BEFORE THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO

In the Matter of: )
The Hearing to Take Public Comment ) Margaret C. Fitzpatrick
On the Proposed Consolidation ) Hearing Officer
And Closing of: ) 2010
McCorkle School )

Hearing Officer’s Report and Recommendation
To the Chief Executive Officer
Regarding the Proposed Consolidation
And Closing of McCorkle School

I. Introduction

Consistent with Article 34, Section 18 of the Illinois School Code and Chicago Public School (“CPS”) Policy 410.4 Closing of Schools (adopted pursuant to Board Report 07-0523-PO2, dated May 23, 2007), Policy 301.1 Consolidation of Schools (adopted pursuant to Board Report 05-1221-PO1, dated December 21, 2005), and Policy 703.2 The Review and Establishment of School Attendance Boundaries (adopted pursuant to Board Report 05-0622-PO1, dated June 22, 2005), a hearing was held for this matter. The purpose of the Hearing was for the presentation of evidence from representatives of the CPS Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) and the taking of public comment on the proposed closing of McCorkle Elementary School, consolidation of McCorkle and Beethoven Elementary Schools, and adjustment of attendance boundaries for Beethoven and McCorkle schools, from parents, staff members (including CTU and other union representatives), the Principal, Local School Council members of McCorkle and Beethoven Schools and community members.

I have been appointed by the CEO, pursuant to Board Policies to serve as the Independent Hearing Officer for this matter to preside over the Hearing and to submit this Report and Recommendation. The hearing was held on January 29, 2010 at the Chambers of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago, 125 South Clark Street, Chicago Illinois 60603 (County of Cook) at 5:30 p.m.
A. **Statutory Provisions and Board Policies and Procedures**

The Illinois School Code authorizes the Board of Education of the City of Chicago “to apportion...pupils to several schools,” which powers are tantamount to the quasi-legislative power to make prospective regulations and orders. *Tyska v. Board of Education*, 117 Ill.App.917, 927 453 N.E.2d 1344, 1353 (1st Dist. 1983); 105 ILCS 5/34-18.

Insofar as the Chicago Board of Education’s restructuring power is a quasi-legislative function to make prospective regulations and orders, the testimony received at a public hearing to consider school closing evidence is in the nature of a town meeting, rather than the evidence submitted in an adversarial judicial setting. It is within this context that this Report is submitted. *Tyska v. Board of Education*, 117 Ill. App. 917, 927 453 N.E. 2d 1344, 1353 (1st Dist. 1983).

**Board Policies**

On May 23, 2007, the Board of Education of the City of Chicago adopted Chicago Public School Policy 410.4 *Closing of Schools* (Board Report 07-0523-PO2) rescinding Board Report 04-0225-PO2, a previous version for this Policy. This Policy sets forth the basis for school closing in this District including Non-Academic Reasons for School Closings. They include:

- **Non-Academic Reasons for School Closings:**
  - a. Space Utilization Level:
  - b. Physical Condition of the Building;
  - c. Alternative Use of School Facilities; and
  - d. Conversion to a Charter School.

- **Academic Reasons for School Closings**

- **A Basis for School Closing Due to a Need for Change in Educational Focus**

- **The Process for School Closings**

- **Implementation Process for School Closing and Annual Review**
- The Procedures for the Reassignment of Students Upon School Closings
- The Procedures for the Reassignment of Teachers Upon School Closings
- The Effect of a School Closing on the relevant Local School Council.

On December 21, 2005, the Board of Education of the City of Chicago adopted Chicago Public School Policy 301.1 *Consolidation of Schools* (adopted pursuant to Board Report 05-1221-PO1) rescinding Board Report 68-872, *Combination of Schools* Policy. This Policy sets forth the basis for school consolidation in this District.

The Board’s Policy on the Consolidation of Schools states:

When considering the matter of consolidation of schools, the Board intends to provide students high quality academic opportunities in a supportive educational environment and to make decisions regarding the utilization of school facilities that provide for the effective and efficient allocation of the Board’s limited financial resources. In accordance with existing Board actions and consent decrees and to the maximum extent consistent with financial constraints, the Board will avoid consolidation of schools if it will have a negative impact on the desegregation or integration of any school.

I. CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOLS

The Board may decide to consolidate two or more schools by: (1) closing one or more schools and reassigning the students to another school within close proximity, or (2) relocating the students of one school to another school building within close proximity without closing or restructuring either school.

II. CONSIDERATIONS FOR CONSOLIDATION

The Board shall consider the following factors in any decision to consolidate a school.
1. Space Utilization Level. The Board will consider whether the space available at a school or schools in close proximity to one another is being used in an efficient cost-effective manner.

2. Physical condition of the Facility. The Board will review the condition of the facility, including:
a. the actual physical condition of the school facility, including the cost to repair any safety hazards and make structural changes necessary to ensure compliance with all city, state and federal laws;
b. the extent to which the physical condition of the facility makes continued operation cost-prohibitive;
c. whether the continued occupancy of the facility is unsafe or impractical.

3. Potential Alternative Use of School Facility or Site. The Board will consider whether it would beneficial to use sites designated for consolidation for other programmatic or educational purposes, to open a new school, to expand an existing school or to use the site for other purposes that are consistent with the goals of the Board.

