SKYWAY COMMUNITY NETWORK MEETING

February 20, 2013
7:00 o'clock p.m.

The Report of Proceedings had in the meeting of the above-entitled cause, taken before ROBBIN M. OCHENKOWSKI, a Certified Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public in and for the County of Cook and State of Illinois, at South Shore Cultural Center,
South South Shore Drive, February 20th, 2013, at
the hour of approximately 7:00 o'clock, p.m.

PRESENT:

MS. LATANYA MC DADE, Chief of Schools for the
Skyway Network

MR. JOHN SCOTT, Chief of Family and Community
Engagement

MR. JOHN PRICE, Chief of Schools for the
Burnham Park Network

MR. ARTHUR SLATER, Interim Chief of Schools for the
South Side Network

MR. TODD BABBITZ - Chief Transformation Officer
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MR. SCOTT: Everyone, please come in and start filling the seats. If there are any seats available, there is an overflow area. There is an overflow area if there are any seats available.

Good evening, everyone. Tonight we are here for the Skyway Network. Present on our panel tonight to listen to the discussion, we have the Skyway Network Chief which is Latanya McDade, we have Chief John Price from the Burnham Network, we have Todd Babbitz which is the Chief Transformation Officer, and also we have the South Side High School Network Chief Arthur Slater.

Tonight there will be ten schools speaking. Each school will have six minutes to speak by their chosen speaker, six minutes. We want to be respectful of all the speakers. We want to give everyone an opportunity to speak tonight.

My name is John Scott. I'm from Family and Community Engagement of Chicago Public Schools. I'm here on the behalf of my chief which is Mr. Phillip Hampton, Chief of Family and Community Engagement.

Also, we would like to recognize there's a Kimberly Webb. She's Chief of Staff for the Fifth Ward Alderman, Leslie Hairston.
Now, what I'm going to do now, I'm going to turn it over to Chief Latanya McDade, and she's going to name the schools.

MS. MC DADE: Good evening. Thank you so much for coming out supporting the Skyway Network and all of the schools, even our schools -- some of the schools that are here just supporting other schools. That means a lot. So thank you for being here.

I am going to name the ten schools that will be speaking tonight, and each school will have three people that they can select to speak for your school. You can come up together or just stand while the person is speaking. Because the space may be limited, some of you guys have some really big groups, which is awesome, but you can stand when it's time for your school to come up.

So we're going to go in order. Ashe, Buckingham, then Madison, and let me -- I know Ashe is here. I saw Buckingham.

Is Madison here?

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)


THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

MS. MC DADE: I saw O'Keefe and Parkside, correct?
THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

MS. MC DADE: I saw Powell.

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

MS. MC DADE: And Revere, I didn't see Revere. Is Revere here?

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

MS. MC DADE: All right. Revere is here. Warren is here?

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

MS. MC DADE: And Yale, is Yale here?

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

MS. MC DADE: Okay. So it's kind of the same rules as the last community meeting. We want to make sure, one, that we are respectful; two, that we display the kind of behavior that our children would be able to emulate, that we want them to emulate, right, we want to model that kind of behavior that we teach them that you can have a voice, but with that voice there's a way to be heard that's decent and in --

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

MS. MC DADE: -- order, right?

Respect given is respect due.

And then the other thing is, after all -- all of the schools on the list will be able to speak first,
that is just the right thing, right, and then after that
those community members that have signed up will have an
opportunity to come forward.

And I'm going to turn it over to our
facilitator for the evening. Todd is going to -- the
Chief of Transformation Todd Babbitz is going to come
forth, and he's going to give you just a little bit of
background information that you need to hear.

So listen closely, take notes, and take
advantage of some of the knowledge that's going to be
shared with you this evening, okay?

Can we please welcome Todd?

MR. BABBITZ: Thank you. I'm going to be very
quick.

My name is Todd Babbitz, Chief Transformation
Officer for Chicago Public Schools. I lead the Office
of Strategy Management.

The conversation we're going to have tonight is
important business as I'm sure you are all aware. We've
got 330 schools in our district that we consider to be
underutilized.

What that means is that every dollar that we
invest in our schools, in those schools in particular,
doesn't impact as many students as we would like to be
impacting. We started out with 330 underutilized
schools. We've applied a set of criteria in a
systematic objective way across the city to get down to
a number of schools that we are still having
contversations about.

It's 129 schools citywide. In this network,
we've reduced the number from 36 down to ten, and it's
those ten primarily that we want to have the
correction about.

For those of you that are wondering why are
these ten still under consideration, the ten guidelines
or guardrails are listed on this page.

I won't read them to you. You can all review
them at your leisure.

So what we want to hear from you today is about
those ten schools in particular, and the kinds of
questions that we want to hear about are listed on this
page as well. It's things like the additional resources
that you feel that these schools need, the academic
plans for these schools, what specific unique
circumstances do these schools face. Let us know about
specific safety and security concerns and provide us
with any additional information that you think we need
to hear about.
We will be listening intently. Hearing from the community is vital to this process, it is important to our CEO, it is important to all of us that you see up on this stage and everybody that's involved in CPS and the decision-making that is underway. So with that let me turn it back over to Network Chief McDade.

Thank you.

MS. MC DADE: Okay. So with that being said, we are going to get started.

I do want to just let you know, I already know what the answer is, but I'm going to say it anyway, there is an overflow room for those of you who are standing, and if you want to go to the overflow room, I just want to let you know that it is available, there are seats there, however, if you prefer to just remain in here, certainly, you definitely can, okay?

So we are going to get started with the evening. I'm going to turn the microphone back to our facilitator, and then we'll begin calling our schools, and we're going to start with Ashe followed by Buckingham.

MR. SCOTT: I just want to remind everyone that there's six minutes that each school has to speak.
Right here (indicating) is a timekeeper, okay? She will be flashing you, letting you know intervals on how long you have left.

Also, we have a court reporter here Robbin Ochenkowski here. She's recording every word that you say. Every word that you say is reported. Our CEO of Chicago Public Schools Barbara Byrd-Bennett will get all information.

If you have any information that you have, any detailed information on your school, please turn it in to me, and it will be turned over to the CEO's office. So it's time to get started. The first school come up.

SCHOOL: ASHE

SPEAKER: Good afternoon.

First I want to address these are the places of the kids. I want everyone to look at the innocent kids.

Oh, very good. Thank you. Thank you.

These are the kids that we want to keep safe. These are our future. We have some over there. We don't want numbers, but we want for you all to see faces. We want you all to see the faces of kids.

My name is Janice Johnson. I've lived in the Chatham area since about over 40 years, okay? Now, I
have my older kids went to Sabarber (phonetic). We in
turn changed the school over to Arthur Ashe, which his
daughter came to the school.

Now my grandkids graduated from Arthur Ashe. I
have two children left and a grandchild in Arthur Ashe.

When Dr. Murry and Mr. Ferrell came to
Arthur Ashe, they began to share with the children and
the community what they want to do and where they wanted
to go with Ashe. They have shared with me and all of
the parents that came into the school these charts that
tell us where our students are, and after they take the
ISAT test, each year they have been at our school, the
students have made progress. The charts keep us
up-to-date. The charts show the percentage of students
that are making progress. There are charts outside
every classroom that tell us -- that tell how many
students are successful on the test and they take -- the
test that they take each week. Anyone that comes into
the building can see the charts outside each classroom.
They tell us how they plan to reach their goals.

They have afterschool classes, teachers that
teach and do not get paid. They reward students with
good behavior. They take students on trips after school
hours.
You all -- You always have to catch them because they are always in the classroom with the children. All the children know the principal and the assistant principal. They are always everywhere in the building. They each -- They even teach classes. Ashe children need to be with their teachers.

I know all the teachers in the school. I'm on the LSC, I'm on the parent patrol at Arthur Ashe School. When they need support, they feel comfortable asking the LSC and other parents that volunteer their services at the school. Not all parents in the community can participate, but it is in -- but it is not because the administrative staff at Ashe do not ask.

Students come to Ashe from everywhere. I know they have children that have lived in other places, and they came to Ashe. They're outside of our community.

There is not a severe safety plan because -- There is not a severe safety plan because the parents watch out for the students. They spend quality time with them. All of the students at Ashe know what adults they can come to when they need help. Every day parents are on patrol at Ashe.

I feel my children are safe. I feel the children are safe because we all -- we are more like a
family community rather than a school community.

We want Ashe to stay open so we can continue to
care for and watch over our children and make sure they're successful
and keep them safe.

