. This shows a gigantic hole on CPS claim of 4Billion deficit. We that money from the surplus, we want more music, art, math teachers
- 1st Ward Alderman implored the panel to “listen to the parents and teachers”
- 27th Ward Alderman commended the panel (CPS) for listening and stated that there does not need to be no more Charters but resources should go to Public Schools. The alderman stated that this is creating a competition with private schools and that there is a concern about safety.

School-specific Learning:

Brown

- (Principal) I have lived here all my life. We are more than just numbers. I urge you to come to see our community before you close our schools
(Volunteer) I am speaking on behalf of 61 volunteers. All the progress that our kids at our schools have made can’t be measured yet, only in 2 years. These kids have improved a lot. Volunteers do a great job. You should use this school as a model on how to engage the community.

(Pastor) I believe in the potential of all our kids, this school is doing great work. You see here integrity, professionalism. Schools should not be closed but given funding.

Burr

- Where is the Board of Education, CPS CEO, Rahm Emmanuel? If they are not here, how much value they put to our opinion?
- Board of Education, if you are listening, then take this into account (talking to the attendees in the room) Stand up those that oppose school closing (all attendees in the room stood up)
- Teacher – the community would be damaged if the schools were consolidated

Diego

- Hearing about school closings is heartbreaking. Our schools are getting less and less. We want to get more resources. We need CPS to step up.
- Our school is like a family. Everybody works for our kids. We are a community
- LSC member – collected 800 support letters. The community will not be the same if the school closes.
- Teacher- reported that there is not enough SEL resources
- Crowd begin to chant “save our schools”

Duprey

- What is your transition plan for our school? What is your evaluation process? We don’t mind receiving students. This system is setting us for failure.
- In our school our kids are safe. We raised 10 thousand dollars to improve our programs but still need resources. We need a library, books, nurses. Please think what you are doing to our community.
- Principal opened this school 25 years ago. We have small class size. We can do more, if we can get more resources. We went from level 3 to level 2. We need to have a pre-school program. We applied to it. We need a magnet program. We have a lot to offer but we need more support.
- Parent – saw noticeable improvement in her child since he transferred into Duprey

Herbert

- Enjoy safe haven in our after school program. That is a net of safety for our kids. We have built several programs. If you close our school you will destroy all that.
- Librarian – touted the schools partnerships
- Grandmother: “has the committee considered the special needs children?”

Irving
• I teach classes with 20 students, which allows for a more individualized education, better education. If you close schools and consolidate, we will be sitting on top of each other.
• We need social workers, counselors, nurses
• Consolidating schools is dangerous of our children
• Principal – taking the village away from the child. The community has stepped up to the plate.
• Pastor from Soul City Church – spoke as a parent and implored the panel not to close the school

Lafayette
• With a culture of disinvestment, how can schools are not going to be struggling? Under enrollment happens because of the opening of Charter schools, students leaving our school to go to a charter.
• We have 166 students with disabilities out of 400 students. Closing this school in our neighborhood means bringing more destabilization to these kids. Some of our rooms are being used for special programs, but you don’t look at that.
• Teacher/parent asked “where is my son going to go if the school is closed”

King
• My kids and nephews learned to read here. If you close, where are our kids going to go? This school is like home for our kids. They can learn social skills
• Parent noted that CPS does a good job with math but only in subtraction.

Lasalle
• We have 4 special education classrooms, we have a world language studies classroom
• We need books, library, computers
• I haven’t seen much turnaround in my school, teachers become the constant in student’s lives. CEOs at CPS have changed many times, areas have been changed to networks, plans have changed but our teachers stay
• Not every child at CPS is given same resources, not all have libraries, computers, books

Mitchell
• We have seen 6 years of academic improvements. Our teachers do professional development, received national award certifications, attend conferences for common core. We are part of a collaborative effort, between principal, teachers, staff, volunteers, and the community
• Our kids are safe here in the school. We have innovative teaching. We constantly improve. Our teachers have impeccable resumes. Collaborate with each other. I personally have attended courses in common core, math, first aid, bullying, parent workshops, all provided by this school.
• Parent – 50 years of being a part of the school. Participates in workshops like Common Core and bulling

**Peabody**

• Our kids feel comfortable and safe at school. It is a vital part of our community. This is a strong neighborhood school. It exemplifies excellence in education, in an area of high needs. This is a small school, which makes it safer. We are able to help kids with special needs

• Parent- from Pritzker school pledged solidarity

**Dett**

• Parent – what happened to the TIF money?

**Jackson**

• Parent- came to support all the schools. Need more social workers and counselors as well as a level playing field.

**Otis**

• Parent – “stop wasting our time”