4. Availability of Space for Consolidation. The Board will consider whether another school is located within close proximity that has available space, as measured by design capacity. The identification of a school within close proximity includes a review of any natural barriers safety hazards and the neighborhood conditions.

On June 22, 2005, The Board of Education of the City of Chicago adopted Chicago Public School Policy 703.2 Board’s Policy on the Review and Establishment of School Attendance Boundaries (adopted pursuant to Board Report 05-0622-PO1), which provides in pertinent part as follows:

The purpose of this policy is to establish a process and procedure for the establishment of attendance boundaries for new school and for the review and revision of attendance boundaries that the Board may determine are necessary from time to time.
I. ANNUAL REVIEW OF ATTENDANCE BOUNDARIES

The Department of School Demographics and Planning (DSP) shall review the enrollment at existing schools to determine if there is a need to revise existing boundaries as necessary. If it is determined that there is a need to revise any existing boundaries, DSP shall develop and recommend any proposed changes to the Chief Executive Officer prior to the beginning of the school year in which the changes will take effect. In additions, DSP shall have responsibility for developing and recommending proposed boundaries for new schools to the Chief Executive Officer prior to the beginning of the school year in which the new school boundaries will take effect.

II. FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED

In reviewing and proposing revisions to boundaries for existing school and proposing attendance boundaries for new schools, DSP shall consider a range of factors including the following:
A. Capacities of Each of the Schools Involved in the Proposed Boundary Revisions
In considering whether to revise attendance boundaries at existing schools, DSP will consider the extent to which a school is overcrowded or underutilized. Where feasible, the goal is for elementary schools to be utilized at not more than eighty percent of design capacity, and for high schools at not more than one hundred percent of program capacity. Schools will be considered severely overcrowded if they are operating in excess of 100% utilization and significantly underutilized if they are less than thirty percent. DSP also shall consider these utilization rates when proposing revisions to attendance boundaries for existing schools and when proposing attendance boundaries for new schools.
B. Current and Projected Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Schools Affected
Where feasible, DSP shall propose establishing or revising attendance boundaries to maintain or promote stably segregated enrollments in each of the affected schools and to avoid the creation of one-race schools.
C. Geographic Barriers
In proposing new or revised attendance boundaries, DSP shall consider geographical barriers so as to promote safety and minimize transportation burdens, to the extent feasible.

D. Travel Time and Distance
In proposing new or revised attendance boundaries, DSP will seek to minimize travel time and distance, to the extent feasible.

E. Program Considerations
In proposing new or revised boundaries, DSP shall consider the placement of programs, such programs for English Language learners and for special education students. In addition, DSP shall consider the impact of magnet schools and programs and the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Finally, the role of the Hearing Officer, and manner in which she is to receive comments regarding the issues of whether the Attendance boundaries should be changed, are set forth in the “Procedures for Hearings on Proposed School Closings, Consolidations, Attendance Area Boundary Changes or Reconstitutions.” Those Procedures state:

1. Upon determining to recommend to the Board that a school be closed, consolidated, reconstituted or subject to attendance area boundary changes, the CEO may appoint an independent hearing officer to conduct a hearing for the purpose of receiving comments and documents relevant to the proposed closing, consolidation, reconstitution or change in attendance area boundaries.

2. The CEO or a designee will provide notice of a hearing to consider a proposed school closing, consolidation, reconstitution, or change in attendance area boundaries to the school(s) that would be affected. Public notice of the hearing may also be given by publication in newspapers of general circulation and by posting notice at the Central Offices of the Board of Education. At the hearing the hearing officer will consider the relevant statements, comments or documents of any person who wishes to speak. The total number of persons speaking at the hearing will be subject to the sole discretion of the hearing officer.
3. The hearing officer will be solely responsible for conducting the hearing and will conduct the hearing in an efficient and impartial manner according to the following guidelines:
   a. All those wishing to comment on the matter being considered will be required to sign up to do so as provided in the notice of hearing.
   b. The hearing will commence and conclude at the time designated in the notice of hearing;
   c. The hearing officer will commence the hearing by reviewing the purpose for which the hearing is convened;
   d. The hearing officer will determine the order of speakers’ participation;
   e. Participants may submit any relevant documents or written statements to the hearing officer;
   f. The hearing officer may impose any other reasonable procedures or limitations necessary to ensure that the proceedings are orderly and efficient.

4. Following the hearing, a hearing officer will prepare and submit to the CEO a recommendation and/or summary of the public comment and documents received at the hearing.

5. The CEO shall include the hearing officer’s summary report in recommendation submitted to the Board for consideration.

B. Notice

Pursuant to Board Policies, Notice was served on the Principal of McCorkle School. Similarly, pursuant to Board Policies, Notice of the Hearing date was sent to teachers or staff members of McCorkle School on or about January 19, 2010. Also Notice of the Hearing was sent to the Local School Council members of McCorkle School on or about January 19, 2010. Finally, Notice was served on the community of McCorkle School via newspaper publications in the Chicago Sun Times, and the Chicago Tribune on January 22, 2010

(See Hearing Exhibit Board 1A)
II. **Witness and Staff Participation**

A. **CPS Witnesses and Staff Available at the Hearings**

**Board Hearing**

1. Miguel Rodriguez, Deputy General Counsel
2. Robert Runcie, Chief Administrative Officer
3. Patricia Taylor, Chief Facilities Officer

B. **Witnesses who Submitted Public Comment**

Consistent with the purpose of the Hearing, the opportunity for public comment on the proposed closing and consolidation of McCorkle School from staff members (including CTU and other union representatives), the Principal, Local School Council members and community members was available.