I am -- I and other Ashe families ask that you
reconsider closing our school and keeping our children
safe and ready for the future.

We are fighting for the goods. We are fighting
the good fight. We have not finished our course.

One personal thing I want to say. I was
listening to the news, and Heidi's mother said no one
knows how I feel unless you've been in that situation.

I said -- I thought to myself, I don't know, I don't
know, I don't know what I would do if something happened
to my kids.

So when you're asking -- when you're asking
your kids to go out of their boundaries and being a
parent, you -- I might have an idea.

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): Thank you.

I will never want to change that.

SPEAKER: My name is Tara Campbell (phonetic), and

I'm a proud honor student of Arthur Ashe.

Arthur Ashe --
THE AUDIENCE:  (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.):  Arthur Ashe to me is not just a school.  It's a family.  It's a place where I can go and feel safe and learn new things every day.  It is a place where I can go and see friendly faces and friendly people and friendly places.  I love everybody at Arthur Ashe, my teachers, my friends, everyone, even people I don't even know.

Arthur Ashe has always been a place where I feel I could be myself.  I enjoy myself at Arthur Ashe. I enjoy the activities, the afterschool programs and everything else in between.

Arthur Ashe is a family.  Arthur Ashe is not just a place you go to learn things.  Arthur Ashe is a community.  Arthur Ashe helps you with your problems, and Arthur Ashe listens.

The teachers at Arthur Ashe have helped me with a lot of problems.  I have recently went through something very traumatic and very stressful.  My teachers and staff at Arthur Ashe has helped me through it.

I am a better person because of Arthur Ashe.  I know more things because of Arthur Ashe.  I have improved in everything in Arthur Ashe.
Arthur Ashe teaches you everything, and Arthur Ashe helps you with everything. Arthur Ashe is, once again, a family, not just a school, and for you to close it is unbelievable.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: My name is Mary Jedrey (phonetic), and I am a proud member of a beautiful family from Arthur Ashe school.

The students at Ashe are not just students. When they walk through the doors, they know they are like one of our own sons and daughters. Every adult who either works at Ashe or is up at the school on a regular basis goes out of their way to make every student feel like they are part of an extended family. This is something we take pride in at our school.

One of the things I've learned from teaching is I cannot do this alone, I need my colleagues administrators, students, parents, the community, but especially I need Jesus to help me each and every day.

So I learned to become a very prayerful person. One day I was in prayer, and Jesus told me to stop spending my money at Dunkin' Donuts. Now, to you it may be any big deal or have any significance, but for me, I was like, what, I love my coffee, and it was the
one expense I didn't mind having.

However, since I serve an awesome God, I gave it up. Jesus told -- Jesus told me there were better ways I could spend my money. So the money I would have spent at Dunkin' Donuts, I've been saving.

For Valentine's Day this year, I decided I wanted to spend some of that saved money on my students. I know how hard I am on my students, but, more importantly, I know how hard they have been working the last year and a half that I've had them. I wanted to do something special for them as a way to show them how much I love them and as a way to acknowledge that their hard work and commitment -- and as a way to acknowledge their hard work and commitment to their education.

So I made each of them a simple treat bag that consisted of a few fall items. When I passed them out, there were many smiles, there was gratitude, and there was a sense of love.

As I reflected deeper on that moment and the rest of the week, I thought about how their attitudes were even better than what they normally are. Maybe it's me, but I saw and felt a different kind of love that this not -- that they had not only for me but towards each other, and it really made me think about
I thought, what if CPS showed my family how much they loved them? One of the mottos of CPS has been children first. What if CS actually showed my children that, yes, they truly are first? Would we have all the violence within our community if CPS took some accountability for showing love and concern for my students and the other families affected by the school closings? What if CPS invested in us and showed a commitment to us even though we are a Level 3 school? What if my family, my students just felt loved by CPS rather than neglected and thrown to the curb year after year because we are a Level 3 school?

THE TIMEKEEPER: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): What if CS just showed my family that, yes, we truly do care, and we do believe that you can succeed despite what the statistics say?

CPS is great at pointing the finger at teachers and administrators for failing schools, however, let me just share a few facts on how CPS has failed my Arthur Ashe family.

First of all, everything's been a budget problem. Never has the Board try to find a solution that benefited my students.

It's me. About 30 more seconds, okay?

SPEAKER (cont'd.): Okay. Okay.

So I'll go to the end.

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): If CPS is going to make decisions about closing my school and putting my family out on the street, why doesn't CPS make sure that the playing field is level throughout the entire district before these types of decisions are made?

I shouldn't have to stand here and justify why we should be remain open. CPS should be providing us with proof as to what they have done to ensure that our enrollment increases and how CPS has ensured that Level 3 schools are provided with the same learning experiences as a Level 1 school so that we can all achieve together.

Oh, but that's right, statistics say our students won't make it.

I'm sure you are --

I'm sure you're probably tired of hearing about statistics, but the truth is CPS needs to be aware of it. I've watched CPS for 15 years believe more in the
statistics than in my students.

CPS has neglected --

THE TIMEKEEPER: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): -- not only Arthur Ashe but the entire Skyway Network.

You want to close our schools, fine, but before you do, level the playing field so every student has the same opportunities throughout the entire district regardless of what level their school is at. Channel the resources to schools that truly need it so they have a chance to survive.

I am preventing --

I am presenting this treat bag to you to present to Barbara Byrd-Bennett. It is similar to the one that I gave my students on Valentine's Day. Let her know that she has two choices of what she can do with it.

She can do what the Board has always done to the students at Arthur Ashe and in the Skyway Network and believe in the statistics and just throw the bag away, or she can keep it and let it become a symbol, a symbol that if this simple bag can generate so much love among my eighth graders, imagine what would happen to my students if the Board actually made them feel like
someone downtown truly cared about them.

   It's time that the Board adheres and believes

in their own mottos --

THE TIMEKEEPER:  (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): -- that they have used over the
years; children first, every child, every school,
educate, inspire, transform.

I'd just ask that you think of one thing. Is
CPS going to start believing in their students, or is
CPS going to continue to believe in the statistics?

I guess we will get your answer on March 31st.

Thank you.

MS. MC DADE:  All right. Skyway Schools, it is six
minutes per school, and what we will do to make sure we
get -- I really don't want to cut you guys off, I really
don't. So what we're going to do is keep it at six, and
then once we get through the ten, we'll just start
calling people back up.

Is that fair?

All right. Let's go with Buckingham.

SCHOOL:  BUCKINGHAM

SPEAKER: Hello, hi. My name is --

Hello, hi. My name is Diana Garcia (phonetic),
and I'm here to speak about Kate Buckingham Elementary
Kate Buckingham is not just an elementary school. It's a special therapeutic day school, and this school is used to serve children with disabilities across the Chicagoland area.

Now, what -- myself, a parent, the students and the staff that are here with me today, what we can't understand is why we're on the list, period. It's no way possible that we should be on this list. These students come from across the City of Chicago.

I don't have a Kumbaya song to sing for you today. I don't have a flag to wave today. I have one question to ask you today. How the (indicating) did we get on this list?

I have an 11-year-old son that has been attending this school for three years. When my son made --

No. Let me tell you about my son first.

This baby came to me as a blessing. He's adopted, okay, number one? Number two, he already lost one home. And you're asking him to leave another one. Number two -- Number three, ADHD, fetal alcohol syndrome, bipolar. You're asking him to go back to a school that said they couldn't do nothing for him.
You're asking him to go back to a community and a system that said they could not do anything for him. You're saying you're closing it, but you don't have any -- you're not telling me or him or the staff, anybody what you're going to do for him.

When the school closes, when it closes -- I said that wrong because it's not, you're not going to do it.

I'm here. You're going to have to get through me and every parent that's there. You're going to have to get through us.

He has a special educational plan. We can take that into consideration. And are you going to do due process? What are you going to do for my child? I don't want to hear about numbers. He's already been disserved. He's already been thrown away. He's already been done that. What else are you going to do to him and the kids that are just like him?

Let's talk about -- Let's talk about who this does serve outside of my child because everybody don't have the same issues my child has.

It's called emotionally disturbed. You would not see one child standing up here, you're not going to see it, because that's not -- that's not their fight.
This is ours, us, parents to stand up for them.

You have purple notes in your hands that explain what Buckingham represents and who Buckingham represents.

All I'm asking you today is to take another look at this school. All I'm asking the CEO is to tell us how are you going to serve our kids. Tell us how before you put us on a list as if though we are not some (indicating), as if though we are not special, as if though we don't have little angels that we are trying to raise to be -- become productive individuals in society.

