ROCK ISLAND COMMUNITY MEETING No. 2

February 25th, 2013

7:00 o'clock p.m.

The Report of Proceedings had in the meeting of the above-entitled cause, taken before PAMELA A. MARZULLO, a Certified Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public in and for the County of Cook and State of Illinois, at 1257 South 111th Street, February 25th, 2013, at the hour of approximately 7:00 o'clock p.m.

PRESENT:

MR. PHILLIP HAMPTON, Chief of Family and Community Engagement

DR. KAREN V. SAFFOLD, Chief of Schools, Rock Island Network

MR. ALEX FRALIN, Deputy Chief of Schools, Rock Island Network

MR. ADAM ANDERSON, Office of Portfolio Planning & Strategy

MR. ARNIE RIVERA, Deputy Chief of Staff

MS. THYATIRIA TOWNS, Facilitator
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DR. SAFFOLD: Good evening. We're going to get started. Before we get started, we want to thank the wonderful pastor for allowing us to use this facility, and I would like to share a few announcements with you before we get started.

Passer Crider.

REVERAND CRIDER: Good evening, and welcome to Mount Calvary Baptist Church. I would like for you to at least thank God for being alive. So give God a hand for at least being alive. I want to thank Chicago Public Schools for asking us to host.

You'll get instructions concerning more seating, and you'll get instructions concerning how the process will go. I'm just here to welcome you, and we are in a church, in a sanctuary. Let's just bow for just a prayer.

Lord, we thank you again for waking up this morning, for watching over us through the night. You said study to show thyself and approved onto God. So, we're here promoting education, and we ask that you would cause us to have a conversation that we would come and reason together and do things decently and in order. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.
DR. SAFFOLD: At this time I'm going to introduce a few people that have been orchestrating and making this a successful evening for us. We have Thyatiria Towns, who is our FACE manager for the Rock Island Network. Thyatiria.

We have some other colleagues, Carl. We have some other networks FACE managers here at this time. Before we get started, I want to introduce two people. Phil Hampton, I want you to come on up, and you'll be followed by Adam Anderson, and then we'll begin to have testimony from our schools.

Phil and Adam.

MR. HAMPTON: Hampton good evening, everyone. Good evening again, everyone. So, I wasn't really on the program, but I'm glad to have an opportunity to say something.

First we want to thank Reverend Crider, who has been a part of the Chicago Public Schools over the years, for opening up his space and allowing us to be here. We see several other pastors that are here that work with Chicago Public Schools. We appreciate that. We also recognize several executive officials that are here.

I'm on Barbara Byrd-Bennett's cabinet, or
I'm on her team. I have made almost all of the meetings, unless there have been duplicate meetings across the city.

I think it's important for you to know that your input really matters. That this meeting, you're going to receive some information that really will let you know the number of schools that began in this network within this process that fell under this utilization number; and you will see that that number has declined, and the number of schools that are still under consideration, we hope that you take this opportunity tonight to really give us concrete input to help us form a decision, as we move forward.

The decision, a final decision, has not been made. A final decision has not been made. So, that's why this meeting is so important. The young lady, Ms. Marzullo, who is here to the left, is our official court reporter. You she's already taking notes.

She is going to be here taking notes on every individual that speaks, that will be formulated into a report and goes to directly to Dr. Byrd-Bennett, to help us make a decision
relative to the number of schools and how we could potentially recommend any actions for this area.

We appreciate that with Dr. Saffold's leadership, we appreciate how we at CPS has been respectful towards you. We appreciate how you have received us. We know this is a contentious issue. We do acknowledge and appreciate how we've been able to have this conversation in a way that is productive. So, we thank you.

Next, I would like to invite Mr. Adam Anderson, who is our Chief Officer of Strategy. He's going to talk about the document that you should have in your hand. He will explain how we've gotten to this point. Adam.

MR. ANDERSON: Good evening, everybody. I want to first echo the thanks for all of you to be here tonight. Parents, teachers, committee members, school leaders, especially the students that are here.

I know these conversations that we continue to have are challenging conversations, but know that everybody up here, because I know everybody out there, believes every student can and should have access to a high-quality education, and
that's we're all here for. Special thanks to the
students who are here.

I'm going to very quickly walk through the
handout that you all should have received that talks
a little bit where we are in the process.

The front page of the handout, which has a
list of schools on one side, on the left and some
criteria, and a list of schools on the right, is
criteria that is shown in the middle is what we have
heard from a number of meetings, both through the
Commission on School Utilization, as well as our
first run of meetings.

We developed this criteria to help narrow
down the list of schools that are under
consideration citywide. That number went from 330
citywide to 129, 6 of which are in the Rock Island
Network. I would like to emphasize one point.

Those 129, just as the 6 in Rock Island,
are not currently recommended for closure. We are
not planning on closing 129 schools. We're not
planning on closing all 6 schools in Rock Island.

We do not have a number in mind tonight.

This is a continuation of the conversation. Now,
I'm not going to read all the criteria, but I want
to emphasize a couple of points that we heard specifically from the Rock Island Network.

One of the things that we heard was that there are a number of schools throughout the city that while they might be under utilized, their performance is improving and increasing, which we're trying to get those schools more students. So, schools such as Mount Vernon, Bennett, were removed from the list in Rock Island.

We also heard a number of concerns about if the school is isolated, and that school is closed, that those students, as well as future students, would have to travel a long distance to get to their neighborhood school.

So, we added some criteria to reduce schools, such as Fort Dearborn, which are a high school. So, this is feedback we heard both from the Commission as well as through our first run of the meetings, that we have applied.

Now, for the 6 schools that remain, I do want to emphasize the schools that are here tonight are just for further conversation. We did hear a lot of the feedback from these schools in the initial round of conversations, Langston Hughes
being in the building.

My team has walked each of these 6 schools, along with Dr. Saffold and others. So, we have gone out and seen what is happening in the buildings on the ground, so we have a better understanding of what's happening. So, tonight is not about a rehash of what we heard in the first meeting.

If you'll look on the back of the page, there's a set of questions that have been outlined specifically by Dr. Byrd-Bennett that she would like to hear from schools on. So, this is intended to advance the conversation to start to understand more about where your schools are and where schools are going.

I do, of course, want to emphasize the final question, which even though these questions are what Dr. CEO Byrd-Bennett has asked, we of course want to also hear anything else, as the last question states, about your school that you think is important to share.

So, again, I thank you for giving me the chance to share this information with you tonight. Please know that we are listening. I looked forward
to hearing from each and every school.  

At this point in time, I'll turn it over  
to Dr. Saffold to facilitate the conversations.  

Thank you.  

DR. SAFFOLD: So, we're going to begin tonight  
with Fernwood. Each school will have ten minutes to  
present. Each school will have ten minutes.  

If you have documentation, please make  
sure you give it to the court reporter and say your  
first and last name, because she is recording  
everything that is taking place this evening.  

So, at this time I would like to invite  
Fernwood up to the front. I do know that we have  
elected officials here that I would like to  
acknowledge. First of all, I see Matt O'Shae.  
Matt, would you like to come up and say anything?  
Okay.  

Then we have Carrie Austin who just came  
through the door. We're happy she's here this  
everning. Carrie Austin, would you like to come up  
at this time? I'm happy she's here. She suffered a  
loss this weekend in her family, and she's still  
here. She's a survivor, so I do appreciate her  
being here. Fernwood, if you could come on up.
ALDERMAN AUSTIN: While they are assembling themselves, let me first say we pray in honor of God, who is truly the head of my life, because the God that I serve allowed me to be here today to support my schools, even upon the passing of my brother.

I know that my brother is going on home to glory, but I know this was just as important. It was more important for me, because all of our children that are in the schools are important to me.

My brother had 14 grandchildren, and that was -- and I got 28. So, that was something that we spoke about quite often in our homes. So, let me start in regards to Fernwood.

I know that there are critical issues that are under cause, but let me say this: In every school of mine that come up here, I'm going to repeat it over and over, over and over, and over and over.

There will be no closing of any schools in 34th. I don't say that for applauds, because I say that our schools are doing great things; but yet
still you want to close because under attendance,
low attendance, but they are performing.

So, if they are performing, why are you
take thinking about taking these over dangerous
lines? Our kids at Fernwood would have to go all
the way to either Evers, or would have to go all the
way down to Wacker. So, that's not going to happen.

You're not going to take any of my
children in 34 and put them in harm's way. If you
believe that of any school of mine, they are all
community schools, so you could take my children and
put them in harm's way no matter where you send
them.

You will send them across the lines. You
could send them across expressways. It wouldn't
make any difference where you send my children,
because they are so far in between an entrenched in
community, there is nowhere else for them to go.