III. **Exhibits**

As part of the Hearing, documentary submissions were received and included the following:

**BOARD DOCUMENTS**

1. A Binder containing the following documents:

A. **NOTICES OF HEARING**

1. Notice Letters to:
   a. Parents or Guardians of McCorkle School Students
   b. Principal of McCorkle School
   c. Assistant Principal of McCorkle School
   d. Teachers and Staff Members of McCorkle School
   e. Local School Council Member of McCorkle School
   f. Principal of Beethoven School
   g. Local School Council Members of Beethoven School

2. Affidavit of Devin McFarland, Special Assistant to the Chief of Staff of CPS, Re: mail and personal Delivery of Notices on or about January 19, 2010.

B. RELEVANT LEGAL AND PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS


5. Chicago Board of Education’s Policy on the Closing of Schools, 07-0523-PO2

6. Chicago Board of Education’s Policy on the Consolidation of Schools, 05-1221-PO1

7. Chicago Board of Education Policy on the Review and Establishment of School Attendance Boundaries, 05-0622-PO1

8. The Chief Executive Officer’s School Closing Guidelines (2009-2010)

9. Chief Executive Officer’s Procedures for Hearings on Proposed School Closings, Consolidations, Attendance Area Boundary Changes or Reconstitutions

C. DOCUMENTS AND WRITTEN EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF CONSOLIDATING AND CLOSING MCCORKLE SCHOOL

10. Written Statement of Mr. Robert Runcie, Chief Administrative Officer for the Chicago Public Schools.

11. Written Statement of Ms. Patricia Taylor, Chief Facilities Officer for the Chicago Public Schools.


13. Maps representing the 2009-2010 attendance area boundaries for McCorkle and Beethoven Elementary Schools and the proposed 2010-1011 attendance area boundary for Beethoven Elementary School.


2. Transcript of Proceedings

3. Detailed Explanation of Replacement Costs versus Renovation Cost for McCorkle School Facility
PUBLIC COMMENT DOCUMENTS

1. Binder entitled *McCorkle School Proposal Against Consolidation with Beethoven School* Submitted by McCorkle LSC Chairperson, Patricia Reed, and McCorkle PAC Chairperson, Carol Jarrett.
   This binder included the following:
   A. McCorkle School Proposal
   B. School Building Structural Assessment Report
   C. Charts/Graphs
   D. Letters from McCorkle School Students
   E. Letters of Support
   F. McCorkle School Snapshots
   G. McCorkle School Recognition

2. Letter dated 1/29/10 from Grand Boulevard Federation signed by Gregory Washington, President

3. Newsletter entitled Peer Parent Education Network by Grand Boulevard Federation

4. Letter to CPS from Lilnora Foster opposing the closing of McCorkle

5. A folder submitted by Patricia Reed, LSC Chair and Carol Jarrett, PAC Chair, containing the following sections:
   A. An Addendum
   B. Letters from Parents
   C. Miscellaneous Newspaper Articles


7. Addendum 2 including an Assessment Management Facilities Report and a 3 page assessment of the building done in October of 2009 indicating an overall score of 3.65 out of a possible 5.0.

IV. **Testimony Received on the Proposed Closing of McCorkle and Consolidation of McCorkle and Beethoven Schools**

Certified transcripts of the Public Hearings have been maintained. (See Hearing Exhibit Board 2)

Also, Spanish and Sign language Interpreters were available for the hearing.
extensive structural issues, roof, masonry windows, mechanical and electrical problems, renovation nears 60% of replacement cost, making the facility a poor candidate for renovation and continued use as an educational facility.

McCorkle has an enrollment of 306 students. Beethoven has 373 and combined would yield a utilization rate of 62.2%. Beethoven is a higher performing school and is receiving a major renovation of more than $8 million this spring. McCorkle has a Performance Policy Point of 21.4% and ISAT of 47.8%. Beethoven has a Performance Policy Points of 47.6 % and ISAT scores of 71.1%.

Public Comment

Janet Cooper-House  Principal of McCorkle

Ms. Cooper-House stated that she has been the Principal of McCorkle for 12 years. She presented a binder (See Public Exhibit 1). Ms. Cooper-House believes that McCorkle can be renovated for much less that CPS estimates and to this end, she presented assessments from architects and structural engineers. She referred to the contents of the binder, which included pictures of students, letters of support and acknowledgement of accomplishments.

Andrea Parker  Parent

Her third grade son loves McCorkle and feels like he is with family there. She wonders if the school is in such bad condition, how is it currently open.

Student

is a third grade student at McCorkle and wants to keep the McCorkle family alive.

Student

is a 7th grade honor roll student with perfect attendance. She enjoys coming to McCorkle. Looks are not as important as learning.

Darlene  Parent

Her two children pass twenty schools just to go to McCorkle. McCorkle is a safe-haven for them. Beethoven is a rival school and mixing the students will not go well.
Student

had a brother and sister who graduated from McCorkle and she wants to graduate from there also. McCorkle has excellent teachers.