Thanks.

SPEAKER: I want to say good evening to the Board and to everyone that's here.

My name is Pastor Levelle Willis, and I've been working --

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): My name is Pastor Levelle Willis, and I've been working with Buckingham since the new press board come in a few years ago.

And there are a lot of good things I can say about the school and about the community that the school serves and the community that serves with the school, but I kind of want to focus on this; that the criteria
to be on the list to be closed you guys have stated, and we respect that, but just in reference to Buckingham, Buckingham doesn't fit that criteria.

There's a utilization issue, and we understand that from you have to build budgets and things that are all tied into that, but I believe that the point of breaking is 70 -- 69 percent and less and under for utilization. Right now Buckingham has a 73 percent utilization.

And since this is a special ed school, when we get the four calls or five calls per month for children -- for parents that say my child has a problem and needs some help, we have to refer them back to the school that they're in that the child isn't getting any help and then say go to CPS.

CPS is controlling the utilization of this school. So you guys have to refer students to the school in order for the school to meet and exceed the utilization that it has right now, but it currently is at 73 percent.

All right. Even on the document that you guys have, the information about how many students it has, we currently have 39 students, by which one was just referred yesterday or last week. So if that process
continues, then we'll continue to see what we've seen over the past year, which is a 39 percent increase in enrollment.

So we're asking that you please take another look at the metrics that you have set for closing the school and then look at the parameters that have been set by the numbers of Buckingham, and I'm sure you'll find that Buckingham does not fit it and that, too, we can remove Buckingham and any school like it from this list of special ed once the Board operates in a position of its power, and that is to refer more students to those schools.

MR. SCOTT: We'd like to recognize the elected officials that are in the house tonight and give them an opportunity to speak.

We want to recognize Alderman Roger Sawyer of the Sixth Ward, and we have Alderwoman Harris of the Eighth Ward.

ALDERMAN SAWYER: Thank you, and good evening, everyone.

I just want to be very brief because I know there's a lot of people here for a lot of -- one great cause, and we're all here for our children.

I'm a little disappointed not in the people
that are doing hard work here, not for the parents. I'm disappointed for our children.

This situation has gone out of -- This has gotten out of hand. This should never be this type of situation where we decide what school is open and what school is closed. We're putting good people against good people, and that's not right.

I just have to come up here and say that. I just feel strongly that we should be concentrating on making all of our schools better instead of pitting one school against another.

I was sitting there listening, and everybody is advocating for their school, which is a great thing, and I appreciate that, and I understand that, but what we end up doing is we're pitting one against the other, you know, we're fighting one another, but we all want the same thing. We all want better schools for our children. We want to have our you communities safe. We all want the same things. And I believe -- I'm happy to see how many people are here today to express their concerns, and I'm happy four the Board to be here today, the people that are bringing the information to the CPS.

But this process is flawed. This whole process is flawed, and I'm concerned about it.
So what I want to do, and in the interest of time, I know there's a lot of people that want to speak, and I want to make sure that everybody's voices are heard that need to be, but we need to go back -- please tell the administration we need to go back and revisit this process. This process is flawed. It's pitting good people against good people, and that's not right, and I want us -- I just had to say that.

And thank you for your time. I appreciate it.

ALDERWOMAN HARRIS: Good evening.

Is Madison in the house, and where is Arthur Ashe?

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

ALDERWOMAN HARRIS: Okay. All right.

Today --

Can you hear me? Do I have the mic on?

I have to be closer, okay.

I'm going to speak into the mic. I'm going to take my two minutes.

My Madison, my Arthur Ashe are the very fabric and the strength of my communities.

What makes communities are the fact that we have strong schools, we have strong bodies, we have
strong families, we have strong people. That's why

communities were created.

Schools become the villages don't exist for

African American children. It's important that we keep

our villages so that they can continue to support our

children.

The only home some children know is a CPS

school. When they walk through that door, they feel

loved, they feel protected, they are cared about, they

are concerned.

So today I stand before you and say, I will

fight, I will fight to keep my communities stable. I

cannot afford to have any elephants left in my

community. I got enough boarded-up buildings and enough

abandoned properties. I cannot take it.

So today I stand in support of Arthur Ashe for

their leadership and the teachers, Dr. Murry, A.P.

Ferrell, who have worked like dogs day and night, staff

that comes in unpaid, stays late to make sure that our

children can have a quality education.

Today I stand and say to you that we need to

keep our schools for our children, for our communities

and keep these villages strong because we need to have

support. All right.
MS. MC DADE: The next school will be Madison followed by New Sullivan.

Madison, please come forward.

SCHOOL: MADISON

SPEAKER: I would like to explain to you why you shouldn't close James Madison.

Where would we go? We can't go to other schools because it's dangerous. Some of us don't feel safe. We will have to go to another area that is not familiar with us and we're not familiar with them, people that might harm us, but at James Madison we don't have to think twice because everyone -- everybody knows everyone.

There's an old saying that goes, it takes a village to raise a child. My village is the surrounding area of James Madison.

I've been going to James Madison from pre-K to eighth grade. So seeing it closed would be devastating. My childhood school closed will have me feeling sad and depressed.

Madison is like a home away from home. Madison is a generation of families that have grown here, played here, learned here and had good times at Madison.

When we would get to -- When you get to know
the people here, the thoughts are going to be different than what you've heard.

I used to think I don't care about Madison, but most students feel that way, but in reality, we really do.

Madison is a school that will help you grow, also a school that helps you with what you don't understand.

I have grown at Madison. I have my ups and downs. So seeing it close would not only upset me but upset the community.

Let's not forget another -- about other children that attend Madison. I have many family members who are still a part of Madison family. To think they will not get the experience and warm feeling of the help -- of the home school like I have sends chills down my spine. The community that has grown from children to adult will lose the only community center they have.

So when you consider closing Madison, you are closing -- you are not only closing a school, you tearing a family apart.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good evening, everyone. My name is
Albert Kelly. I'm the pastor of the Lord --

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): My name is Albert Kelly. I'm
the pastor of the Lord's Way Baptist Church located at
1250 East 75th Street. I'm a member of the LSC of
Madison School.

And everyone has spoken and said so many
wonderful things, but my questioning -- my question is,
where will our kids go, where will our kids go?

It's hard enough having them walk to school
from their house, and their house is only a block away.
Now you're talking about transporting our children
across town and everywhere else through gang territories
that are different and all kinds of stuff like that.

Who's going to be responsible for the safety of
our children? Who's going to be responsible for that?
When another 15-year-old, another eight-year-old,
another 12-year-old is gunned down because they had to
tavel somewhere else to go to school, who's going to be
responsible?

SPEAKER: Good evening, Ladies and gentlemen. My
name is Kelsey Jeter, and I'm on the local school
council at James Madison.

When you think of James Madison, you think of a
community, a huge family, you think of an old proverb, as the old saying goes, it takes a village to raise a child.

There's a lot of history you can see posted on the walls of students, family members who have graduated over the years. We know, academically, we are one of the best neighborhood schools. Historically, we as a community value James Madison, our teachers, our principals, our assistant principals and all other staff members that make Madison a community of survival.

Our family history book must continue at Madison.

James Madison made the second list for closure. We need to make sure that we do not make that final cut on March 31st.

The Madison community needs and wants your support in keeping the only assets to education and community center that our kids can go to and be safe. We need you to step up and fight for what really belongs in this community.

It's not -- If not for your tax dollars, churches, business and community members need to stand up for our children. This placement is not a good placement.
Thank you.

SPEAKER: I volunteer for Madison, and I just want to say Madison is a family to our neighborhood.

I went to school there as a young kid, and I'm 59 years old today. There's been generations that grew up in that school, and the ones that come from under me, they have kids, and their kids have kids. It's been a family-oriented neighborhood for years to come. We need that.

We have no centers in our neighborhood, we have nothing, nothing over there, and everything that they have done for Madison has been good for Madison, for our kids. The teachers come out and walk the neighborhood. That's how we work over there.

We need help. Please do not shut our school down.

Thank you.

MS. MC DADE: Sullivan please come forward followed by Park -- by O'Keefe.

SCHOOL: NEW SULLIVAN

SPEAKER: Good morning, all. My name is Kevin McGowan. I'm the dean of students at New Sullivan Elementary School.

New Sullivan Elementary School is located in
the south Chicago neighborhood known as the Bush. We have 501 students from pre-K to eighth grade. These students include profoundly disabled, autistic and English language learners.

