



Community Meeting for the Proposal to Co-Locate Nash and Academy of Community and Technology Charter School

Jan. 6, 2012; 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Location: Austin High School, 231 N. Pine Ave

CPS Staff in Attendance

Chief of Staff Andrea Saenz, Network Chief of Schools Annette Gurley, Saira Riaz

Brief Summary

The purpose of the meeting was to receive public comments on the proposal to co-locate Nash Elementary School and Academy of Community and Technology Charter School in accordance with Public Act 097-0474. CPS officials made a presentation regarding the proposal. There were about 167 people in attendance and 21 speakers. The speaker comments focused on a variety of topics including: concerns that students would choose not to attend Nash, the staff and community were not consulted regarding the proposed action and support for the co-location.

CPS Presentation

Andrea Saenz, Chief of Staff for CPS, welcomed those in attendance and introduced the meeting. Chief Gurley of the Austin-North Lawndale Elementary Network then gave an overview of the proposal. Around 6:12 p.m., the meeting was opened for public comment.

Public Comment

Asia Miller

Ms. Miller supports the Doolittle and ACT co-location. She said that students will have more resources, no one will lose their job, and the school will focus more on children.

Leah Burns

Ms. Burns supports the phase-out of Crane High School. She quoted PSAT scores and graduation rates, and said that students will have better resources and be safer.

Maurice Gaiter

Mr. Gaiter supports Guggenheim's school closing. He cited scores on state standards and said that the children will have more resources.

Dawn Scott

Ms. Scott supports the Walter Reed phase-out. She said that students will have more resources.

Shameka Morsan

Ms. Morsan supports the phase-outs and closures on the Near West Side, saying that students will gain access to higher-performing schools.

Donald Johnson

Mr. Johnson supports the Price school closing, saying that students deserve better than Price and children will be safe.

Annette Rizzo

Ms. Rizzo expressed that she thought the meeting was going to be about finding out the plan for Nash. The Nash building was supposed to be demolished thirty-nine years ago. She wondered why a charter school gets the money.

Response from Chief Gurley

The charter school will be in the annex, and Nash will be in the main building. Both schools will receive funding.

Dwayne Truss

Mr. Truss asked why there is not a hearing officer. He opposes the co-location, saying that Nash was not consulted or asked and that there is no academic justification or research to prove it is beneficial.

Response from Chief Gurley

The hearing officer is only present at the hearing, not at the community meetings.

Krissy Gross

Ms. Gross supports the co-location. She is from KIPP, and her kids are getting a quality education there. She said KIPP is successful.

Emor Starkey

Mr. Starkey supports the co-location. He said that at KIPP, all children want to attend college.

Theresa Tucker

Ms. Tucker said that parents need to help children in the school district.

Hyneisha Wilson

Ms. Wilson supports the phase-out of Dyett in Washington Park, saying that students will have better options and will be safe.

Amaka Unaka

Ms. Unaka supports the co-location. She is from KIPP. Of its graduating class, 90 percent are now attending college; it will partner with the Austin community.

Jeannette Farmer

Ms. Farmer wants the schools to be fixed, because 60% of students are failing.

Shelly Nation-Watson

Ms. Nation-Watson is concerned that Nash will have its students pulled away from their school when they have been making gains. She would like to see a contract stating that KIPP will not recruit their students.

Response from Chief Gurley

The floor team will collect her information, and the administration will follow up.

Tanorviette Spruill

Tanorviette supports the co-location, saying KIPP provides a safe environment, focuses on strong academics, and gives children confidence.

Stacey Payton

Ms. Payton said that students are important, that people at CPS are making double salaries, and that kids are not learning – they need help and a stronger education.

Dan Lavega

Mr. Lavega said that education is important and that everything is falling apart. He said that we need to get children out who don't want to learn, and that hiring teachers is CPS's responsibility.

Ivy Sisson

Ms. Sisson is a CPS graduate and supports school closings. She believes that schools are institutions of learning, and that children need the best education possible.

Rosalynn Harris

Ms. Harris supports school closings, saying that children will be safer and they deserve better.

Antoine Simmons

Ms. Simmons said that CPS has been failing and been stumbling for twenty years. She said that children need more attention at home, and that teachers need to instill that education is important. With support and community input, the schools probably will improve.

Cynthycie Styles

Ms. Styles supports the co-location, saying KIPP is college-focused and good for the community.

Dija Manual

Ms. Manual supports the co-location. She is a former KIPP Student and a successful graduate who is now attending college.