Veronica Johnson  TAP Teacher

Ms. Johnson is the lead TAP teacher at McCorkle. Since TAP has been at McCorkle, there has been a 30% growth for sixth graders, 40% for seventh graders and 10% for eighth graders. She wants the opportunity to share her TAP experience with other teachers at McCorkle.

Deborah Lynch  Teacher

Renaissance 2010 is an attack on neighborhood schools, especially in areas of fragile social fabric. Displaced students are stigmatized and put in danger. Reinvest the 8 million in a neighborhood school.

Darlene Penn  Parent

Her son was well prepared for high school by McCorkle. She also graduated from McCorkle. Teachers work hard at McCorkle.

Majors  Former Student

Majors was valedictorian last year at McCorkle and he believes it is an excellent school. His entire family came from McCorkle, and they all love the school.

Student

attends McCorkle and named his favorite teachers who helped him. The teachers are all hard working.

Kevin Condon  Teacher

Mr. Condon is a South Side teacher. He wonders why McCorkle was not better maintained over the years.

Anna Paglia  Attorney

Ms. Paglia’s husband is a teacher at McCorkle. She refutes the claim that the building is in such bad condition. It needs some repair, but most schools do. McCorkle deserves renovation as much as Beethoven does. McCorkle has sent work orders requesting repairs, but they were rejected. The building is only 50 years old, and in Europe, buildings last over 2000 years.
Nakisha Reynolds  Teacher Assistant/Headstart

Ms. Reynolds used to work with an architect firm that conducted a structural evaluation of the McCorkle facility, concluding that the concrete is in good condition, the walls are in good condition as are the columns and stairs. The steel claddings have rusted and the cantilevered weight of window façade has a pulling effect on the entire cladding. There has been no maintenance in the past 11 years. Overall, the building is in good structural condition and with the recommended repairs will last another 100 years with minor future maintenance.

Chantel Foley  School Clerk

Many of the repairs noted by CPS have already been completed and some do not apply. The chart submitted in the binder (Exhibit Public 1C) shows items not needed, items fully operational, and items that need replacing. She estimates the cost at 1.3 million. CPS spends 18 million to build new schools and 60% of that is 10.8. She estimates the cost of replacement at 9 million and 60% of that is 5.4 million well over what she believes should be the cost of necessary repairs. It would cost the same to level the building as to do the necessary repairs.

John Boden  Gym Teacher and Coach

It is our responsibility to meet the needs of the children in the community as teachers. Schools should be looked at individually, just as children are. Children are not dollar amounts. Closing this school would be a tremendous loss for students, families, and the community. Changing schools is traumatic.

Diane Walker Robinson  Parent

We are only asking for a couple million dollars. The plumbing and heating are working, as are the teachers and students. No money can replace this building. There is redevelopment in the area and the school would be well attended.

Tamika Coleman  Parent

Research shows that small school setting works best for low-income minority children. McCorkle is better able to meet the needs of these children. Any transition cannot be smooth as it is taking children away from their family. At McCorkle, everyone knows each other’s names.
Robert Elchert  
**Education Liaison for 3rd Ward**

Mr. Elchert is the liaison for Alderman Dowell. The Alderman is concerned about the impact of consolidation on the community. There is redevelopment which means schools will be needed in the area. Beethoven and McCorkle are the last accessible neighborhood schools along that portion of the State Street corridor.

Derrick Harris  
**North Lawndale Federation**

The failure of CPS to maintain the facility and student mobility are the issues. The closings are only happening in African-American communities. Most schools in Chicago are in some need of repair. The community has been left out of the planning for this change.

Andrea Lee  
**Grand Boulevard Federation**

Ms. Lee submitted a letter from the President of GBF (Exhibit Public 2) and another piece of testimony from community residents.(Exhibit Public 3). The Bronzeville community used to have many elementary schools and now only two are left. CPS chose not to invest in McCorkle just like Attucks. She disagrees that McCorkle is in unsafe condition. Cost of repair does not amount to 50% of replacement. She asks that CPS work with the school and community to identify educational and facility needs with greater fiscal accountability for all Bronzeville schools.

Mary McGuire  
**CTU**

Moving children results in violence. In November of 2006, Arne Duncan, received a federal grant of 27.5 million for TAP and it expires in 2011. McCorkle was one of the schools participating in the program and is in its third year of implementation. She wonders what will happen to CPS’ reputation after taking grant money to improve a school, and at the same time have such little regard for the community.

Norine Gulankanst  
**CORE**

Closing McCorkle is not a solution. The Board is investing in a lot of schools and many are small learning communities just like McCorkle. It’s wrong and racist.

Dr. John Kugler  
**Teacher/displaced**

Public Act 960803 establishes a task force of facilities, which requires CPS to establish and work with this task force before it makes any decisions or recommendations to close any schools.
Kilo Sims  
**Parent**
Ms. Sims’ children attend McCorkle and her family trusts and values the school for its excellence. ISAT scores have increased. Beethoven has very little interest in their parents; the school is too big and there is not concern for parent/student/teacher involvement. She has chosen McCorkle over other schools because of its goals to educate, inspire, and transform.