Since Mrs. McCoy took over our school, Ms. Kathy McCoy, our illustrious principal, in 2010, we have retained every staff member minus one who took a promotion within CPS and several retirees who have worked for CPS for several decades.

Our attendance has jumped from 90 percent to 93 percent. Our ISAT scores have jumped as well. Sixty-two percent of our students meet or exceed state standards in math, 57 meet or exceed in science, and 58 meet or exceed state standards in reading.

Despite the fact that we are on probationary status, our performance policy rating increased from 11 to 42 to 19 to 42. Last year --

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): Last year our school was two points away from becoming a Tier 2 school. This year our academic priorities are to increase ISAT test scores by ten percent across. We want to ensure all students meet or exceed growth targets on the NWEA assessment.

To reach these goals, we have developed
schoolwide strategic plans. We have formal and informal classroom observations. Lesson plans are monitored for alignment with Illinois Learning Plan Book and Common Core standards. We use an optimal learning pattern to ensure mastery throughout all constant years. We also have ongoing data conversations targeting the individual instruction needs of each student.

What makes New Sullivan special?

We are a community school, one of the only elementary non-charter community schools in the south Chicago area.

We not only educate students. We address parental and family issues as well. At our school parents, families, community members can come and take academic, socioemotional classes. We have a before and afterschool program in both academics and fine arts and performing.

We have the developed partnerships with Chicago agencies that address health, wellness, socioemotional learning and college and career readiness.

To close New Sullivan would cause our entire community to suffer. None of the classes we offer are offered within a one and a half mile radius of our school. And, as we know, people who live in
neighborhoods who mostly travel by foot don't go more than five blocks out of their way to get services. To close our school would cause our students to cross gang lines they don't know, a small highway as well as train tracks. To keep us open, we can continue the great strides we've made already with our increased learning, low incidence of billing and almost zero violence. Give us a chance, and we can increase enrollment as well.

The McCaffery Interests, Chicago -- the City of Chicago and the aldermen of the 7th and 10th Wards have worked on a program called Lakeside Development. The very first face of this development to build houses and buildings and businesses. These houses will be directly related -- will directly lie in our school's attendance area.

We would not be here if our school was not underutilized, however, what I bring to you, just everything else that these kids go through Monday through Saturday, the learning, the extra classes, the socioemotional, the fine arts, the performing the sports, I welcome you, any other schools that may need to close in our area, we welcome those students, we have
that room, we want to give more than just to our current
students what we all love here at New Sullivan.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Evening, everyone. My name is Khamia
Teague. I am currently an eighth grader at William K.
New Sullivan.

There are many great schools out there, and
New Sullivan is one of them. They have an excellent
staff and great educators. An enormous amount of
programs are offered. Let's not forget, they love to
see their scholars sour. The staff and educators are
just amazing. The cater staff provides us with a
healthy --

Excuse me.

The cater staff provides us with a healthy
lunch to keep us strong. The custodians keep the school
clean. Teachers are doing so much to help us with what
we need. They try to make sure everything is
understood. They are all truly amazing.

A wide range of programs are offered before and
afterschool. You have tutoring sessions, basketball,
girls and boys, ballet, Spanish class, music works, et
cetera. The choices are endless.

There's got to be one you would love to do. I
mean, how couldn't you? You can get extra help or have
a little fun doing something you enjoy.

Last, but certainly not least, their love for
seeing their scholars score, not just academically, but
as a person as well working together, helping each other
out, becoming friends instead of enemies, going
forwards.

In conclusion, the 500-plus students attend an
astonishing school. They are surrounded by people that
care. We attend a marvelous school. I should know.
I've been there since kindergarten, and I'm in the
eighth grader now.

William Sullivan is great. We are a family on
the rise.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good evening, everyone. My name is
Ron Lukaway (phonetic).

I speak to you today as a parent and -- as a
parent of two children who attend William K. Sullivan
Fine Arts Academy.

My goal tonight is to encourage you all to
consider our school has a viable option to remain open.

My family is one that stays highly involved
with all the children in education. I live in the
community. I appreciate the way in which New Sullivan, our community school, has worked to develop the best in our children.

My children and I always feel welcome at the school, and I have ongoing contact with the teachers our children have been lucky enough to work with. Over the past five years, I can tell you all that the teachers, administrators are not only caring and compassionate, but they also have gone above and beyond both in terms of giving their pride to the children and all of the children who attend the school.

I realize that financial times are tough. I also think --

THE TIMEKEEPER: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): -- the need to be acknowledged through Sullivan is a place where every teacher and student feels supported and valued. Our school is a place of hope for every children.

My children's teachers are expected -- experts at what they do. They are true professionals.

I hope to see the Board do the right thing by our school and support our efforts in making sure that our school -- that our children are the priority in decisions that they will make over the next couple of
months. New Sullivan is an excellent school, and I
know, as a parent, they --

THE TIMEKEEPER: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): -- that our children entering
our schools will be fortunate to become a member of our
community.

Thanks.

MS. MC DADE: O'Keefe, O'Keefe followed by Parkside.

SCHOOL: O'KEEFE

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Anita Kidd
(phonetic). I am here representing the O'Keefe School.

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): My name is Anita Kidd. I am
here representing the O'Keefe Elementary School family.

I graduated from O'Keefe in 1976. My children
have graduated. My children graduated. My grandson
goes there. My nieces go there. We have three
generations at O'Keefe School.

Each morning I make sure my grandson has his
uniform on and I have mine. We both head to O'Keefe to
take care of business. His role is to learn, and my
role is to support the educators and the school
personnel.

During my tenure at O'Keefe School, I have
served as a member of the local school council,
secretary of PAC, the parent organization, greeter at
the main entrance and support for the cafeteria workers,
coach for the afterschool activities. You name it, I've
done it.

Closing O'Keefe would be at a minimum a
strategy. There's plenty of history, and the school is
on the rise with the people and programs that are being
implemented.

Where would the students go? Have the numerous
safety scenarios been acknowledged? Bussing over 560
students to neighborhoods that are out of the realm of
comfort is simply cruel.

Please consider that for our children. Closing
O'Keefe will be -- Closing O'Keefe will be a form of
abandonment. They have already experienced their
parents disappearing, parents being incarcerated,
deceased care-takers. The list goes on. The data
statistics and numbers cannot speak to the social and
emotional issues that will escalate if O'Keefe remains
on the list for foreclosure.

I have a question. It takes a village to raise
a child? How many villages are you willing to close?

Thank you for listening.
SPEAKER: Hello. My name is Natasha Dunn (phonetic), and I am the local school council community representative for Isabella O'Keefe, and I was wondering if you remember me from the last meeting.

If not, I brought some more people with me this time to represent Isabella O'Keefe. See, I came last time by myself, and I was so sincere that I wanted to make sure that the voices were heard.

I am a community member. My children do not attend this school, but I am very proud of my community South Shore. I've been a resident for 37 years, I was born and raised here, and it is appalling that you all are considering closing our schools.

I was so serious that I knocked on doors, I talked to the community, I made phone calls. This is serious business. And let me tell you something. This number is going to be bigger next time.

You say that our school is underutilized. I say that our school is full, bright and busting out of the seams with potential.

You say that our school is a Level 3 school. I say that our school is a Level 1 school with a world class education in particular teaching our kids to be able to compete on a global scale.
At Isabella O'Keefe we've made improvements over the years, and I know because, guess what, I used to substitute there years ago. And let me tell you something, 2011 and '12, '10 and '11 and even before then, it was not so good, but now we have made progress. In 2011 and '12 we made a 23 percent increase in the ISAT scores of the seventh grade students. Over 53 percent of our students are meeting and exceeding standards in the math and reading ISAT. We have formed partnerships with Concerned Christian Men, Black Store Project, Forum to Provide Mentoring, peace circles and also provide resources and uniforms for our students.

You see, we have special parents. We have parents that come from different backgrounds. We have a very diverse community. And we need services for our parents.

Today when I was on the phone doing phone banking, I ran into a couple of those beautiful, special, dedicated parents, one of which is homeless. She sends her children to O'Keefe every morning. She lives in a shelter on the west side of Chicago. Okay? So this is what we're working with. We have special needs, and we have dedicated parents.

We also have Spanish classes at O'Keefe. Our
children are taking foreign languages so that they will be able to compete in the global world. We have music, we have vocal classes, we have art, poetry and spoken word.

Whenever I walk in that school, I hear the children on the first level in kindergarten and pre-K, you can hear them shouting their A, B, C's and 1, 2, 3s with pride.

