Claim: Closing these schools won't save money.  
Fact: Based on actual spending at each underutilized school CPS is proposing to close, the District will save $43 million annually in operating spending for a total of $430 million over 10 years. By avoiding needed capital spending on underutilized schools proposed for closure CPS will save $437 million over the next ten years.

Claim: Classes at welcoming schools will be overcrowded.  
Fact: Each welcoming school has sufficient space for the number of students expected to attend this fall. By combining underutilized schools, principals will have more resources to hire needed staff and will be better positioned to avoid the larger class sizes that we often see in our under-enrolled, under-resourced schools.

Claim: Thousands of teachers will lose their jobs.  
Fact: There are just over 1,100 teachers in underutilized schools proposed for closure. Many of these teachers will follow their students to welcoming schools per the joint CTU-CPS agreement included in last year’s teachers’ contract, which allows tenured teachers with Superior or Excellent ratings to follow students if their position is open at the welcoming school.

Claim: Student safety will be at risk.  
Fact: The safety and security of every student is the District’s top priority. In partnership with the Chicago Police Department, CPS will provide every welcoming school with (1) Safe Passage to provide safe routes for students to and from school every day (2) additional safety personnel inside each school (3) new and updated security technology inside each school and (4) social emotional supports to help build relationships between students, staff and families of both sending and welcoming schools in order to create positive learning environments by the start of the school year.

Claim: Students will have to walk several blocks more to get from home to their welcoming school.  
Fact: For neighborhood students that will not receive transportation, the average increase in distance from their home to their school building will be less than 2 blocks.

Claim: Students won't be going to better schools.  
Fact: Per state law, every designated welcoming school will be higher-performing than the sending school. Criteria outlined in the CPS CEO School Actions Guidelines, which was filed with the state in October 2012, defines school performance that must be used in determining the performance of each school.

Claim: There is no population decline/CPS can find the money for things we want to fund.  
Fact: According to U.S. Census data, there are 181,000 fewer African Americans in Chicago today than last decade. This has had a significant impact on the utilization rates of schools in these communities – in fact 65% of underutilization in elementary schools is due to population decline. Due to declining revenues and an additional $400 million pension payment, CPS is facing a $1 billion deficit next fiscal year. While it has cut more than half a billion dollars in non-classroom spending over the last two years, it can’t cut its way out of this deficit without impacting classrooms.

Claim: CPS created this problem.  
Fact: Population declines over the last decade in both the African American community and in school-aged children are driving the majority of underutilization in our District’s schools. Today, our schools have space for 511,000 children, but only 403,000 are enrolled.

Claim: This will result in vacant buildings and eyesores in communities, with no plan to deal with this.  
Fact: CPS is working with communities and City Departments on a comprehensive planning process to determine the highest and best use for unused buildings.
Claim: CPS planned to close 50 schools all along.
Fact: News outlets as well as the CTU widely reported for months in advance that closings would amount to 80, 100 and even 120 schools. The reality is that CPS never had a list. The process started with 330 underutilized schools and due to feedback from over 20,000 parents and community members from nearly 30 community meetings the CEO is recommending 54 school and program closures. The final number also falls well below the recommendation of the independent Commission on School Utilization, which concluded that the District has the capacity to close up to 80 schools.

Claim: CPS does not have the capacity to handle the transitions.
Fact: The District has a cross-functional team of more than 40 subject matter experts who worked every day for several months to create transition plans covering all areas that would impact students and staff as part of school consolidations, including safety and security, social and emotional supports, as well as services and resources that meet the needs of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students in temporary living situations. CPS has also partnered with other City agencies such as the Chicago Police Department on building safety plans for each school to provide a safe, smooth transition for all students and will continue to refine those plans with the ongoing input of parents, principals, community leaders and faith leaders.