But the schools that are performing at a
level 3, at a level 2, at a level 1, they are
performing, whatever the level. They are striving
to become level 2s. They are striving to become
level 1.

So, if my children are striving to become
number one, why would you say that we would allow
and put another detriment to you, the children.

Now, every kid that come up here, I'm not going to say the same thing over, but you see me stand up here, you know I'm talking about same thing over and over. I could say I never in my life, except for one time that I do recall, been in a picket line, but I guarantee I'll be in this one.

If they are going to close my schools, because those children that God allowed me to be charge over, I have to fight for them every single day, no matter what day of the week it is.

For the children that are trying and doing their best, we have schools that are doing outstanding, but they are at not at the level that CPS wishes them to be at, so we're going to move them out of their comfort zone where they are, to a zone they know nothing about.

You would rather allow them to go into harm's way, as opposing to allow allowing them to stay where they are at and grow. You don't want to do that. So, you want to say, "We are going to close this school. We are going to put them over here at this school."
How do you know it won't go down? While they are striving to become number one, let's keep them number one.

SCHOOL: FERNWOOD

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Trinity Haynes, and I'm the sixth and seventh grade language arts teacher at Fernwood School. In my 14 years in teaching at Fernwood, yes, I have seen the enrollment decrease; however, our school's academic achievements and test scores continue to increase.

The Fernwood community is bewildered as to why we remain on the list, when we are in compliance to utilization metric 5. Our utilization rate is not 67 percent, but 71.6 percent. So, right there, we should be taken off the list.

Next, take a look at metric 7b-1. Fernwood has an enrollment of 322 students on the 20th day of school, above the necessary 300 students.

Next, metric 7b-2, Fernwood's performance level for the 2011-2012 school year was higher than the 2010-2011 school year. Fernwood had a 19 percent performance level increase, which raised Fernwood from a level 3 school to a level 2 school
in good standing.

Next, if you look at metric 7b-3, Fernwood's ISAT composites meets, exceeds the trend value that indicates an increase in student proficiency.

Fernwood has had a composite increase of 13 percentage points over five years, which equates to a plus 7.5 trend over five years, and a plus 5.8 trend over four years.

Lastly, if you take a look at the metric 7b-4, students at Fernwood are performing at or above their peers in reading and/or math for each of the last three years. When you look at Fernwood's scores, compared to the district, Fernwood is actually performing better than the district's average.

In the last three years, Fernwood has out performed the district in reading two out of the last three years. In math, Fernwood has out performed the district the last three years. That places us in compliance for metric 7b-4.

Once again, Fernwood is in compliance when it comes to the criteria for the utilization metric 7b. Fernwood is a level 2 school on the rise.
Why stop Fernwood's progress now? Let's continue our mission in giving a great quality education to our Fernwood students, and give us a chance at becoming a level 1 school.

Next, Mr. Mason will inform you about how we are taking that forward.

SPEAKER: We are Fernwood, and we are on the rise. We have been building partnerships in our community, partnerships with Paul Hall, Safe Haven, Areil Capital Management, Fernwood Church, and we have to speak with us from the Kroc Center Dr. McNeal.

Because of this, our attendance rate that has been over 96 percent for the last three years. At Fernwood, our students are safe. They are cared for, and they are pushed to succeed. For our community, our city and our nation, Fernwood must be kept open and Fernwood must rise.

Gangs don't start in our high schools. The melee that we saw at Ford City, that doesn't just happen in high school, that happens in grammar school. 48 percent of our instructional team is male.

We have discipline at Fernwood. In two
years, we have not had one out-of-school suspension. In two years, we haven't had one out-of-school suspension.

In 2011, 48.27 percent of our grads were selectively enrolled in high school. In 2012, we have 51.28 percent of our eighth graders in selective enrollment high schools, Whitney Young, Walter Payton, Simeon, just to name a few.

Fernwood has accepted the challenge and continues to rise above our peers. We have accepted our administration's challenge to not just make good test takers, we're not just making good test takers. We are making life-long learners; and as a result, we have the third highest overall ISAT growth within our network.

Our students are on track to graduate, and that has risen from 49 percent to 71 percent in 2012. Fernwood is on the rise, but I am here to tell you, just as in our community, we cannot accept this. We are not satisfied. Over 50 percent of -- we are not satisfied. Let me slow down.

We challenge this panel. We challenge the CEO, respectfully, respectfully, we challenge CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett. You stated it, and we
respectfully quote, "Schools on the rise will not be closed."

Fernwood's mission is CPS's mission. We at Fernwood Elementary School are dedicated to providing a world-class education for every child. Please, allow us to continue this mission.

At this time I would like to bring up Dr. Mcneal from the Kroc Center, one of our partners that we have been building in our community.

SPEAKER: Good evening to everyone. My name is Dr. Kimberly A. McNeal, and I am the partners -- we are one of the partners from the Salvation Army, Ray Joan Kroc Community Center.

As a former principal of Chicago Public Schools, I was a part of this area at one time, and I have seen the progress of Fernwood over many years.

In addition to that, I spoke with Mr. Towner, and his assistant principal. They came when the Kroc Center opened and they asked us, "What can we do to insure that our students have something else to do to balance what it is that they're doing?"

And, so, one of the things that we came up
with, I talked to him about writing a proposal on
behalf of the school. He wrote a proposal. I
submitted that proposal to our board of directors,
as well as CPS.

The proposal was honored; and as a result
of that, the students will be coming to the center
twice a week to work to swim, to do sports, to do a
lot of different things.

I think that looking at the data that
Fernwood has more than shown that they are an
excellent school with excellent growth, and we just
want to be the balance. So, I hope that you will
reconsider not just for Fernwood, but for all the
schools here. Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Diane
Archer. I attended Fernwood, graduated class of
'86. I'm here speaking for the safety of our
children, as well as representing all the parents.

I have four kids that went to Fernwood,
two are still here, two graduated. I have at least
two other generations that was here. Just like the
rest of our parents, we have four and five
generations of people that attended Fernwood.

Fernwood has been home to some students.
We open our school in the after school so they could get off the street. On the weekends they could come play basketball, and the safety is what we are mainly concerned about. I don't want my child going across the tracks or have to go over the bridge, none of that.

I want my child to remain safe. I know Fernwood has a safe haven school, because we have a lot of parent patrol. We have other alumni that come and they work for Fernwood. They insure that our kids are safe when they are going home.

They are down three and four blocks each way, north, south, east and west going all around the school to make sure our kids are safe. So, that's what I'm talking about all the parents, if you could look around, and you see all our banners, everything, we are strong and we're going to stand together. We are not going to let this happen.

DR. SAFFOLD: Thank you, Fernwood. At this time, please come on up Garvey, Marcus Garvey.

While Garvey is getting assembled, we're going ask Alderman Brookins to come up at this time.

OFFICIAL

ALDERMAN BROOKINS: Good evening, everybody. I
appreciate each and every one of you all coming out tonight. As you all know, I am Alderman Howard Brookins, and I'm one of the commissioners that sits on the board.

I want you to know that your voices are being heard, and we will continue to be resolute, with respect to the situation. Because of you all, as you all know, the number has changed from approximately 329 schools that were initially on the list, and have gone down to the 129 that was reported, and that number will continue to be refined.

So, this is an important part. This is not a dog-and-pony show. We're actively listening to you all, and your voices are being heard. So, thank you.

SCHOOL: MARCUS GARVEY.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Joy Lewis. I'm a teacher at Marcus Garvey School. Schools that are on the rise. Criteria B, any schools that are sustainable improving performance, these schools meet all of the following: Criteria 1, greater than or equal to 300 students enrolled 20th day of school.
Marcus Garvey schools meets this criteria for more than 300 students enrolled on the 20th day of school. From August 13, through September 25th, our enrollment increased by 57 students.

Criteria No. 2, same or higher performance level for the 2011-2012 school year. Although Marcus Garvey does not have the same or higher performance for the 2011 to 2012 school year, we do have it for the 2010 and 2011 school year.

You can see from the Chicago Public Schools over time probation report, this is the first-time occurrence. Marcus Garvey is a first-year probation school, and we have not been on probation since school year of 1996 to 1997.

Criteria No. 3, ISAT composite meets or exceeds trend value that indicates increasing student performance. Our ISAT composite meets or exceeds the average for the last three years, in 77.2 percent.

For the 2011-2012 school year, Marcus Garvey exceeds the average composite score from the last three years. Criteria No. 4, students are performing at or above their peers in reading and math for each of the last three years.
Students are performing at or above their peers in reading and math at Marcus Garvey School for the last three years. Additionally, Marcus Garvey School students have been performing at or above their peers in reading and math, not only for the last three years, but the last eight years.