We have incorporated three new kindergarten classrooms. Within those classrooms, those children are being trained, they're being taught, they're being given the tools necessary to succeed.

We also have a strong collaboration with our pre-K program so the children who are in the pre-K program are being taught, and they're being funneled into our kindergarten program prepared to learn and be successful.

See, at O'Keefe we don't give up, and we're not going to beg you to keep our school open because we know that our school is going to stay open, and we're going to do what it takes. Like I said, these people here, it's going to triple, quadruple and then some just so you know.

Thank you.
Can I say one more thing?

Can you all explain to this little boy why you all going to close his school down, please? Can you all explain to all the rest of them out here why you all going to close their school down? Can all you tell them what's the real reason why you all closing this school down?

Stop thinking about the money issues and think about how many lives you all are playing with.

That's all I got to say.

MS. MC DADE: Parkside.

SCHOOL: PARKSIDE

SPEAKER: I sure hope we got somebody here from Parkside. I know I did see a few, right?

Well, that's okay.

My name is Sylvia Brooks, and I'm an advocate activist, and I'm going to keep it short.

I got some grandchildren here though. Come over here, please.

(Indicating.)

This is just two of my nine grandchildren.

Here comes some Parkside local members.

I just want to say one thing, and, like she said, I'm not going to beg either because I know just
one thing; I don't want to see no more blood shed, and I know that Parkside is a good school.

I have five kids. I have one --

Come on, Honey.

(Indicator.)

Oh, well, thank you. Amen. Well, thank you.

There you go, Mr. Willis. They were in the back. They couldn't get to the front.

I'm not going to let anybody speak like this.

First of all, I just want to say Parkside Elementary raised five of my children. I have four boys and one girl. We are all successful. My son is a captain in the Air Force. He's only 34. Yes, I was a young parent. Very, very successful.

I'm an advocate activist, and I'm at Parkside every day. They have a new principal there with new leadership, with new ideas and doing new things.

I would ask you guys to give them a chance, see what he's doing and do not close those doors to those kids right now.

I also want to let you guys know that, guess what, it's an awesome world in this world today. Crossing the boundaries is very dangerous. Come over there and walk those streets one day. That's all I want
to say.

Education is very, very important, but
trying -- taking a child out of his element of safety,
and then, you know, guess what, they can go to this one
teacher who understands them and can teach them in
relation to whether or not to go to the next seven
blocks to go to where see if they're going to make it
back home.

So I just want to tell you one more time, I got
five successful children and nine grandchildren who went
to Parkside, four of them who successfully finished
again. They all look kind of young, don't they?
Started early right? Right.

Parkside must stay put. O'Keefe --

(Indicating.)

Don't touch me.

O'Keefe and Parkside must because I get in the
trenches, I walk the streets, I knock on doors, and I
will help the principal.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good afternoon. My name is Deborah
Gardner (phonetic). I am one of the many teachers at
Parkside.

You know, we can go on about how wonderful
Parkside is, but we have really, really struggled this year, we have been struggling for years, and we've had principals and principals.

So when you said you're going to close us up, you should have first looked at the point that you have switched principals for us, I mean, every four years, every three years.

We have gotten the AEIO, and now we have Ms. McDade, and she's the person who has been in our school. I've seen her more than I've seen anyone out of the 17 years I have been teaching. So she's coming in, and she's trying.

And so we have a principal who has come with new innovative ways to work with us. He has taught us how to do data, which we have never been taught how to work with the data, how to read and how to develop programs so that we can be able to teach our children the best we can.

I can tell you that I've been there, I've seen children come, and I've seen children leave, but, you know, one thing that they know is that, more than anything, that we give them what they need.

And so if you close us up, if you close them up, they already have so much mistrust, they have so
much things that they're looking at people for, so they
would probably feel as if we're turning our back on
them, we're leaving them, and we're not doing our job as
a teachers, and we're not doing our job as
administrators, and so if you look at the point that we
have a new principal and he's just starting and he has
already made a lot of changes, we have new teachers,
younger teachers in the building who have new ideas, new
things going on, we have new -- we have never had new
computers, never, I've been there since 1996, and I'm
telling you, every time I got computers in my room, they
were always used computers, this is the first year that
I've gotten new computers, that I've gotten -- he's
given us new iPads, new things to work with, new things
that he's taken out of his pocket, he has come to the
point where he's trying to get us so that we can catch
up with everybody else.

So you say you're closing us down, but then I
ask you, how can you hold us accountable when you don't
give us what we need? You don't give us what we need.

You give things to other schools, but then you
take this school, and you don't look at the point that
we've been changing principals more than anybody. When
I've been there, I've seen ten principals out of the
time that I've been there, ten. That's ridiculous. How
can you get into any consistency? How can you get into
anything?

I'm asking you before you close us down to look
at the point that you haven't given us anything. You've
given us nothing to work with, not anything whatsoever.

So now you've given us a principal and you've
given us a sense of hope, and now you want to shut our
doors. I don't understand that because you're trying to
say that we're not doing our job, but then you're not
doing yours. You're not taking care of what we're
supposed to be doing.

To close the doors down and to say that you're
going to shut us down where there's no school for our
children either to be bussed, they have to either get to
know a whole set of new people, or they have to be
crossed -- cross Stony Island or cross Jeffery, I think
that's ridiculous because would you want your child to
go there, and so would you want your child to have to
cross big streets, would you want your child not to have
anything?

We struggle with having paper. We struggle
with having anything that's new. We struggle with all
this.
So now you give us somebody who's willing to work with us, willing to help us, willing to teach us. Give us a chance to have meetings where we work together and we're building the unity and we're running everything --

THE TIMEKEEPER: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): And I've got 15 seconds so I'm going to say this.

I'm asking you, from the bottom of my heart, not because I need a job, of course, everybody here needs a job who has a job, I'm not begging for my job, I'm begging for my children, for all the children who I've taught through the years, all the children that I'm teaching now, that you give us a chance, at least a chance to see how our principal, how our new administration is going to work and how we're going to do things before you shut us down.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is --

MS. MC DADE: Okay. I'm sorry. Is it time?

THE TIMEKEEPER: (Indicating.)

MS. MC DADE: Okay. So Parkside, you guys have used your time.

We want to get through the list so we'll call
you back up once we finish all the schools, okay?

Powell.

SCHOOL: POWELL

SPEAKER: All right.

MS. MC DADE: All right. Powell, we need you to have your time to speak. The key speakers for Powell, we do not want you to miss out on your time to speak, absolutely, everyone that is here supporting Powell.

SPEAKER: Good evening, everyone.

Those that are supporting Powell, we're asking you to stage up front now.

While we're getting on stage, we want to thank our friends of the program that includes our elected officials, our family members, our friends.

Okay. Yes.

All the friends and family of Powell, please --

Good evening.

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): Awesome job, you guys, awesome job.

My name is Joselyn Ploy (phonetic), and I am a friend of Powell Academy, and I am so honored to speak and advocate for such a wonderful school that somehow --

THE AUDIENCE: (Applause.)
SPEAKER (cont'd.): -- made it to this list.

Now, just recently, we were a Level 1 school, and all of a sudden we became a Level 2 school because it was claimed that we were underutilized, which is not accurate information.

We're located at 7511 South Shore Drive in Chicago. We are on the lake front, which is prime real estate for those of you who may not know that. We're in an award winning building school. We received an award, we received a nomination just this year. We've only been in the building two years, and already we're on the chopping block, and we're confused as to why when you claim that we're underutilized.

It seems as though underutilization is a means of taking over and creating havoc within our community with our students. So upon researching the information that you provided, we'd like to offer you some solutions in partnering with you in the hopes of keeping our school open.

Now, as we talk about utilization, we have to talk about ancillary programs. Ancillary programs include a science program with a lab. It includes a music program with instruments, it includes an art program, two technology labs, a parent community
resource family, a family room, a female mentoring
program with Girl Scouts, a male mentoring program, a
reading program, a library that is comparable to a
Chicago public library, a gymnasium, a dining facility,
algebra, math program, Spanish program and a special
needs program.

And, again, it is alleged that we are
underutilized. We are servicing 544 students, African
American students with which 97.5 of these students are
on a free lunch program, meaning that they are
impoverished. These are students that are making
challenges, overcoming challenges daily just to get good
grades and grants.

