



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

January 20, 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, Tracy Templin, Charles Swirsky, Susan Birkhotlz, Henry Velarde, Sharon Hinton, Claudia Guzman, Maritza Rivera, Joyce Crockett, Bonnie Roelle, Lee Caldwell, Ashley Voss, Edith Zayas

**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 approximately 79 people in attendance and 21 speakers. The speaker comments focused on a variety of issues, including community members' concerns that students would choose not to attend Nash and reasons to support the co-location.

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**CPS Presentation**

At approximately 6:08 pm, Andrea Saenz, Chief of Staff for CPS, welcomed those in attendance and introduced the meeting. At 6:12 p.m., Chief Gurley of the Austin-North Lawndale Elementary Network gave an overview of the proposal. Thereafter, the meeting was opened for public comment.

**Public Comment**

**Jyson Franklin, KIPP Teacher**

Mr. Franklin expressed excitement about sharing space and working with Nash. In his first class, 80% of his students were from the Austin area. He said that 90% are in college now.

**Kahari Hammond**

Mr. Hammond believes that co-location would be good for the North Lawndale and Austin community and would provide a better education to the children. He stated that the co-location was good because people are coming together and focusing on the children.

**Hyneisha Wilson**

Ms. Wilson believes that Austin High School is a failure. She hopes that children can succeed and is glad that the community is coming together and fighting for better school learning.

**Deponshia Davis**

Ms. Davis stated that there needs to be higher quality education for students in the Westside community.

**Sonia Garcia, Parent at KIPP**

Ms. Garcia is satisfied with KIPP administration. She stated that KIPP helps her help her child. She also enjoys Saturday options. Ms. Garcia said that she can email, text, or call a principal and get a response and she is a proud KIPP parent.

**Shelly Nation Watson, Teacher at NASH**

Ms. Nation Watson stated that her students and parents are on speed dial. For Nash's composite ISAT scores, there is a 9% difference between KIPP and NASH and a 40% ISAT Composite increase. Her concern was being able to keep students and continue to help them grow and succeed. Ms. Nation Watson wants to see in the contract how long it would take for students to be pulled into KIPP.

*Response from Chief Gurlly – No contract as of yet, but we will make the information available when it is completed. A memorandum of understanding will provide that they will not be pulling students from the same attendance area.*

**George Kelly**

Mr. Kelly stated that after ten years of academic probation, Crane is among the lowest performing schools in the district.

**Katie Gelsan, Teacher**

Ms. Gelsan, stated that what the Board is doing to Nash is wrong. He expressed concerned about keeping primary students safe and fights breaking out. He believed that this action will displace the community.

**Anthony Clay**

Mr. Clay asked about the next plan if the plan at Nash doesn't work out. There needs to be another plan.

**Elaida Mora, Parent**

Ms. Mora stated she was representing parents who are concerned about closing of schools, which forces children to go to schools that they are not comfortable in and inconveniences parents. She does not want to fail the children. She noted that the slide show addressed safety, but not tutoring or afterschool programs.

**Amaka Unaka, Dean of students at KIPP**

Ms. Unaka stated this has been a challenging but rewarding experience. She shared that a KIPP alum told her, "I am going to be a college man." Another KIPP alum experienced the bliss of hard work. She believes that there is more education that needs to take place and sharing space allows this to happen. Sharing a building is not the end, but an opportunity to continue to open our doors and share best practices and opportunities that students deserve to be successful. She is positive that all parities will benefit.

**Keisha Heasa**

Ms. Heard stated that tough decisions need to be made to make sure our kids succeed.

**Dwayne Truss, Vice Chairman Community Action Council**

Mr. Truss disagreed that the action is quality option for the community. Based on CPS data, KIPP should be on probation. He stated that Austin community schools are moving, have magnet programs, including 5 magnet schools clustering near UIC, and those people are getting the resources. He questions co-location and following NCLB. He invited KIPP parents to come to community meetings.

**C.H., Student**

C.H. stated that KIPP encourages family connection and helps students be accountable.

**Theresa Tucker, Parent**

Ms. Tucker supports co-location and stated that children in both NASH and KIPP will be better off.

**Travis McDaniel**

Mr. McDaniel supports co-location, stating that the time has come to make changes and co-location makes sense. Nash has more than enough space, and KIPP needs space. He believes that kids will get more academic support such as more summer school and after school programs.

**Tangee Williams, Parent**

Ms. Williams believes it would be a benefit to students and the Austin community to have KIPP in Nash. KIPP's core classes are longer, students get more instruction time and the classes are challenging. If you walk inside KIPP, the kids walk with a book in hand, always reading.

**Keith Rhodes**

Mr. Rhodes stated that the status quo in public education is failing the children.

**Eisha Farmer**

Ms. Farmer stated that she participated in the Jan. 6 community meeting, as a parent and president of North Lawndale community, and after hearing CPS explain and listening to other attendees, she believes that the Mayor and CEO should be given the chance to reform our system. Children deserve high quality education. Ms. Farmer stated that this is a difficult but necessary action.

**Billy Hayes**

Mr. Hayes stated that the children are the future and parents believe the same. He believes that school reform a good thing.

**Gilinda McPhail**

Ms. McPhail supports co-location and stated that community will benefit from having KIPP School. KIPP focuses on promoting higher learning. Her oldest son is a senior and scored 33 on the ACT. Her other son is on full scholarship. KIPP provides a positive impact on children. The community deserves more teachers that care and go above and beyond. She believes that the community deserves and needs KIPP.

Speakers end at around 6:48.