Janet Cooper-House  
**Principal**
Ms. Cooper-House stated that the columns have been repaired and the chimney stack is gone. The school has been painted and repairs have been made. The pictures submitted by the Board do not reflect the condition of the school.

**Summary of Testimony**
Those opposing closing McCorkle are concerned with the impact of the moving students to a new school, the safety of the students, and the sense of loss of family on the students and community. They questioned the Board’s estimates and provided their own estimates, which they feel are significantly lower and more reasonable. They further provided a copy of a Board Assessment, which grades the condition of the facility at 3.65 out of a possible 5.0. They cite McCorkle’s long standing in the community as a small and successful school. They believe that new development in the area will result in an increase in attendance. The parents and students are happy with the staff at McCorkle and feel they are part of a family. They ask that the Board review their proposal and consider it before closing McCorkle School.

**Summary of Documents**
**Submitted by Public Speakers**
Grand Boulevard Federation opposes the closing of McCorkle School and consolidating McCorkle School with Beethoven School because they blame CPS for failing to make adequate repairs in a timely manner. Beethoven is a year older and also in need of repairs. They do not believe that the cost of repairing McCorkle exceeds 50% of the cost to rebuild, and they maintain that McCorkle students’ test scores are up. Moving the students would disrupt this progress.
Ms. Foster's letter maintains that CPS is focusing their school closings on minority schools and that there is a hidden agenda.

The binder of documents presented by McCorkle’s LSC and PAC had several components. First, they present a ten-page proposal, which presses two points. They believe that the cost of repair is much lower than the Board’s estimate. They complain that McCorkle has been neglected over the years but that for less than two million, the building can be made sound. Second, there is concern for the safety of the children and the affect of moving children to another school, many of who have already experienced displacement in their homes. They believe that the small school setting best serves their community and that new construction will render McCorkle even more necessary to the neighborhood. They point out that McCorkle has many school partnerships, and that their teachers are experienced, most with Master’s degrees, and ask that children, not finance, be considered.

Next, they present a School Building Structural Assessment by Beckley Engineering. This report recommended that the exterior steel claddings be replaced and that all exterior windows be replaced. The report further states that the building is in good structural condition, and after the recommended repairs are complete, with very minor future maintenance, the building life span should be 100 years.

The next section provides charts and graphs including the CPS study of needed repairs and McCorkle’s response. The response removes several items from the CPS projected repairs because they have either been completed, are not in the building or not applicable. The estimated cost to demolish the building is over 9 million and the repairs they believe are needed, amount to 1.3 million.

Further, the report states that the school is 40 students short of capacity, which they believe will be surpassed due to new construction near the school. Finally this section boasts an increase in ISAT scores over the past ten years.

The next section includes letters from 13 students who love their school and their teachers. This section includes 8 letters of support from the Alderman, pastor, former Area Instruction Officer and various partnerships all describing the positive learning experience provided at McCorkle. The following section includes snapshots of students at work at McCorkle. And finally, included are pictures and descriptions of
the many activities and positive experiences provided to students at McCorkle along with McCorkle’s achievements.

The McCorkle LSC Chair and PAC Chair submitted additional documents. These included a response to a health inspection report summarizing the work completed related to that report. Also, there was concern that the roof shown in the CPS report was not McCorkle’s roof. Finally, they stated that Beethoven and McCorkle have two different cultures. McCorkle has more programs such as full-day Headstart and multicultural festivals. There are 16 letters from parents asking to keep McCorkle open as they believe the school meets the needs of their children and Beethoven will not. The third section includes articles from Catalyst regarding success stories of McCorkle students.

An Addendum was submitted after the deadline, but was forwarded to the hearing officer for consideration. This 4-page report assessed McCorkle facilities at 72% and as a result of an inspection done in October of 2009, gave an overall score for the condition of the facility at 3.65 out of 5.0.

V. Findings and Recommendation

I make the following findings and recommendation regarding the proposed Closing and Consolidation of the McCorkle Elementary School:

- I find that the CEO has satisfied the Notice requirements as mandated by Board Policy and the School Code 105 ILCS 5/34-18.
- I find that the CEO has satisfied the mandates of Board Policy 410.4 Closing of Schools (adopted pursuant to Board Report 07-0523-PO2, (dated May 23 2007).
- I find that the CEO has satisfied the mandates of Board Policy in Policy 301.1 Consolidation of Schools (adopted pursuant to Board Report 05-1221-PO1, dated December 21, 2005).
- The revised attendance boundaries for McCorkle and Beethoven schools comply with the mandates of Board Policy 703.2 Review and Establishment of School Attendance Boundaries (adopted pursuant to Board Report 05-0622-PO1 dated June 22, 2005).
• McCorkle Elementary School is located at 4421 South State Street. For the 2009-10 school year, McCorkle has 306 students. Beethoven Elementary School is located 25 West 47th Street. For the 2009-2010 school year, Beethoven has 373 students. The combination of both schools would be 679 students, a 62.2% utilization for the Beethoven facility.

• Beethoven Elementary School has the ability to accommodate the additional McCorkle students

• McCorkle Elementary School is in need of extensive structural repairs estimated by CPS to exceed 7.6 million dollars. (See Board Exhibit 3)*

• The replacement cost of the McCorkle school building is estimated at 9.53 million dollars. (See Board Exhibit 3)*

• McCorkle School has a Performance Policy Point of 21.4% and ISAT score of 7.8%. Beethoven School has a Performance Policy Point of 47.6% and ISAT score of 71.1%.