And we're going to talk about attendance in a
moment, but ISAT sat scores, which is clearly important
to all of you, as it is to us, as we have continued to
increase our show rate in academic achievement as it
relates to the ISAT, we have been successful in this
area for the last five years in a row. Since 2007 our
ISAT capacity has increased from 48 percent to 77
percent. Powell Academy has not decreased one
percentile compositely on the ISAT since 2008.
Currently, we are at 77.3 percent in meeting or
exceeding ISAT composites. We're at 74.7 percent in
meeting or exceeding reading. We're at 78 percent in
meeting or exceeding math. We're at 80 percent in
meeting or exceeding science. We're at 15.3 percent in
exceeding overall goals.

So, again, I say we were a Level 1 school that
hit the Level 2 school list because we were
underutilized, and we'd like to challenge that theory.

We need to work together to better utilize the
resources that we have. And we have done that. We have
reached out to a Grammy award winning international
music artist to help us develop our music program. We
have even reached out to the community to develop
partnerships so that they can come in and help our
children with economic and developing businesses. We're
even reaching out to social service programs to help us
continue to deal with the inner city eco socioeconomics
issues that you say don't exist with our students as our
students are trying to compete with their counterparts
on the North Shore to get the resources that we clearly
don't get at all. So we're kindly requesting that you
work with us.

We have a zero tolerance rate for violence and
crime in the school. We have 100 percent parent
contact. We have an attendance rate that's second to
none. Ninety-six percent of our students go to school every day. We don't have a truancy issue. Additionally, 95 percent of our faculty and staff is at work every day. That is a level of commitment that we are committed to in the long term, but in two years it's not enough time to discuss whether or not we're going to be a failure. It's not enough time. So we're asking to work with you, sit down at the table because you've never invited us to the table. We've been in the room. But we need to be at the table negotiating a relationship that works in the benefit of our children.

We don't think that you're against us, but you've got to work with us, and if we can't work with you, we're not showing our children that we can even get along. We have to get along together.

So, now, if you again say we're underutilized, we are washing uniforms. Our students are so poor that sometimes they show up with dirty uniforms. We wash their uniforms for them. Some of our students don't have hot water and heat at home so they take showers at school. Our principal pays for haircuts so our young men will be presentable.

We have children that need health care. They
get health care, they get health and wellness programs,
they get free vision, dental mental, emotional health,
hearing programs. We are working with our students.

So in closing we're just asking kindly that you
take us off this list and you work with us and be
committed because we're committed to working with you,
and we're reaching out to you.

Today I had the opportunity to talk to
Mr. Powell's grandson, and he was devastated that you
would even attempt to take this aggressive action on us.
We have a video for you to see along with our
information.

We want to thank you for your time, and we
expect your support.

MS. MC DADE: Powell, Powell, you have used all of
your time.

We have to go to the other schools, and we will
bring you back. We'll bring your additional speakers
back with the time.

SPEAKER: I am a representative of a community
group. I am a representative of a community group. I
am president of the Chicago South Side --

MS. MC DADE: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): -- of NAACP.
And based upon -- based upon the evidence and the information that you just heard, this is a school that you should not close.

I -- The NAACP, has received complaints from parents about this school being closed and other schools that are here tonight who are good quality community schools.

We don't want those schools to close, and we will be investigating all complaints.

So people, parents, I have complaints here tonight. You need to see the NAACP.

Thank you very much.

I have faith in myself. I have faith in my teachers. I will express my duties and responsibilities.

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

MS. MC DADE: Revere, Revere followed by Warren.

Revere followed by Warren.

SCHOOL: REVERE

SPEAKER: Hello?

MS. MC DADE: Can we have your attention, please?

Let's please give our respect to Revere. All of the schools thus far have been respected and heard.

We want to make sure that the remaining schools have an
opportunity to have a voice tonight.

SPEAKER (cont'd.): Okay. Good evening. First be honored to God who is the head of my life.

My name is Brook Pryor (phonetic).

THE AUDIENCE: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): Sorry, Revere. Go ahead.

MS. MC DADE: Come close -- Come close to the mic.

Right.

SPEAKER (cont'd.): My name is Brook Pryor, last name P-r-y-o-r.

They can't hear.

Can you turn the mic up?

I'm speaking on behalf of the students and families at Paul Revere Accelerated School, as LSC co-chair, community organizing is my job in church, lifetime resident of the community and, most impair -- most important, a parent of two Revere students.

Concerned about our safety, I will speak on the logistics around affiliations, new causes including social media, the demographics, the age and the gender of the violence.

Everyone comes up here, and we're speaking about our neighborhoods, our community. Well, I'm going to give you some insight on my community.
We are formed --

We are officially part of the Greater Grant Crossing community but most commonly referred to as Pocket Town or the Pocket. We stretch from 71st to 74th from Drexel to Woodlawn and from 68th to 70th and Kimbark. We are cut off to the north by the cemetery. We are cut off by tracks and a viaduct to the east.

We are a relatively small community but very tightknit. For generations and generations, there has been a consistency -- a consistency with the neighborhood to the east of us in under the viaduct which is known as Circon, which also houses Grant Madison Elementary School. As a community activist and doing work with my church, I get to interact with both sides, and violence is an issue on both sides.

THE AUDIENCE: Can't hear you.

SPEAKER (cont'd.): Violence, the media is flooded with homicides of youth and innocent bystanders.

Can you hear me now?

The media also portrays these as gang shootings when the issue now is larger than gangs. The issue is no longer just gangs. The issue is neighborhood to neighborhood and sometimes block to block within these neighborhoods. And this is what's going on between the
Pocket and Circon. This is going on between Revere School and Madison School.

And it's now starting as early as fourth and fifth graders, and that means as early as eight, nine and ten years old. These children are fighting which is leading to getting -- people getting killed.

On October 8th, 2012, a young name by the name of Jonathan Williams was shot and killed on 74th and Dorchester. On October 17th, 2012, Clinton Smith was killed inside his apartment when someone knocked on the door and open fired.

Though the police do not have anyone for either of these incidents, they are both said to be innocent bystanders of the crime that happened between the Pocket and Circon.

Mixing the schools can cause these environments to go outside, making it very unsafe for our kids. Once they're in sixth grade, they cannot cross over into the viaduct, they will not be safe, and it goes for both Madison and Revere.

A greater percentage of our neighborhood consists of working single families. Revere is and has been a pillar in our neighborhood, oftentimes linking together the few hours between the parents -- linking a
few hours with parents' work schedules and students' school schedules. For this reason the Head Start is a needed -- immediate need of Revere.

My oldest child, she's now in third grade, was in the last class to receive full-day Head Start at Revere. She left Head Start reading at a first grade level. She was able to skip kindergarten and go straight to first grade.

Since the Comer Foundation has decreased enrollment in their local community, Revere has picked up on those hours. Revere is open from 8:00 o'clock a.m. to 6:45 p.m. These students with us have just got out of school at 6:45, and my children are some of those 8:00 o'clock a.m. babies.

Currently the afterschool program provides 125 students with tutoring and music and performing arts.

We need more time if you're going to -- We need more funding for afterschool programs.

Yes, CPS can save money by closing schools, but you cannot put a price on these babies lives.

SPEAKER: How many minutes I got?

THE TIMEKEEPER: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): Okay. I'll make it quick.

My name is Angelie Porchay (phonetic), and I am
the NCLB chairperson for Revere School.

Revere has unique circumstances, not mobility, special population or truancy, and these are common factors that impact schools in our communities.

Although these problems exist, with the 26.1 mobility rate, we know that our best chance to overturn these challenges is our free public school safely located away from drug-dealing corners and daily violence.

We cannot afford to put our students in the crossfire of Circon madness by making them travel under viaducts. We cannot afford to lose extended day programming that sees the last of 125 students leave at 6:45 p.m. We cannot afford the alternatives to public education.

As we hear rumblings of behind-closed-door dealings to give Paul Revere to a charter institute where students are fined from everything from not having notebook paper to absences, the alternative is not a system based on education for all.

We are done with the lies that use Paul Revere as the poster child for educational reform. Yes, we had support as part of the $65 million investment in the community, but if our children were so important, why
did you abandon them? We were told that Revere would
never be forsaken. In spite of it all, we continue to
work and attain higher scores than when we had you.

Who's responsible for breaking the promise?

When you left, you took security, teachers for
small class sizes, a full-time social worker and much
more. You left our kids. First our schools and then
our homes.

This is Revere's unique circumstance.

Is this about children or properties? Can you
answer that question?

Thank you.

MS. MC DADE: Warren.

SCHOOL: WARREN

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Roxanne Young.

I am a teacher at Warren Elementary School, and I'm here
this evening to bring you the facts or why Warren
Elementary School should not be considered for school
closing.