Criteria No. 5, schools that are isolated from nearby elementary schools. Marcus Garvey School is isolated from nearby schools in the sense that attending one of the nearby schools would prevent or provide a safety issue. Students will be required to cross the busy Halsted Street to get to the school.

Additionally, forcing our students to attend our other neighborhood schools presents another safety issue. Although our students are not gang members, they will be forced to cross clearly-defined gang barriers. They are forced to cross clearly-defined gang boundaries, in order to attend another neighborhood school.

Our school is located on 103rd Street, which is according to the Chicago Police, 22nd District Gang Territory report, it is written that Folks Nation Alliance is there. The 22nd District
gang boundary line is at 104th Street, taking our
students across the lines to other nearby
neighborhood school would send them into People
Nation Alliance territory. These are conflicting
gang territory.

Marcus Garvey, we are not underutilized,
we are under recognized.

SPEAKER: I represent Marcus Garvey. I'm a dad
who's had kids graduated from Garvey, top learners,
went on from grade school to high school, high
academics and now are about to graduate from college
with high honors.

So, we are talking about education. Let me tell you something about education. First of all, that's not a thing that you take lightly.
That's something that you take it as a treasure,
because the more you learn, the more you can put
yourself out there and be defensive as a world
nation, not just as around the neighborhood.

You will be able to do what you need to do
and show that education in Illinois is top priority
for our children. That's what it is about.

Now, let's touch on something right quick.
Not only I support it, but I will stand with Garvey,
and I have stood over the years for Garvey, to make sure all the children get the top education they deserve. This is what it's about.

Not turning things around, and this is not about the gangs. It's about your safety. As parents, we care about where our children go all the time. I don't want any of my children from Garvey going anywhere and in harm's way.

You can put yourself in harm's way. That is what I have to say.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Dmari Moore, and I'm an eighth grade student from Marcus Garvey School. Before I came to this school, I attended a school in the neighborhood that had gang members hanging around the school area; and when I was ten years old, I was shot on my way home from school.

I can't quite describe what it feels like to be shot, other than I was in shock and in a lot of pain. You could see right through my leg where the bullet hole went in and out.

Because of what happened to me, I was afraid to go back to the school. My mother was afraid for my safety and transferred me to Marcus
Garvey in 2010, hoping for a better education and not living in fear while doing so.

I can walk to school and from school with my siblings without fear of being hurt. I feel safer than ever. The neighborhood is better, and I don't have to cross any gang lines just to get to school.

I no longer have to avoid fights that have carried over from an unsafe neighborhood into the classrooms and halls. My mother, aunts, my grandmother and my uncles graduated from Marcus Garvey, and I wanted myself and my siblings to be educated in the same safe environment.

Marcus Garvey is a safe environment and should remain open. Students deserve the opportunity to learn, and parents need to know their children are safe.

SPEAKER: Good evening. As the school year comes to an end, I'm with a discussion I do not plan on making until my daughter graduated from Marcus Garvey in 2018.

Marcus Garvey -- currently my daughter walks three blocks to school before she reaches the playground where staff are waiting for her. Moving
her to another school would cause her to walk a
longer distance; and instead of being on a main
street, she will walk on a dim side street. As a
parent, I am concerned with her safety.

The violence in Chicago is on the rise.
The violence is not only taking the lives of gang
members, but is taking the lives of innocent
children who are where they are supposed to be and
doing what their parents gave them permission to do.

Haydia Pendleton's death was the closet
gang violence to reach my family. My son had a few
classes with her, and said the class has not been
the same since she's been gone. Some of the
remaining schools will cause my daughter to walk
through gang territory.

I have been able to make relationships
with community businesses who watch out for my
daughter and my son as they walk home from school.

If my child has not passed a certain place
by at a certain time, I receive a call asking where
are they, did they get picked up. I'm asking you to
please not close Marcus Garvey.

SPEAKER: My name is Adean Johnson. I'm in
third grade at Marcus Garvey School. I used to
attend a private school before coming to Marcus Garvey.

At first, I didn't want to leave my old school, because I felt Marcus Garvey School would be like other public schools. I thought that the school would be full of violence.

I believe that Garvey would be dangerous with kids fighting every day, bringing weapons to school, along with gangs hurting and threatening the students. However, I found out that Garvey was a great school to be at.

I feel safe inside of my school, and there is structure. I love the fact that there is structure, because clear rules are safe and expected to be followed. For example, we do not talk in the hallway because the hallway is considered zone zero.

Garvey is a safe environment for kids to learn and be the best that they could be. I feel safe at Marcus Garvey, because we use social and emotional learning skills to solve our problems.

We learn how to show empathy for each other, and how to control our anger and emotions. I love the SEL program at our school. We go to a peace center to discuss problems and follow
problem-solving steps that help us to pick the best
solutions for our problems.

We were featured on Fox 32 news last year
for SEL, and I was featured in a video for the
collaborative for academic social and emotional
learning organization, which is known as the CASEL
Group, discussing how positively the SEL program has
helped me to improve my academic and social skills.

My school deserves to stay open because we
have a great community and school.

DR. SAFFOLD: So, Green, would you please
assemble at this time. Each student has ten
minutes.

However, if you have additional speakers,
you could stay after all schools have spoken, and
you will have an opportunity to voice your concerns.

We'll do Green at this time.

SCHOOL: GREEN

SPEAKER: Good evening. I'm Paretta J. Pruitt,
wife of Mr. James Pruitt, chairperson of the local
school council.

The first issue we want to drive home is
the ideal capacity number that CPS is using to
calculate our utilization, and that is criteria
No. 5. That is highlighted on your handout. The school has a utilization rate of 70 percent or higher.

CPS inaccurately calculates that Wendell E. Green has 21 classrooms. We, in fact, have 16 classrooms at Wendell E. Green Elementary. This miscalculation incorrectly adds 120 students to the formula used to determine ideal capacity.

The problem is the misinterpretation of the blueprint. In our handout, you can see the floor plan of the school indicating where the discrepancy lies.

Ms. Ashley Richardson from the Portfolio Office, and Ms. Towns from Family and Community Engagement, visited Wendell Green and conducted a walk-through in which they can validate there were no walls present where the pink lines are highlighted.

The blueprints showed girders used by engineers and architects for construction, not walls for classrooms. Let me reiterate that Wendell E. Green Elementary has 16 classrooms, not 21; and our ideal capacity is 360 students, not the inaccurate number of 480.
Our school, therefore, is over the 70-percent threshold for utilization criteria. Thankfuly, you are having community meetings to uncover information that is unknown or accurate, or inaccurate, excuse me.

Now, let's do the right thing with the information that you have obtained. Take us, Wendell E. Green Elementary, off your list. Our capacity numbers are wrong, making the utilization number wrong.

The CPS portfolio representative and FACE representative on the walk-through can confirm this factual. Surely you wouldn't want to bear false witness against this finding.

Again, let me say take Wendell E. Green elementary off the list and immediately amend our ideal capacity number, so we won't need to address this issue on an annual basis.

Take Wendell E. Green off the list. Do recognize this error, correct it, and once again take Wendell E. Green Elementary off the list.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good evening, everybody. Hello, my name Zackery Love. CPS states that it's goal is to
insure that all students are able to get to school
and be at school safely.

Let's talk about the route I would have to
travel if you closed my school. Look at the map on
the gang territories in your PowerPoint. Our school
is totally surrounded by opposing gangs.

Although I'm not in a gang, other gangs
don't just don't care. They associate me with the
neighborhood I live in; therefore, I'm always a
target.

The neighborhood of the Green, Wacker and
Fort Dearborn Schools have been battling for over 35
years with documented acts of shootings and
violence. We've had basketball games canceled three
weeks ago because of specific threats of shootings.

A month ago, students from charter schools
stopped me and another student, asked what gang we
are we were in, then violently beat us up.

Why send the lamb into the lines den, when
you already know what's going to happen to us.

Specifically the black boys in our city, hear my
cry. Take us off the list. Don't send me to harm's
way. Take us off the list.

SPEAKER: Hi, my name is Dorothy Blue. I'm
here to represent Wendell E. Green School. I know you have heard the community's cry regarding safety, but my personal testimony is that my oldest son and his best friend were both shot at.

By the grace of God, my oldest son was not hit, but his best friend was struck in the face. The feeling that I had on that day, I could not describe. I want my child to, I have my youngest son at Wendell E. Green, I want him to be a name and not a number.

At Green, the children feel safe. Gangbangers do not approach them at Wendell E. Green. After school, the children from green have a safe environment at the after-school programs for the boys and girls held at Trinity All Nations Church that is right across the street our Wendell E. Green School.