*Although McCorkle's estimates for repair are significantly lower than the Board's estimates, CPS has outlined many contingencies which would affect cost, including complying with ADA requirements, which were not considered in McCorkle's estimates. (See Board Exhibits C-11 and C-14 and Board Exhibit 3) The community cannot waive the extensive structural issues included but not limited to roof, electrical, masonry, windows, mechanical and electrical repairs identified by professional engineers and architects. CPS documents area more comprehensive assessment of the infrastructure and outline capital renovation needs vs. maintenance s needs. As a result of these estimates, CPS has found the McCorkle facility to be a poor candidate for renovation and continued use as an educational facility.
Based on these findings, I conclude that the CEO has supported his recommendation that in accordance with Section I.A of the Board’s School Closing Policy, and Section 301.1 of the Boards Consolidation Policy, and Section 703.2 of the Board’s Attendance Boundary Policy, that McCorkle Elementary School be closed at the end of the 2009-2010 school year, that McCorkle Elementary School be consolidated with Beethoven Elementary School, and that the Attendance Boundaries be adjusted as per the proposed map in Board Exhibit 1C Section 14, whereby Beethoven Elementary School’s revised attendance boundaries encompass the current existing attendance boundaries of McCorkle Elementary School.

Submitted this 8th day of February, 2010

By:

Margaret C. Fitzpatrick
January 29, 2010

RE: Opposed to CPS’ proposal to consolidate McCorkle with Beethoven

Dear Chicago Public Schools Board of Education,

I am writing this letter of support for McCorkle School. On behalf of the Grand Boulevard Federation and its constituents, we are opposed to the Chicago Public School’s proposal to consolidate McCorkle into Beethoven School for your cited reason of costly capital repairs.

The larger Bronzeville community had 10 elementary schools serving the State Street Corridor. If you close McCorkle, we will be left with two: National Teachers Academy at Cermak and Beethoven at 47th Street. Attucks students are already bussed outside of their attendance area, so it is difficult to count this is a real neighborhood school serving current and new neighborhood students.

We are opposed to CPS closing and consolidating the school for the following reasons:

• CPS chose not to invest in repairing the school. Instead they invested only $589,000 in the school, so it is no surprise that the building is in disrepair. In fact, more than 12 Bronzeville schools are in need of repairs of more than $4 million per building, so why did CPS decide that McCorkle was to be the school to close? Furthermore, the community has not been shown why this particular building is no longer worth investing in, or that Beethoven, which is one year older, is more worthy of needed repairs than McCorkle. Beethoven actually needs more than $6.5 million in repairs.

• To the latter point, CPS cites its 50% repair/replace rules of thumb, where if the cost to repair exceeds 50% of the cost to rebuild it, CPS will not repair it. It costs approximately $20 million to build a new elementary school to be conservative. Subtract the cost of land, at the lower end it might cost $15 million. How is CPS’ $4 million in repairs 50% of $15 million? Bronzeville has more than 12 schools in our community with more than $4 million in need. Does this mean you will use your 50% repair/replace rule to close all 12 of those schools? Citywide, the number of schools with deferred capital projects and maintenance increases drastically. This argument based on the 50% guideline is not sound.

• McCorkle students are learning and test scores went up 23% from 2003 to 2008 (56.1%). Most of the students come from public housing, and to relocate them would disrupt their learning and create greater mobility, since many of them have already been displaced due to CHA’s plan for transformation. For many, this is their remaining “community”. Student learning should be a priority consideration.
- CPS has not worked with the larger Bronzeville community to develop a comprehensive Educational Facilities Master Plan. Until we see a community-inclusive education and facilities plan in place that will address the needs of all our neighborhood's schools, the community remains skeptical that there is a true need to close this school.

We strongly discourage you from approving this decision, and alternatively request that you work with the school and community on identifying educational and facility needs more comprehensively, transparently, and with greater fiscal accountability for all of Bronzeville. We wish to see continued learning at Mccorkle and that a longer-term educational and facility plan for these students be addressed with greater school and community involvement.

Thank you for considering the needs of our families, schools, and the larger community.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Gregory Washington
President
gregwashington@grandboulevardfederation.org
CPS' Siege on Bronzeville Schools.... Again  
Masking the TRUTH on the Demise of Our Neighborhood Schools

CPS announced that it proposes to:
1. Consolidate McCorkle into Beethoven because McCorkle’s school building costs too much to repair;
2. Consolidate Mollison for Chronic Underperformance where Mollison students remain and Wells Prep students, administration, and staff would relocate to the Mollison building under a new name.

The TRUTH:
1. McCorkle has met its challenges, and succeeded to educate its students, mostly from the Robert Taylor CHA housing development. Its school building disrepair was created by CPS not using its building assessments to drive the capital funding priorities and failing to make adequate investments in the building. Additionally, CPS has stated that if repairs cost more than 50% of building new, then it would not repair. CPS has not proven this, and CPS is investing in other schools in spite of the 50% rule. This is the second school building in Bronzeville that CPS wants to close due to costly capital repairs that we all know occurred from CPS’ own failure to fund repairs and maintenance, nor did this occur overnight. We used to have 10 neighborhood schools serving the State Street Corridor, and if McCorkle closes, we will have two — NTA at Cermak and Beethoven at 47th. Attacks does not count since CPS closed its building and is bussing the last remaining 14 blocks south [See below for more].