Unfortunately, CPS has not considered one of
the major facts; where will our students go? Our
neighborhood schools are overcrowded or are filled to
capacity. Even some of them have selective enrollment.

Our students would dare to have to travel
13 blocks into neighborhoods that are infested with
gangs, and then they will have to go across streets such
as 59th Street and Stony Island Street.

We have to consider the safety of our students.

Fact 2: CPS has inaccurate data. They have us
as 314 students enrolled. We have 330 students
enrolled. Every single student at our school counts at
Warren Elementary School.

Fact 3: We have buildings, we have classrooms
that they say are not utilized, when in fact they are
being utilized.

Classroom Number 1 is our parent resource
center. In that room we have resources for our parents
so that they can come into our building, they can use
these resources to help their students at home because
we know that it does not just take the teacher, it's the
teacher, the parent and the community to help educate
our students.

In that resource center, we also hold our PAC
meetings for our parents so that they can come into in
this resource center.

We also have a library in our primary building
so that our babies will not have to travel outdoors
during inclement weather. They can have their own
library in their building.

Fact --

Classroom Number 3: We have an RTI tutoring program. The response to intervention tutoring programs are for our struggling students to get individualized instructional programs. With that program we take our students who are below, and we move them to meet and exceed.

Fact Number 4: We keep our students off of the streets. Our school is open as early as 7:00 a.m. in the morning and does not close until as late as 6:45 in the evening. We offer programs before school and after school. We have teachers who come in and volunteer their time to teach our students reading, math and science. We have teachers who come in to coach our students in volleyball, softball, track, cheerleading, dance, whatever. You name it, Warren has it for our students. We have clubs and we have programs for our students to enhance our instructions. We have a science club. We have a technology club. We have a chest club to promote critical thinking, and we also have partnerships with the Museum of Science and Industry as well as the Nature Museum.

At Warren we believe in keeping our students
off of the streets, and we believe in keeping our
students safe.

CPS, please consider the students at
Warren Elementary School.

SPEAKER: My name is Robert Julun (phonetic).

I've been involved with Warren School for over
40 years. My children went to Warren, my grandchildren
went to Warren, and I still have a grandchild at Warren
right now. I've been an LSC member there. I've been a
parent volunteer for the last 13 years on a daily basis
at Warren School.

I'd like to thank Ms. Barbara Byrd-Bennett and
CPS officials for allowing us to present our information
on the quality and quantity of teaching and learning
going on at Joseph Warren school.

It's reported that we have 300 students -- 314,
but we actually have 330 students enrolled there. In
fact, we enroll students basically from all the over the
city. At one time I thought that Joseph Warren was a
dumping ground because we got so many never-do-well
students.

But the staff didn't see it that way. They saw
it as an opportunity to include as many children in our
education process as they could safely absorb.
We realize that some schools must be closed due to circumstances not of your making, not of our making, however, Joseph Warren must be removed from that list of school closures.

Our continued operation is essential to the excellence and education that we have achieved the past few years. Joseph Warren is a magnet cluster school with a focus on math and science, and that focus is revealed in the testing results from 2010 through 2012.

Consider our overall student meets/exceeds for the past three years in reading, math and science. In reading in 2010, we were at 59 percent; 2011, 68 percent and improved even further 2012 to 73 percent. Math went from 69 percent to 72 percent and increased again in 2012 to 77 percent; science from a low of 43 percent in 2010 to 70 percent in 2011, and another jump in 2012 to 77 percent.

Extrapolate these figures, and you can see we are on track for some very significant improvement. Numbers don't lie. We're doing very, very well and getting better.

To impede upon the process of progress at Joseph Warren would be a detriment to the very people CPS serves; our children. Don't stop the process, don't
stop the progress by closing Joseph Warren School.
Please keep us open as we continue to strive for
excellence in educating and preparing our children for
life.

    Thank you.

    THE TIMEKEEPER:  (Indicating.)

    MS. MC DADE:  We don't have two more so he can go.

    SPEAKER:  Okay.  Thank you.  Thank you.  Thank you.

    To this illustrious Board, my name is Otto Ali.
I represent a community where Warren School exists.  I
also served as the local school council chairperson at
Warren School for a little over 25 years, I believe, and
I want to share with you, if I may, some concerns that I
have not only as a parent but also as a community leader
and also as a past chairman of the local school council.

    First and foremost, my concern lies with the
safety of our children.  Many of our -- our parents
can't afford to pay the high cost of bussing their
children to different schools.  Warren is in close
proximity to the many homes of the majority of our
children, and, also, by that proximity, it is accessible
and it is easy for them to walk to.

    When they walk, we can see them coming from
four or five blocks away.  You see, our -- we have a
parent patrol as well as our security staff who is posted on each corner of our schools every day.

If you close one school, our students will have to walk under viaducts, cross two-way traffic streets like 95th and Jeffery and then travel through gang-infested territories.

According to the crime watch, Jeffrey Manor neighborhood is riddled with armed robberies, burglaries and assaults.

We are tightly linked to the community. We have partnerships with the Compassionate Church, Trinity Hospital, CTA and Chicago State University. They provide afterschool programs, tutorial programs, coats, shoes, socks and uniforms for our children in need.

I really want to highlight Warren School's disciplinary program. We have a we are family policy, and the students truly believe that they are an extended family of each other.

The students have a Warren chant that builds teamwork and unity. We have a principal for the first time in over 30 years that I've been involved in education that sings the Happy Birthday song to every student on their birthday in the school, the numerous, numerous, numerous incentive programs such as
Good Guy/Good Guy program and On The Ball program, that rewards students for jobs well done.

Our students don't fight. We might nonviolently disagree, and this will soon become a classroom debate. Suspensions are at an all-time low, and students feel safe, and they love to come to school.

I would like to deeply appeal to all of you, please, please, please remove Warren School from that list. The facts state we don't belong there.

As I took my seat --

As I take my seat, oftentimes, we were talking about the education that's going on right now, and I just want to share this with all of you. Yesterday coupled with today is what guarantees us our tomorrow. Help us continue to guarantee our tomorrows by keeping the doors of our education open today, please.

I have a son who called me who was a past student that graduated from here. He is now a junior at Warren Wilson College in Asheville, North Carolina. He plays basketball. He's a junior. Last year made the All American Honors Mention. This year he made the dean's list. And, not only that, in the school's 56-year history, this is the first time that college will make a tournament bid to the NCAA.
We have progress that has come out of this school. Keep our doors open.

Thank you so much.

MS. MC DADE: Ms. Young.

SPEAKER: One minute.

Good evening, community members and all that are present tonight. I am here speaking on behalf of all of our parents, students, community and staff at Warren.

My concern is that no one has taken into consideration we as parents can go to work and school in the morning and know that our children are in safe hands at our school Joseph Warren. We don't have to worry about our children passing through unknown territories, gang violence.

It is not a problem in elementary school is what you all said. This is just not true. Middle school children from the ages of 12 through 14 are most targeted because of their maturity level.

CPS says that we are not at 30 -- 300 students on the 20th of day of school. Our data shows we are. We are currently enrolled with 330 students now.

We also stand in knowing that from shown data Warren has strengthened the growth in our children
academically as well as socially.

Many of us as parents have been able to better help our children academically and financially because of the parent room that is being utilized to have parent workshops, job skill programs, homework help and many other programs.

Yet, you all argue space utilization. The couple classrooms that you are saying do not hold students, it is actually holding them.

Outside of the parent room, we are using one of our rooms as a primary library which is accessible for our primary children to support their age level learning.

And our response to intervention classrooms, it is equipped with resources and highly qualified teachers to supporting the needs of our students that they may struggle a little harder to reach their maximum potential. So we will pull these students daily in a small setting, and we work with them to bring them to exceed levels because closing Warren is not an effect -- not only affecting the students and parents, but it also pulls down our value in the neighborhood.

Warren has strong partnerships with many of the neighboring organizations, and we continue to be of more
connections. We work hand in hand with our church in
the neighborhood which continues to help our children
feel good about themselves and know that everything is
possible that is positive through education.

THE TIMEKEEPER: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): Please let us continue to make
our children soar to their highest potential in their
own surroundings, Warren School. Stabilization is more
important than utilization.

MS. MC DADE: Thank you, Warren.

Yale, representatives from Yale.

Yale.

SCHOOL: YALE

SPEAKER: My name is Stephanie Patton, and I am a
parent advisory council president and parent of a
seventh grader at Yale Elementary School.