Asking us to allow our children to attend either of the schools west, east or north of Green school is totally unacceptable to me and every other parent with children at Green School.

We should not have to tolerate the gang issues, or the safety issues, as you are asking us to do. With all of the violence and deaths of
children occurring in other areas, I cannot believe that you are even considering making our children leave the safe environment we have here at Wendell E. Green School. Please, take us off the list.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Tammy Taylor. CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett and CPS have stated on numerous occasions that students will be given options to enroll in higher-performing schools. It has also been mentioned several times students will not move from a higher-performing school to a lower-performing school.

Well, what schools will the children from Green attend, since there are no higher-performing schools in our neighborhood? Green Elementary was a level 1 school last year. We are now literally one point away from being a level 1 school.

We are not on probation. The school to our south is a level 3 school, 22 points away from level 1 status. The school to your east in rival gang territory is a level 2 school, 20 points away from level 1 status and lower ISAT composite than Green.

The school to our west, CICS Longwood Charter, is a level 3 school, 27 points away from
the level 1 status. The next school west of the charter is a magnet school level 2, and 7 points away from level 1 status.

The school to our north is in rival gang territory, is level 3 at 22 points away from level 1. Where will the children from Green go? Where are the higher-performing school options?

CPS states that no school level 2 on the rise will close. How much long on the rise must we be, if we're one point away if level 1?

We regained trust of the community. Take us off the list. Use the wisdom of Solomon, take us off the list. We are the high-performing options for families. Please take us off the list.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Jeff Daniel, and I am the site directed for the Wendell E. Green Girls and Boys Clubs. The Boys and Girls Club in Chicago started its faithful partnership with Wendell E. Green in 2008 with a five-year grant funded by 21st Century Learning center.

During the five-year term, from 2008 until 2013, the Girls and Boys Clubs provided after-school programs and summer programs at no cost to CPS to further enhance the academic success of the student.
Success has been achieved with the help of the Boys and Girls Club after-school program at Green. In 2008, when the partnership initially began, Green school was on academic probation failing to meet AYP.

Within one year through collaborative efforts, the school was no longer listed as underachieving, and since has remained off the list.

It is no in 2013, and the initial five-year agreed-upon term with Boys and Girls Club since 2008 has come to an end.

There are very few cases where 21st Century Learning Center has renewed funding after a five-year term has been completed.

I am proud and excited to say due to continuous academic success at Green, from 2008 to 2013, 21st Century Learning Center has again awarded Boys and Girls Club another five years of funding to continue to provide quality after-school and summer programs services until the year 2018.

Might I add that with the new extend date, the Boys and Girls Club also provide extra bodies to monitor recess and allow teachers to people their lesson. This is another service to Green at no cost
to the CPS.

During the second term of 21st Century Funding, Boys and Girls Club has additional funds for STEM and SEL material to assist Green School with implementing these programs during the school day. Again, this is at no cost to CPS.

In addition to the 21st Century funds, the Wendell E. Green Boys and Girls Club has been awarded a two-year SPARK grant program from the Department of Education to provide in-school tutoring to 56 students in grades K through three. The 56 targeted students will be tutored every minute three times a week, this totaling 90 minutes a week of one-on-one tutor beginning in August 2014.

The SPARK program has been awarded to the Boys and Girls Club as a pilot program to continue to help Green school increase its math and reading grades and test scores as well.

Boys and Girls Club partnered with six other schools throughout CPS. Of the six schools, four of them are on the closing list. Green School is listed as being underutilized.

It is a level 2 school only by one point
from being level 1. Green is not on probation. Green may be listed as underutilized, but it is maximized with strong resources to support academic success at no cost to CPS.

It is with strong recommendation for the Boys and Girls Club of Chicago that Green School remain open. Please don't let the Boys and Girls Club funding become underutilized by not having students to serve due to possible closing of Green School. Thank you.

DR. SAFFOLD: Thank you, Green. Langston Hughes, please come up at this time.

SCHOOL: LANGSTON HUGHES

SPEAKER: Good evening, everybody. My name is Amanda Montes. Thank for giving me this opportunity to express my concerns regarding our students at school.

I'm a parent of two boys that have attended Langston Hughes. My oldest son, Pedro, attended for one year, and he made so much progress in socialization skills, sensory challenges and academic chills.

My youngest son, Enrique's, challenges are more profound. Enrique's diagnosis is down
syndrome. He is a non-verbal, handicapped impaired, temporarily physically impaired, which requires him to use a wheelchair.

His progress may not seem much to anybody else; but for me, his mom, and the supported team of Langston Hughes, it has been amazing. And with his progress it has progress has included the following:

Physically, he's able to maneuver his wheelchair.

He is able to walk using his gait walker, and every day his attempts are greater distances and longer time periods. Enrique's legs keep getting stronger, and our hopes and prayers will soon become a reality when he walks on his own.

Speech, although Enrique is non-verbal, I believe with the same team of professionals, he will soon begin to communicate more effectively.

Sensory, CPS has three sensory rooms, and Langston Hughes is one of those schools that has such a room.

Enrique was a challenge that was afraid of everything. He was afraid to touch different textures. He was afraid to explore and go Beyond his comfort zone. With the help of the support team, I was able to understand and help Enrique hurdle his misunderstood challenge.
I see now how Enrique is able to touch sand, not being afraid to go to the beach, how he's able to tolerate the grass and play in the yard. He loves to feel his fingers touch shaving cream, yogurt, Play Dough.

I can go on and on. Most of all, he moves around from room to room and just explores. That for me is tremendous progress. Enrique has also improved his oral motor skims. He used to only eat pure food, and now he can chew crackers and eat more textured foods.

As a parent, I am here to implore this community to reconsider closing Langston Hughes. I would like my son to continue at the school where he feels comfortable with all his teachers and therapists so he can continue making progress.

Enrique is a child with continuity and predictable routine is important. For Enrique to start at a new school with a whole new support team, Enrique will regress instead of making any progress.

Please take into account my son, Enrique, when you make a final decision. My son already has his handful of challenges. Please don't make it harder for him to reach his potential.
SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Raquel Clark. I am also an alumni of Langston Hughes School class of 1988. I am also a proud concerned parent of Langston Hughes Elementary School, which is located 240 West 104th on the south side of Chicago.

Yes, we are all want our children to be in safe areas. Everywhere there's gangs. Everywhere there's bad people. We all want our children to be safe.

I can speak on behalf of the parents, as well as my alumni family, when I say Langston Hughes are like family. We all have our ups and downs, but we all work together. Langston Hughes is a very strong family.

The programs that are in place now at Langston Hughes, I didn't have when I was growing up. My daughter is an emerging young leader for the young for the young ladies that's dealing with AKA. We also have a very good Japanese program. Excuse me, I'm sorry, because it's God.

Sorry. What elementary school has a partnership with Tokyo, Japan. My daughter is one out of 15 who went Japan free of charge. After
watching most of the schools on the south side get
their new school, it took two decades for us to get
our school.

Our staff, parents and community went to
Springfield to fight for us to get our school. We
finally got our school. I'm sorry. I'm sorry,
everyone.

Let me tell you that it was not easy for
us going to three separate schools also; but through
it all, through it all, from the staff, our parents
and the community, we made it.

So, we the parents of the alumni high
school, as well as our community, are asking you all
to please don't close our school. Please don't make
a school that has been recognized by the state as
improving each year closing its doors.

Thank you. My name is Raquel Clark,
submittedly, Langston Hughes class of 1988.

SPEAKER: Good afternoon. I mean good evening.
My name is a Kyla Frenchwood. I am a 2012 graduate
of Langston Hughes.

Langston Hughes prepared me for high
school and the real world. While attending Langston
Hughes, I was a member of EYL and president of
student council. Because of these experiences, I have had also the pleasure of participating in leadership programs at CHSAS.

I will be going to London in 2014. This will be my second trip aboard. My first trip was to Japan. Secondly, I recently been invited to be a part of the University of Chicago Collegiate Scholar Program.

This will give me an opportunity to be prepared for college. Shutting down Langston Hughes will shut down other students like me to have similar opportunities to excel. Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name Shawnice Hubbard. I am an educator at Langston Hughes Elementary School. Our school has made wonderful gains. The state has acknowledged us two years in a row.

Number two, you all know why we're so unique? Because those specialty children that nobody else wants, that have trachs, that have G tubes, that have autism, they come to Langston Hughes and they get love. They get care.

They have some of the best special ed teachers in the city. We are here because we are
the only school with this program. We have the
structural classrooms that can only have 10
students. We have two blended classrooms, and it
only can hold 17 students. That is state law.