2. Mollison is not at all your poster school for “chronic underperformance.” In fact, it gained 20% points on its ISAT’s and scored 54% last school year 2009. 6 schools in Bronzeville are lower performing, and approximately 74 schools citywide scored lower points on the CPS’ Performance Policy index. Mollison is likely a victim of CPS’ hidden intentions, which is wanting to kick Wells Prep out of the Phillips High School building (yes, it is housed in Phipps) because these students who are scoring at 71% and are mostly living in public housing are in the way of the grand CPS/AUSL Phillips High School Turnaround also proposed this January. It is believed that CPS does not know where to place these Wells Prep children, so by deeming Mollison underperforming versus underutilized, CPS can negotiate the move by justifying getting rid of the entire Mollison staff and administration and moving the Wells Prep staff and administration to Mollison. Additionally, CPS moved out its Safety and Security offices last month from Phillips High School.... [See below for more].

3. From all of the indications, the truth is that it seems Wells Prep is actually closing and moving the students, staff, and administration to takeover Mollison with a name change, Inheriting a building of its own, 200 students, and thus a deeper budget, but all without its separate and own due process because CPS disguised this Wells Prep closing as a “Mollison Consolidation.” [See below for more.]

Helen J. McCorkle School
- Built in 1963, CPS’ 2008 building assessment cites $4,106,000 in needed repairs. This is after CPS neglected the school and spent only $589,000 to fix the school, far lower than most schools citywide.
- Similarly, Beethoven was built one year earlier, and it needs an estimated $6,160,000. This is one year older than McCorkle, so how do we know this building isn’t about to fall apart as well? When comparing building assessments, both had 1 Life, Health, Safety repair needed; 26 components needed 100% replacing at McCorkle compared to 21 components at 100% replacement at Beethoven so there is not too much of a difference in building need, except that Beethoven needs more than $6 million in repairs.
- CPS says if the repair costs exceed 50% of building a new school, it won’t repair the school. CPS has not shown how $4.1 million is half of the cost of a new school. Rebuilding an elementary school minus the cost of land on the very low end would be about $15 million and the high end about $30 million. More than 12 Bronzeville schools are in need of repairs totaling more than $4 million, not to mention schools across the city, and yet we don’t see CPS closing them with this same justification.
- McCorkle is a performing school scoring at 56% in 2008 and has made huge progress since the principal took over, so why is CPS willing to risk harm on low-income children who are learning?

GRAND BOULEVARD FEDERATION
4859 S. Wabash, 2nd Floor Chicago, IL 60615 P: (773) 548-8140 / F: 548-6622
www.grandboulevardfederation.org
Andrea Lee, Education Initiative Coordinator andrealee@grandboulevardfederation.org
To the Chicago Public Schools,

No, the bottom line is that, all of these supposedly college-educated individuals making exorbitant salaries running from one board room meeting to another, are NOT doing their jobs. CPS has sat idle for years at the expense of our children while in the same breath advocating quality education for all. TALK IS CHEAP! To push their own hidden agenda, they are focusing on minority neighborhoods without any input from the actual community or checking their own data and now that they know the "BIG BOYS" are watching, CPS is making quick, rash, and unsound decisions that will negatively affect the future of the families and, above all, the very children they claim to want to help. They are not even abiding by their own regulations which is evident by news reports of misuse of company cars and credit cards! Mr. Huberman, the major problem is at the top and I think it's time to do a "turnaround" on the people you consult with in these closed-door meetings. Mayor Daley, before you leave office, you should seriously consider bringing in outside community resources who have valid plans and connections to the adequate personnel who are willing and able to put the Chicago Public Schools system back up to par.

CPS REPORT CARD

TRANSPARENCY- F
ACCOUNTABILITY- F
FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY- F

Lilnora Foster
January 27, 2010

Clare Munana,
Interim President
Chicago Board of Education
125 South Clark Street, 6th Floor
Chicago, IL 60603

President Munana:

The Third Ward will be particularly impacted if the board’s recent proposals are enacted. The consolidation or turning around of multiple schools not only has a significant impact on the community, but also affects the ways in which these schools function and their ability to serve the needs of students in the ward. With this in consideration, I would like to re-iterate my concerns with the proposed consolidation of McCorkle into the Beethoven building that I mentioned during my meeting with CPS officials last Friday.

My primary concern is that we will be losing yet another neighborhood school along the State Street corridor, which is in the midst of massive redevelopment through CHA’s Plan for Transformation. Hundreds of incoming families will need a school for their children to attend and the proposed movement of Wells to the Mollison building on King Drive combined with the loss of McCorkle will significantly limit their options.

By looking at the assessment of the building that was conducted in May, 2008, it appears that despite McCorkle’s need for capital renovations, they received little to no investment within recent years. Beethoven and McCorkle are both good schools and are our last accessible neighborhood schools along that portion of the State Street corridor that is east of the Dan Ryan. My concerns regarding the need to keep neighborhood schools open and the disinvestment that has affected some of them should be considered not only for McCorkle, but for all capital and academic related decisions that impact students and families in the Third Ward.