Now, let's also go into this, we talk
about early childhood. Our president has stressed
this. Close us, and you close an entire early
classroom wing. Shame, shame, shame.

Well our regular class size is
overcrowded, 38 kindergartens, 40 eighth graders.
We don't have the capacity, because our principal
can't hire any more because they are letting our
positions go.

Now, our Japanese program. Where do you
know that the country of Japan partners with an
African-American school on the south side of
Chicago?

We don't just go to Japan, we go for free,
baby. Seven days paid. It is an open-book social
studies lesson. I'm about to let you hear what our
kids can do in Japan. They can speak Japanese.
They can write Japanese.

SPEAKER: (Whereupon, the student spoke in
Japanese). My name is Lonnie Walker, and I'm in
eighth grade. I'm here to tell you why our school should not be closed. I think our school should not be closed because we have a great Japanese program.

We have a great Japanese program.

I've been studying Japanese since first grade. Since first grade, I have learned more things about the Japanese culture and even got a chance to go and experience the culture firsthand in Japan in the culture itself in Tokyo.

I stayed for seven days, a week, seven days, basically; and there I saw several things. I saw the Shito Shrine where just like Japan, it represents itself like a place of order.

I went and visited the school where the children presented themselves well organized, well mannered and organized individuals; and lastly, this experience was an once-in-a-lifetime shot, because it expanded my knowledge of Japanese culture.

This is why thank you, and this is why our school should not be closed.

SPEAKER: Greetings. My name is Cutis Jones.

I am in fourth grade. I want to talk about different things to keep our school open.

Number one, students have better behavior
by listening to their teacher. Number two, respecting each other. Number three, working hard to learn. These are the citizen qualities I am learning. Don't close my school, please. Thank you all very much.

SPEAKER: I'm Tasha Hunter. Don't pull the trigger on our kids. Keep our school open. Keep Langston Hughes.

DR. SAFFOLD: Kohn, Alfred Kohn, please come on up.

SCHOOL: ALFRED KOHN

SPEAKER: Excuse me. Hi, my name is Lateshia Harvey, and I'm an alumni from Kohn School. I graduated from the class of 2003.

I came to a few of these gatherings, starting at the one at the House of Hope. I've really been wondering what is it that you guys really want from us.

As far as an educational quality of Kohn School, I'm standing proof. I went to Corliss High School. After I graduated from Kohn, I went to Corliss High School, graduated No. 6 of a class of 276 students. I have my Bachelor's in Business Administration, and I'm currently an MBA student
school online.

That's proof of what Kohn School is actually doing. Our school we focus on small differentiation instructional literacy skills and emotional groups.

I'm not going to sit here and tell you that everything that the Kohn Elementary is peachy keen. It's not. We stand in the center of the most highly targeted criminal area in Chicago.

Our school sits on 104th and State. Bordering our school on 103rd is the gang territory. On 107th is a gang territory. Wentworth is gang territory, and Wabash is gang territory.

Not only am I from Kohn School, I'm from the Roseland community and I live across the street from the school. I have been in gun shootings. My daughter goes to this school.

I'm a firm believer in this school and, you know, I understand that the district needs to save money. So, I'm not only here to just hype my school, but I come to propose you guys our action plan.

We are fully committed to shutting down one of our buildings to meet utilization. Right
now, the it cost over $22 million to run and facilitate Kohn School. By taking away one of the buildings, we can still keep our doors open, not only educate our students in reading and math, but we also can build leaders and help them with emotional issues, and help them to learn how to deal with things that they are already faced.

Kohn Elementary School is the first elementary school to implement the CARE Program. What we give our students clinical help, because unlike I'm not sure if you guys know, but like, for instance, over the summer, a six-year-old little girl got killed on 106th and Indiana.

That was my student. You know, she went to our school. Her family still goes to our school. We need help to deal with these issues. We can't expect our kids to read and write and all this other stuff if they're worried about getting beat when they go home.

I came to give you guys a proposal for consolidation of the two buildings. Hopefully you guys will, you know, remain keep Kohn doors open, and consider our proposal.

SPEAKER: Good morning. I'm sorry, good
evening. My name is Dr. Mashan Smith, and I'm a psychologist for the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. Many of you may have known us as Children's Memorial in the past.

We actually work as consultants with Chicago Public Schools Office of Pathways to College and Careers. Particularly, the Youth Development Positive and Behavior Sports program. What we do is we offer consultation, training and technical assistance in a model CARE Team Model.

Not many of you have heard of the CARE Team Model, but we've heard throughout the night students get up to talk about the focus on social and emotional learning within their schools.

So far within the district, the CARE Team Model has only been offered at high schools throughout the area, particularly turnaround and transformation high schools; but when the district wanted to expand this model, and add networks to identify schools, Kohn was one of only two elementary schools identified throughout the city as being prepared for a model of this sort.

Essentially what we're talking about, as several kids throughout the night we heard about the
violence that's occurring within our community, and largely particularly within the Roseland Community, that violence is having a devastating impact on our children, and it's impacting their ability to learn.

So, not only is Kohn addressing the academic needs of the students, but it's recognizing that in order for them to reach their optimal level of performance, they need to address social and emotional issues that are impacting them as well.

Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital is glad to support them in this effort. Kohn has moved expeditiously in getting together a CARE Team and to rounding their students with social and emotional supports that they need.

We've been glad to partner with them throughout this 2012-2013 academic year, and we look forward to serving them in the 13-14 academic year.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is a Nancy Thomas, and I am a proud, proud parent of Kohn, Alfred David School.

I've been a volunteer for 17 years. My kids went to Kohn School from preschool to eighth grade. Now my daughter, she entered into Robert
Morris. She got hers Bachelor's in Business Administration, and you cannot tell me that Kohn did not make an example out of her.

We also have different programs. I am in a program called "The Parent Mentoring Coordinator," and this is the first time they've ever been in African-American school; and it's called the Parent Mentors, which I trained for five days, parent mentors going to the classrooms to mentor students.

We do small groups one on one, and then we also have different issues with our babies. Our first issue is poverty, abuse, negligence, violence, but we also have rape.

My new administration team, like I said, we have a new administration team, Ms. Kimberly Collier and Ms. Kimberly Porter.

So, please keep our doors open, because they are new and fresh, and we have new ideas; and we also had a new grant which got us $40,000 for a new frontier. We also got $5,000 for social and emotional behavior.

Like I said, our babies might have issues, but we're willing to work with them; and I just want you all to know that we are rising stars, and we
will shine. So, keep our doors open, please. Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Lacarsha Craig, and I am a proud fifth grade Panther at Kohn Elementary School.

My school should remain open because it is a safe place for me and my fellow partners. My school day begins at 8:00 a.m.; however, I arrive at 7:00 a.m. for the fitness club to exercise and escape the dangers lurking in the neighborhood.

The teachers at my school care about me deeply, and they volunteer their time to make sure their students are safe. Not only am I taught daily, but I am challenged to grow above what is required of me.

If my school closes, where is the safe haven that I can go where the adults teach me, love me, challenge me and help keep me safe in an environment where gangs and guns run rampant.

Please don't close Kohn Elementary School. Our lives matter.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Amaree Gantt, and I am a proud fifth grade Panther at Kohn Elementary School. Kohn should be kept open because
Kohn School is a great place to be. Our school offers classes in the morning so that students can have a safe place to come and and express themselves and not have to deal with damagers lurking around the neighborhood.

Our school should remain open because if we have to travel to another school, our lives will be at risk. There are many gangs that surround our school. Our school has not had to go on lockdown this year, and we have not lost any Panthers to gun violence.

Because our school opens early, we can arrive early and stay safe within in our school. If Kohn closes, we have to go to another school. We will have to cross into other gang territory and our lives will be at stake.

We want to live and learn in our school. Please keep Kohn School.

DR. SAFFOLD: Thank you, Kohn. Please come on up, Shoop, you're on deck. So after Shoop is done, you will have ten minutes. We'll give the following schools ten minutes -- I'm sorry, two minutes to come up and say anything that you would like, if. You didn't have an opportunity, two minutes.
Fernwood, Garvey, Green, Hughes, Kohn, Shoop, that will be the second round. You'll have two minutes. Come on up Shoop.

SCHOOL: SHOOP

SPEAKER: Good afternoon. I say noon, because that's what when the sun is brightest in the sky is in the afternoon.

To build a nation you must build the people. To build the people, what do you have to do? We must first teach the children.

One of the things that I notice as your program opened this evening, Reverend Crider mentioned two scriptures. He didn't give the scripture. That was Timothy and proverbs, but he said, "Study to show thy self approved."

Well, what I'm going to say to you I'm sure might not be the most positive thing in the world, but I talked to our mayor, Mayor Emanuel, personally.

Two weeks before the election, I had one question for him then and I have one now: When are we going to level the playing field in education in the City of Chicago?

When are we going to get $98 million from
Uno taxpayer dollars. Come on and bring it home.

We need to study to show thyself approved.

The next thing is that we do have an idea that will help utilize the underutilization of schools, and it's the same thing that Preckwinkle uses. It's the same thing the mayor used.

All you have to do is check New Mexico school's system, and it gives you a perfect outline as to what you can do; and one of the things that can be done is take those schools as they do there, put in the case worker's time module evaluation.

Take all of these buildings that you are using and paying extra cash for, put them in those underutilized schools where the service is already there for the community. They don't have to run. They don't have to crawl.

He came back after the election and said, "How am I doing?" Well, I'm telling you now how you doing. We've got to do better and a whole lot better than what we're doing now, because right now it's hot what's happening.

SPEAKER: I am representing former past State Senator Jones is trying to get here to speak on behalf of Shoop School. He's a proud graduate and
member of the Shoop 49ers.

That are a number here who are members of the Shoop 49ers. On a recent return trip home, as I crossed the Illinois state line, I glanced at the sign. It read, "Land of Lincoln," but I could have sworn it morphed into the sign that said, "Land of Corruption."

This title fits Illinois finances and politics, but also in education. The real reason that many times Johnny can't read is because Illinois politics and apathy.

The lack of credibility, transparency, honesty and vision suits the needs of some. I will submit to this panel a list of questions that I hope you will address sometime in the immediate future.

While we're looking -- before I look at the question, I want to talk about Shoop. We have 533 students at Shoop School. You realize that there are 56 schools in the City of Chicago that have between 5 and 600 students.

We're one of the 56, but we happen to be one of the few that you plan to close using that number of students. We have always met and exceeded the state standards. For example, from 2002, we
went from 29 percent to 2011, 73 percent increase in our composite scores.

Now, we have a we had a dip last year, but that's because the City of Chicago has no visionaries to their leadership, because if they had visionaries, you would be using the growth model instead of comparing apples to apples and oranges to oranges.

You cannot tell me that. In addition, we looked at the 17 schools that you are closing on the south side of Chicago. Almost all of those schools are in minority concentrated areas, as opposed to on the north side where you are only targeted four school.

Our attendance rate went from 91 percent to 95 percent. So, our students are coming to school. We have collaboration with numerous organizations. We can give you a list of those, and we're sure that you guys can read that, if you want to. I'm going to.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Helen Gorden, and I represent the Morgan Park community. Morgan Park is one oldest black communities in Chicago. Also, John D. Shoop School
was built in 1927. It is a generation of five and six families that went to John D. Shoop School. We're proud of our alma matter, our alumni of Morgan Park High School.

I'm going to give you some partners. We have religious partners. We got Mount Calvary Baptist Church, under the auspices of our own Reverend Tyrone Crider.

We want got Trinity United church. We got Bethany Union Church, which is up at 107th and Woods. We got the First United Methodist Church. We got all the Church of Renewed Faith, and we got Miles George Church at 11339 South May.

Also, I mentioned about the Shoop 49ers and in Morgan Park Youth Organization. Our organization for years, since 1993, we started off with our parents, then we went to the toys and candy babies at Shoop School.

We give every child their John D. Shoop School that you parents know it, a wrapped Christmas gift and an assortment of the candy, from preschool to eighth grade.

Are we government funded? No. Is anybody giving us money to do this? No. This is what we
like to do because we love our community. We got
the Smart Program, the Chicago Family Direction. We
got the Chicago Children Museum, the Morgan Club
Boys and Girls Club. We got 34th Ward Alderman
Carrie Austin, and Illinois math and science camp.
We have enough of Shoop School that are here.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Destiny
Evans. I'm currently attending Shoop Academy, a
current eighth grader. Shoop School has prepared me
for high school and life. For example, in seventh
grade on the ISAT, I exceeded in reading math and
science.

On Saturday, I received accepted letters
from Whitney Young College Preparatory Schools, Chas
and Brooks College Preparatory School. I owe it to
my mother, Shoop School teachers, staff and
students. They have all encouraged me and pushed me
to do my best, no matter what I would have to face
in life and in school.

How has Shoop prepared me for high school?
Well, Shoop School has prepared me because I am
currently taking high school algebra and reading
classes. Also, I am in the Chicago Business School
at Shoop. I have won many awards for best speaker
and team awards.

This has helped me to become confident, develop my public speaking skills, and has taught me to stand up in what I believe. This is why I am standing up for Shoop Academy today, because I believe Shoop should not be closed. I had excelled, and others can and will, if Shoop is not closed.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: My name is Marry Hopkins, and I'm in second grade. I want the school to stay open because it is adorned by us. God give us Shoop and kids and teachers and staff give joy in teaching. Don't throw away joy away.

SPEAKER: I am Tera Romell, program director at the Morgan Park Girls and Boys Club. We opened October 15th, 2012. We just partnered with Shoop in the last few months.

Already 33 percent of our students are enrolled in our after-school program. 172 K through eighth graders are served by our program. Not only do we serve students in our club, but we serve them at Shoop.

Two days a week from 3:00 to 5:00 we run health and fitness programs. We also are in there
Monday through Thursday serving sixth through eighth grader. They are 165 sixth through eighth graders that we serve with our youth development professionals, along with Shoop staff. So, teachers are able to do lesson planning, and we're utilizing their cafeteria. We also utilize their field to run health and fitness programs. So, I saw zero so I stopped. We're really excited teaching our partnership. As I said, it's very young, and we see tons of potential. Just today we started running a recess program for third through fifth graders. So, we are continuing to push the boundaries, and we hope to utilize the school even more, including summer camp. We serve over 100 students during the summer. It's the high risk. We also work for learning loss prevention.

SPEAKER: My name is Wallace Gator Bradley. I'm an alumni of Shoop School. One thing they teach that we are a community, let it be known we ain't letting you close Shoop School. Followed by the that, I'm from Racine Court. I know the importance of new park. I know the importance of red line. I know about Grouper
Park. One thing that is key, like the young schools close, if they close Shoop School, where they going to go?

If you want to stop violence, keep Shoop school open. We was here before they even brung the Dan Ryan across here; and if you're serious, you can go to court, put a TRO against stopping the closing of Shoop school for public safety.

SPEAKER: My name is Earle Brian. I'm a Shoop graduate 1949. I'm not the only graduate that is part of the alumni. We support the school and our time and resources and everything else.

We will not accept the closing of the Shoop School until all our schools in Chicago are closed. Stop taking some of that money -- take some of that many you are using to over charge schools, put it back into the other schools.

Our school should remain in an orderly way. This is what he stand for. The alumni and all of those schools stand behind me in this quest.

SPEAKER: My name is Terrion Williams, and I'm from Shoop Academy School. Well, for one, I do like the school. For one, I would just like to see Shoop come in. Well, for one, I just like Shoop. Why?
Because unlike most people, I've been here all my life, so it would be hard to see Shoop close.

Second thing, I like football, basketball, and other sports activity are things that make people want to keep their grades up.

Shoop should not be closed because just picture 100 kids are here at Shoop; and if we close, we will have to go to another school that is not in our area or a suburban area or something like that.

But the most specific thing I learned is self control for my favorite teacher Mr. Burns. Without his teaching, I would probably not be speaking where I am speaking today.

Another Shoop special teacher are my other favorite teacher Ms. Markatoes and Ms. Jordan. Like I said before, if it wasn't for them, I wouldn't probably know how to write like I do now, or spell how I do now, or do anything I do now.

I probably wouldn't have to do it. If you do close Shoop, all of those other kids, including my three siblings that go to Shoop, would probably drop out of school, join a gang and start selling dope, or start getting jumped to go to another school they got sent to because Shoop closing.
Another good thing is Shoop has been in my generation for 18 years now. So, it means so much to me.

SPEAKER: My name is Ms. Cutasha Hampton. To close Shoop School is showing you do not care and people do not matter. Most of all, it's supposed to be children first. I want our children to be able to have a safe passage and a safe haven.

My children having attended Shoop academy for eighth years, and they have exceeded very well, might I add. Here in our community, what is the real issue at hand? How much do you care about our youth?

Is it supposed to be children first and education matters, or is it just a business proposition? Please tell me, because it's very important to me and mine.

I'm not speaking just for me, but for those who don't have a voice, and for my children who can't speak for themselves. I'm a parent before I'm anything.

Shoop has been my children's home away from home, and educationally their needs have been met. We all know that family means everything to
us. Please do not, and you should not, perplex our children but find a resolution.