Sincerely,

Pat Dowell
Alderman, 3rd Ward

Cc: Janet House
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**Assessment Management Facilities Report**

**Note:** This document is intended for the analysis and evaluation of facility performance and efficiency.
### Lunchroom

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>Doors - hardware, closers, locks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Windows - glazing, balances, stops installed, guards</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Walls</td>
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<td>Ceilings - type and location</td>
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**Average Score: 3.75**

### Pest Control

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**AED**

**Over All Average Score: 3.65**

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Score: 1 (poor) - 5 (excellent)  Blank = Not Applicable

[Grade ID 26111] [Inspection Date 10/27/20]  Page 3
Addendum 2

Response to Lunchroom

McCorkle was not able to obtain this report until 5:35 on 02/01/10. It appears that the data on the school is being drastically manipulated.

Please include this information in our report. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

McCorkle LSC

McCorkle PAC
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<td>Temperature controls</td>
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<td>Dampers / Actuators</td>
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<td>Overall - offices</td>
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<td>Overall - gymnasium</td>
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<td>Overall - gym locker rooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall - mechanical areas, boiler room (Air Tunnels/Plenums clear of debris, storage, peeling paint, environmental conditions)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS</strong></td>
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<td>Fire extinguishers - inspected and serviced</td>
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<td>CO detectors functional, batteries tested</td>
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<td>Exit signs lighted</td>
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<td>Emergency lighting tested and operational</td>
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<td>Security system - motion detectors, cameras, etc.</td>
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<td>Windows - glazing, balances, stops installed, guards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Window screens</td>
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<td>Hand sink(s) - supplied with soap and towels</td>
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<td>Lighting - bulbs, ballasts, lenses</td>
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<td>Electrical outlets</td>
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<td>Flooring</td>
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<td>HVAC - exhaust, hoods cleaned</td>
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Score: 1 (poor) - 5 (excellent)  Blank = Not Applicable
**Exterior**

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<td>American flag and pole</td>
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<td>Fencing - material and finish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sidewalks, stairways, asphalt, other hard surfaces</td>
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<td>Light pole base covers secured, including City</td>
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<td>Trash receptacles (dumpsters, compactor) covered, secured</td>
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<td>Manhole and sewerage</td>
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<td>Roof - gutters clean, spouts clean, roof hatch closed and sealed, flat</td>
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<td>Exterior envelope - Masonry / waterproofing / caulking / painting</td>
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<td>Building free of graffiti</td>
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<td>Landscaping - grass cut, bushes trimmed, etc.</td>
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<td>Campus park - landscaping, equipment, lighting</td>
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<td>Litter removed from grounds</td>
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<td>Marquee sign</td>
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**Interior**

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<td>Lighting - bulbs, ballasts, lenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interior surfaces free of graffiti</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student lockers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Elevators, escalators, wheelchair lifts, dumbwaiters - last city inspection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stairs / stair rails</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ceilings - type and location</td>
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<tr>
<td>Auditorium - flooring, seating, stage, curtains</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gymnasium - flooring, striping, equipment, bleachers</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gym locker rooms - fixtures, lockers, showers, benches, exhaust</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pool - mechanical equipment, filter, pumps, chemical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pool - flooring, deck, ceiling, walls, ventilation equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pool locker room - fixtures, lockers, showers, benches, exhaust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classrooms using blue recycling containers properly</td>
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**Mechanical**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boilers - Inspection date</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9/17/2009</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Boilers - Certificate received date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic Hot water Tank</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feed water/ Condensate tank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pumps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piping</td>
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<td>Steam traps</td>
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<td>Chillers</td>
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<tr>
<td>AC window units</td>
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</table>

Score: 1 (poor) - 5 (excellent)  Blank = Not Applicable
The two items attached to the Addendum 2 include an asset maintenance assessment conducted by the area facility manager and an “Assessment Management Facilities Report” which we have never seen and we can therefore provide no explanation for. The first report is based upon assessment of an area facility manager who is responsible for only the maintenance of the building and has no formal engineering or architectural training to support an assessment of the renovation needs of the facility. The asset maintenance assessment has a limited intended use for oversight of the day to day maintenance of the facility. This assessment cannot be confused, misinterpreted nor considered as a replacement for the renovation assessment of the facility that is conducted by a team of professionally trained engineers and architects. The renovation assessment was originally referred to in the school’s testimony as the assessment for $4.1M of need for the McCorkle Facility. A quick review of each inspection would readily differentiate the two. The asset maintenance assessment reviews items like the flag pole and American flag, snow and ice being cleared, litter removed, while the renovation assessment provides a comprehensive assessment of the facilities infrastructure including quantities, descriptions and estimated construction costs. I have attached scanned versions of both which should clearly delineate the difference. I have also attached the response to the testimony that was previously submitted for reference and explanation of the renovation assessment.

I just want to reiterate that the PM document (Assessment Management Facilities Report) is one that I have never seen and cannot speak to the scores. But whatever data generated this report would be based on maintenance needs NOT capital renovation needs. Again, the asset maintenance assessment is a maintenance/cleanliness assessment NOT a capital renovation assessment.