Before making this judgment, I come to you, and I ask you to stand up for us instead of tearing us down and apart. Now it's time for you to quit trying to balance your budget and make that your first priority and put our children failure.

DR. SAFFOLD: At this time we're going to recognize a state rep. At this time we're going to allow each of the following schools to come up and speak for two minutes.

Listen carefully to everyone's attention. Everyone wants to be heard. So, Fernwood, Garvey, Green, Hughes, Kohn and Shoop, you'll have an opportunity to speak for two minutes.

So, select whichever speakers you would like to come up, line them will up on this side over here. Fernwood, Garvey, Green, Hughes Kohn and Shoop line your speakers up. You have two minutes.

While they're lining up, Terry Austin would like to come and say something, and then we'll end after the last school. After Alderman Austin, Fernwood on deck. If you're not here, we're going to move to Garvey.
If you're not on deck, Green, Langston Hughes, Kohn and Shoop. Two minutes. Two minutes. Excuse me, everyone needs to sit down. Everyone wants to be heard, so sit down. If you're leaving, we ask you to please leave quietly.

We want to make sure that everyone is heard, and we want to do everything, as the paster said, decent and orderly. Please, if you're leaving, leave quietly so that the speakers that want to speak for their two minutes will have an opportunity.

Again, Fernwood, Garvey, Green, Langston Hughes, and Shoop. You should be on deck. Two minutes per school. Mr. Shannon, two minutes per school. Senator Austin?

OFFICIAL

ALDERMAN AUSTIN: Thank you, Dr. Saffold. I just want to touch on the schools of mine that have spoken today.

DR. SAFFOLD: We cannot hear the Alderman. If you're leaving, please leave quietly. We want to be respectful. Thank you.

ALDERMAN AUSTIN: Thank you again, Ms. Saffold. I want to speak just briefly on the schools that
have appeared before you today.

I know that there will be other speakers, but for the last school that was just up, which was Shoop School, I cannot see CPS investing as much money as they did in redevelopment of the building and don't invest that kind of money in the redevelopment of the students.

So, again as Emil Jones saw fit to say, "In order for my children to learn in a better environment, let me fix the surroundings for them."

So, if you invest in brick and mortar, why are we not investing in the children that we have, which is our most precious gift that God could give us.

So, you say its underutilized. As one of the parents say, "Where will they go?" They have to go across the expressway at least six blocks out of their way as opposed to staying in an environment where they are already learning.

How did schools get on this list I have absolutely no idea, because I say this one thing: Numbers can be made to say whatever you want them to say.

If that's what you are doing in regards to our children in all of our schools, I go to
Fernwood, I got the number one male principal in the City of Chicago, Mr. Robert Towner. You don't get that too often.

Mr. Shell Van Allen (phonetic), the principal of Marcus Garvey. In Hughes, Ms. Kimberly Collier. Ms. Soreno (phonetic), she took a leave of absence, she left us strong. This is a few of my schools.

Only 6 out of 18 of my schools, 18 elementary schools, not high schools. So, if anything, if these schools be on any list, as I say when I first stood up here, we will not close any school in the 34th Ward.

I don't give out idle threats, but I can tell you this: As many people that you saw in this auditorium, I guarantee I can bring 10,000 down there. You ain't seen nothing here.

That's not a threat, but a fact. I could tell you that we are very passionate. We've done everything we know how to bring our students up to what they need. We beg, borrow steal, scrape, do everything, teach the parents, teach the children, give them outlets, give them all additional parents. What more do you want our kids to do?
You are asking for them to do more, and
what you are doing for any school in operation? But
you want to close down all of the schools in black
communities, and close down four others.

Invest in our kids. Don't take away from
them and tear them down. How can a kid feel good
about going to a school knowing or thinking their
school is going to close?

As I said, I don't give out idle threats,
but I guarantee you if you're talking about closing
any one of the schools in 34, we're coming down.
We're coming down.

I will tell you the kids on the street, I
can tell you as the children stay on the streets, it
will not be.

DR. SAFFOLD: Fernwood, you are on deck.

SCHOOL: FERNWOOD

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Deja
Booker. I'm in eighth grade, and I attend Fernwood
Elementary School.

I think that our school shouldn't be
closed because we do meet the requirements, and we
are strive for our best. I feel like Fernwood has
challenged me for my full potential because I am
passing with all As, and I am eligible for IB schools, CTE schools, selective enrollment schools and magnet schools.

Fernwood is a safe school. They keep kids safe when they travel to and from school. And lastly, the teachers gave us a packet to look at, and we were exceeding our peers in the district. Thank you and have a great day.

SCHOOL: MARCUS GARVEY

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Shoneice Reynolds, and I'm a parent and alumni of Marcus Garvey school. Garfield Park School has been a consistent pillar and safe haven in our community and a family generational school.

From staff to students, we have a sense of pride. Students return as parents. Parents that were volunteers when I attended are now staff members.

Students are now teachers at Marcus Garvey. That shows community growth and stability. Marcus Garvey is not underutilized. We have various schools, parent and community programs that use classroom space, girl scouts being one, where the current troop leader was my troop leader.
We offer science and computer labs for K through eighth grade. We have preschool, Spanish, art, PE, library, counseling and special education service providers.

We've also used our school funds to have reduced classroom sizings. Marcus Garvey is within one gang territory, and the gang boundary line ends at 104th Street, sending our students across that line to any neighborhood school will put them in a safety issue.

Although our students are not gang members, they will be faced with pressures of gang recruitment and violence, which does not start in high school. Children are drawn in all ages.

Marcus Garvey school exceeded the criteria for more than 300 students enrolled by the 20th day. According to the CPS overtime probation report, Marcus Garvey does not have the same or higher performance for school years 2011-2012 as '10 and '11; but this is Garvey's first year being on probation with the 17 years.

Our ISAT composite meets and exceeds average for the last three years is 77 percent. For the 2011-2012 school year, Marcus Garvey exceeded
the average composite score for the last three years.

Marcus Garvey students have been performing above peers in reading and math for not only the last three years, but the last eight years.

DR. SAFFOLD:  Green, two minutes.

SCHOOL:  WENDELL GREEN

SPEAKER:  Hello. My name is Candria Perkins, and I'm a member of the local school council with two children attending Green.

I am here to state that the First Lady Obama had said our children are being obese, and they need to be more healthy.

So, in the midst of the CPS budget cuts to athletic programs, Green has been able to secure funding from the parents and the Boys and Girls Club to insure opportunities for students to prepare for scholarships that will send them on to college.

Two weeks ago the National Junior Beta Team has represented CPS in Springfield, and they are going to represent them in the national level in June of 2013.

In May, our school went to the Illinois Prevention Bowel here at Wrigley Field. This once
again shared a positive light on the academic progress that CPS and the south side of Chicago can proclaim, if you do not close down Wendell Green School. Please don't not close our school.

SPEAKER: You just took four seconds of my time. My name is Pastor Larry Roberts. I am the pastor of Trinity All Nations Church, located at 9600 South on Vincennes.

I'm the one that married the Boys and Girl Club. I am the one that married Wendell E. Green. I'm the one that married Mr. Tyrone Dibel back in 2002, to start this relationship, this partnership this kinship in the current with the church connected with the community.

Now for what it sounds like to me, we house anywhere from 80 to 100 children that walk from Wendell Green across the street to the church and the fellowship hall.

Now, what it sounds like to me you all are getting ready to divorce us, and divorce does not look good, when it come down to the divorcing the marriage. Right?

So I'm asking you do not divorce the principal and the preacher from the connection in
the community. If you drive down Vincennes, you
will see a great sign that says, "Trinity All
Nations," and you will see another sign in the
middle of the block saying, "Wendell E. Green Boys
and Girls Club."

Don't make me take my sign down. We got a
number of abandoned houses in the community. Do not
abandon schools in the community. Do not shut our
schools down that we walk to school that we're able
to bridge and build relationships.

I walked to school when I was a kid. I
was able to build a relationship with the community.
Do not have us crossing lines in a foreign country
that we know nothing about. Whom God have joined
together, let no man put us under.

SCHOOL: SHOOP

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Dorothy
Jones Connie. My great uncle moved into the
community in the late 1800s. My grandparents, my
great grandmother, and all my great aunts moved here
in 1913.

There were no schools in this community.

There were no schools. Shoop was opened in 1927.

Here is my uncle Jim in the first class in 1928.
Shoop School, then followed by Holy Name of Mary.

Also they planted gardens, grew trees and built homes in this wonderful oldest black community in the City of Chicago. Shoop School is going to celebrate it's 85th anniversary this year.

Do not close this historic school, because we have had generations. This is the third century that people living in this community. Thank you.

SCHOOL: LANGSTON HUGHES

SPEAKER: I am a mother, parent from Langston Hughes. I would like to say how something that seems so small to us is so big to children.

You know, taking away somebody's skills, taking away their social, is basically taking away their ability to adapt and learn in the area being moved from place to place like that. They can't concentrate on the things they need if they're being moved.

It means the world to me that this is my kids first time attending public school, and both of them score above average on standardized tests.

Bring home good grades, bring home very, very good grades.

Langston Hughes houses will provide us
education for special needs children. You know, they give the opportunity for children, black children, black children to go to Japan and experience something outside of their environment that is totally different to what we're seeing on the streets.

It gives them that opportunity. It gives them the opportunity to expand their mind frame. That is what it does. When you have an ability like that to expand your mind frame, you move out of a community.

Your mind is no longer housed in that community, but it feels safe; and if you take away that safety, that takes away their ability to love, to learn. That's what it does.

I feel happy when Nicholas he can come home and he can feel proud to tell me he's doing so well, but in a place that might seem so small to us, it means the world to him.

I see it in them every day they get up and go to school. I see it every day I have to pick them up. I see it every day, and its a safety net for a parent to know, like, me I'm a young parent, not uneducated but young.
I know how it feels to have to walk through these neighborhoods and still say, "Well, I know it's a struggle, not being robbed today. I know it's struggle having to get up and go to school today, but I still have to concentrate on my work."

I still have to do that at the end of the day. These are what the children have to deal with. These are what I know my children have to deal with.

I'm just hoping and praying Langston Hughes can stay open, because I got to see my son, my five year old and my daughter, my six year old, score above average on standardized testing, and this can only come from going to Langston Hughes.

DR. SAFFOLD: We have Kohn. And after Kohn, every school had two minutes. We have Kohn, and then after that we have Pastor Jenkins.

SCHOOL: Kohn

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Gary Williams, and I am a third grade teacher at Kohn Elementary, and I speak on behalf the instructors.

I'm just here to give you a testimony of what we go through. We spent our dollars more than what CPS reimburses us. We're with these children in the morning, and way in the wee hours of the
night.

We are also planning structure. We know what it's like to get in that classroom and move that data. Give us a chance, don't close us down. These kids in here are the next Barack Obamas.

Don't close their future. They are here, and they are standing on the shoulders of their ancestors that fought in the civil rights movement to get them to where they are at now.

With all the gun violence going on in the street, why would we close the schools to put them in harm's way? I know there is an separation of church and state, but I'm here to tell you as long as there is a God in me, there will be God in that classroom every day.

I walk those kids home. I make sure they have what they need. It does not end. We can't get tired, even when we're on breaks, in session or in a strike.

We are still planning, we are still calling homes, we're still checking in. Our job does not stop when we swipe out. It still goes on. I don't have the weekend to myself without thinking about my kids. They are not mine,
personally, but when I'm in that classroom, each and
every last one of those faces belong to me, until I
get them back to their parents.

So, I'm standing on behalf of our
instructors who spend their dollars, spend their
time, who are stressed, out who are tired. Don't
give up and don't give in. Keep teaching,
regardless of what they say.

You got them until June. So, give them
the best that you've got. Thank you.

DR. SAFFOLD: Thank you. We had each school
had two minutes. We're not leaving. We're going to
stay here and listen to you.

So, after every school has had two
minutes, we will stay here and listen to you, but
it's 9:00 o'clock. We want to do everything, Like
Pastor Crider said, decent and cordial.

We will give you -- we're not leaving, but
it's only fair to allow each student to speak two
minutes. Pastor Jenkins, and then Reverend Crider,
and then we'll close out. Thank you.

PASTOR JENKIS: Good evening. Good evening to
each one of you. My name is Craig Jenkins, and I'm
the master of the Bethany Baptist Church, which is
the mother church of this community.

We've been here for 122 years. We've around for a little while. I stand not as a teacher, or administrator, but I stand as a minister, a preacher, gospel of Jesus Christ.

A couple of things as a pastor, I represent a whole lot of folks spiritually. They may not say spiritual things in a sense such as this; but a long time ago mom and dad said something like this, which is theological, "God don't like ugly." God does not like ugly. God does not like ugly.

And when you hurt the children, you are missing something. Let the children come to prevent them not. When you mess with the children, these are God's special ones; and when you mess with the children, you're standing on shaky ground.

Just to give a word for believers, any believers in the house tonight? No weapon from the gaits of hell shall prosper. No weapon. You can't fight God. Your arms are too short to box with God.

You just all be careful because these are God's children. These God's children. We are God's children, and the word of God protects his children.
I got news for you, you may think you've succeeded, but you got to give an account of everything that you do. I stand as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I will stand on these words, God will take care of his children. God will take care of you. Believe in wings of love. God will take care of you.

No matter what may be the test, God will take care of you. Lead the weary ones upon his brother, God will take care of you. God will take care of you through everything, all along the way.

Do I have a witness here? God bless us. God bless us. Don't mess with God's children because God will take care of his children.

DR. SAFFOLD: Thank you, everybody, for being here this evening. Again, we will stay here if you have any additional questions and concerns. My table will be here.

Pastor Crider is going to end us out. Thank you, have a safe trip home. Pastor Crider.

MS. TOWNS: Garvey school, when you get ready to leave, Carl Kimball will escort you to your buses. Okay? Thank you.
REVEREND CRIDER: Let's give Pastor Jenkins a
great round of applauds. I need you to know Pastor
Jenkins spoke on behalf of all of the pastors in the
34th Ward; but I want to recognize just one more
time our awesome Alderwoman. Let's give her a round
of applauds.

And we, too, are going to join you. We're
going to join you, if necessary, send 10,000 down to
CPS. I'm a member. We'll be joining you.

All right. Let me just close by thanking
CPS and the Commission for allowing Calvary to host
this event.

Let me secondly say thank you to every
school, all six schools that we were referencing,
and I just want each school to know you represented
yourself very well. Every school, you represented
yourself very well.

I want to thank you for allowing this
meeting, this conversation, to be done decently and
in order. You also gave that a round of applauds.
All right.

After Pastor Jenkins, I started to open
the doors of the church. He didn't quote just one
verse of the hymn, he went down every sentence of
the them.

You're going to preach here on March 29th to say the last word. He was just practicing again. Don't give the preacher a microphone with a lot of people.

Let's all stand for a moment. For a moment. For a moment. One more time, the Commission and those who are representatives of them said they will remain, if there are others who want to share.

We can do something a little different tonight. I just hope we can join hands together in the spirit of unity. Wherever you are, please find one person.

If you don't mind, at least tell them you are holding the hands of a miracle. Come on, say it one more time, like you really believe it. You're holding the hands of a miracle, of a miracle.

God has kept you and God has blessed you. God has covered you and you're holding the hand of a miracle tonight. I remember want my wife to come just so no brothers get confused. This is my wife.

I just want my wife to stand with me so the brothers don't get confused. I'll say that one
more time. Hug me baby, put your arm around me.

Father, God, we come to say thank you for
this gathering. You said come let us reason
together.

Thank you for allowing every school to
represent from administration to parents to alumni
to students, and thank you for the wonderful
testimony of the students.

Students are crying out, "Keep my school
open." We ought to be thankful. We ought to have
more discussion about closing the prisons and
building more schools.

We stand as a village today. It takes a
whole village to raise the children. So, from the
churches to the community, from pastors to
principals, to parents to professionals and
politicians, we stand to get to fight for our
schools and fight for our children.

We pause even now to take a moment for
those children and students who have lost their
lives to senseless gun violence.

When Cain killed Abel, the first murder,
God said to Cain, "The blood is crying out to me,
and the children's blood is crying out to us." We
pray that you give us direction.

We close now if my people, which will call by my hand, to humble themselves in prayer, seek my faith and turn from their wicked ways.

God says, "I will hear from Heaven. I will forgive sin, and I will heal the land." This is our prayer in Jesus' name. Can everybody say Amen?

Give God a hand of praise. At least praise the Lord. Let's give God a hand in praise. Amen.

(WHICH WERE ALL THE PROCEEDINGS HAD.)
STATE OF ILLINOIS )
) SS:
COUNTY OF COOK )

PAMELA A. MARZULLO, C.S.R., being first duly sworn,
says that she is a court reporter doing business in the city
of Chicago; that she reported in shorthand the proceedings
had at the Proceedings of said cause; that the foregoing is
a true and correct transcript of her shorthand notes, so
taken as aforesaid, and contains all the proceedings of said
meeting.

_____________________
PAMELA A. MARZULLO
License No. 084-001624

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO
before me this _____day
of _______________ 2013.

Notary Public