My child has been at Yale since preschool. He
hopes to graduate from Yale like his older brother who
is graduating from Englewood in Englewood this year. He
hopes to graduate from Yale like --

I'm sorry. I'll leave that.

Yale is an anchor and a hub in our community.

We have numerous programs and services offered to
children and families.
We have Real Men Cook and the Englewood Garden. We hosted the History Makers Program. In 1997 the Yale Club from Yale University adopted our school to provide tutoring and mentoring services to our students.

If Yale was to close, where would our children go? Can you guarantee their safety? Even if you do provide transportation -- I'm sorry. Even if you do provide transportation, the children's day is going to be longer.

You need to know some great things that are happening at Yale. Our teachers are striving to raise students' achievements in reading, math and science. Teachers are providing rigorous instructions that is detrimental for our students. Teachers are receiving focused professional development training to prepare our students. Yale administration is working hard to bring in creative programs to meet the social needs of our children and families. We.

Have letters of support from Alderman Sawyer and Cliff Kelley, The Children's Home & Aid, the Yale Club of Chicago, Joffrey Ballet, Ravinia, Angelic Organic Linus Center and Real Men Cook program.

Here's a binder. (Indicating.)

MS. MC DADE: Thank you.
SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Diana Carr (phonetic). I am a parent of Yale Elementary School.

My son attended -- My son attended Yale at the age of four. He's 13 now. I sat on the Board as the vice-president of the local school council, president of the NCLB Council, Parent Patrol.

My greatest concern is gun violence. If you close Yale, can you guarantee the safety of our children? Look at the death toll of our children who were gunned down. Cemeteries are filled with our children than people who are dying with health issues. Just last week can three young ladies were gunned down by gun violence.

The Board is more concerned about test stores and utilizations of the schools, but as a parent, my concern is the safety of our children of Englewood. If you close Yale, God forbid that anything should ever happen to our children. Who do we hold responsible?

Can you the people who are trying to close Yale, can you guarantee that our children of Englewood will be safe if you close Yale?

Then if you can guarantee me and other parents
and grandparents that their loved ones won't be in
danger, then close it, but if you all don't want the
bloods of our children in your hands, then leave Yale
open.

SPEAKER: Hi. My name is Angela Copeland
(phone), and I'm in fifth grade, and I represent Yale
School.

Yale is all we have. If you close down Yale,
where will we go? I entered this school in
kindergarten, and I want to graduate from Yale. If you
close the school, where would it leave me?

In a new school with strangers who pick on me
and don't believe in me or my success?

Most of classmates live in different
communities. They come to this school because their
parents feel that it's safe. They come here because
they think -- They come here because their parents feel
it's safe and nothing bad will happen to them. We are
influenced here. We'd have to walk communities, and it
may not be safe.

Every Monday on the news I hear about they're
talking about every children and every children being
killed over the weekend. It worries me.

Every day I leave out of the house, my grandma
tells me and will warn me about the risk of walking to
school by ourselves.

But if you --

Plus we feel safe right here, but if you are
crossing territories and to go to a whole another school
could be bad for us and -- could be bad for us.

This leaves me all wondering, does my life have
value, does anyone at the Board of Education care about
me, or do they just care empty seats.

Also, many kids go to town and can't get into
many closer schools around our history.

I know that no education is one number one
reason that kids are either on the streets, on drugs or
locked up in jail.

If you close this school, more kids end up on
the street, more kids end up on drugs and locked up.

Give us a chance. Save our school, not closing
our school with a safe place and a chance to learn.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Yvette Moleo
(phonic), and I'm a 640 resident active in solutions
at Yale Elementary School.

I am executive director of Real Men Charities,
which is the sponsoring organization for the Real Men
Cook events that have been presented for the last 24 years. We have generated dollars for the South Side YMCA Community Mental Council and Boys and Girls clubs. When we can't donate dollars in an economic time like this, we donate our time, and our time has been spent at Englewood -- at Yale in Englewood, Yale is one of -- has been awarded.

This is of particular importance because of the fact that we have been healing what we call a traumatized area. If you know the area, it's 70th and Princeton, which is not quite Skyway logical, it's across the Dan Ryan, but if you know the area, you know that there has been some trauma there for a while.

But it's stabilized a bit because of the kids -- because of the garden and the farm vision that we give them. We have children and parents working in the farm and the garden together and being served healthy meals by the men. So we have men in the schools that are supporters, and they are as a stabilizing effort.

We work with Dr. Carl Bell and seven principals for community building, and we believe that we are creating stability.

Actually, this is what the City of Chicago says
is -- is important.

    In the recent study of Recipes for Success, and

I'm reading now from Cliff Kelley's, and Cliff Kelley is
the commentator on WVIN radio who went to Englewood High
School, and you have his letter in your package, but
what he says is that everything that the city says, that
they want help the schools, it's happening at Yale right
now. We planted the seeds --

    THE TIMEKEEPER: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): -- but we have to allow what we
put in, what we've invested in the last two years to
grow.

    The garden is right next-door to the school,

Yale Elementary School. Across the street is the
farmland which is called The Eat to Live Farm
Development program. Next door to that is a house.

    THE TIMEKEEPER: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): So, you know, we are looking at
a healthy campus which is a hub of Englewood's health
area. Think of it as the sunshine and the rays of light
are shining out into the community.

SPEAKER: Hello. My name is Kennedi Huff. I am 12
years old and in the seventh grade.

    As you will allow other schools more than six
minutes, I hope you don't cut us off because our school
starts with a Y at the end of the alphabet.

I've been a student of Yale since 2005 and have
had a very great experience so far. In my opinion the
school is a great place where students can learn in a
safe and enjoyable environment.

I feel that, as a future eighth grader, I need
an environment where I feel my most comfortable.

The reason is very simple. The classes are
small so it makes -- so it makes it very easy to do our
work, and this is on one-on-one instruction on how we
should complete any given assignment if need be.

Just because Yale closing is heartbreaking
because the new administration allows students to have a
voice and make decisions. Because of their efforts, we
now have a student council, something that has never
happened in the history of me attending Yale.

At Yale the teachers are very concerned about
our learning. I feel that they are committed and
dedicated to the success of the students at the school.
Because there are only a few of them, they have taken on
many roles.

We have grown accustomed to talking with our
teachers about anything because we know that they are
looking out for our welfare.

We also have very many volunteers. The Yale alumni, just to name one, plays an integral part. They have been with us for about eight years. They have taken us under their wing and provided us with many opportunities that we otherwise would not have had.

If Yale is closed, we lose out on the experience that they have provided and those that they plan to bring us next year.

There's also a legacy which started with my grandmother who graduated in 1966, my mother who graduated in 1986 and then my sister who graduated at the end of this school year.

If you close Yale, you will be destroying my chance to graduate, my brother after me and the legacy our family has built.

In addition, the thought of having to attend another school with the possibility of having to come in contact with gang members scares me very much. I know I will have to cross several different gang-affiliated boundaries in order to attend any other school in my neighborhood.

The thought of what we can do in the future is mind-blowing only if you give us that chance.
Save our school by rethinking how this would be not only for the betterment of the students of Yale but the betterment of our community.

So if you give the great minds of Yale and I a chance, it will have a great outcome. Trust me. You will be surprised at all we can do, not as individuals but as a whole.

MS. MC DADE: Okay. We have about five to six minutes remaining before we close out the session, and we have some community members who have signed up to speak, and so we will begin calling them now beginning with C. Powell, Greater Chatham Alliance.

Is C. Powell here?

SPEAKER: Yes.

I just wanted to --

MS. MC DADE: Alderman Harris --

SPEAKER: -- to acknowledge Warren Elementary School, which is not mine anymore, and it's in the remap, but it's such a part and a fabric of the community that I represent, historically, that schools has been sitting in our district for over 30 years, it is so much of who we are, I recently invested 200-plus thousand dollars on a signal light to help those children cross the street and get there safely, so that
community is so much a part of the Calumet Heights years and part of who we are, there are no schools that can take on the population in that grid, Black is selective enrollment, Earhart is filled too capacity, and Horn Elementary is busting at the seams so I implore you to make sure that they have an opportunity to stay in that building because I don't know where those babies are going to go. So they are so much apart of who I am, my --

THE AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): -- send their kids there, and so I supporting Warren Elementary.

MS. MC DADE: Okay. Thank you, Alderman Harris.

C. Powell.

SPEAKER: Good evening. Thank you for taking the time to hear me.

Can you all hear me?

MS. MC DADE: Take it out.

SPEAKER: Can you guys hear me now?

Hi. I just wanted to speak on behalf of Greater Chatham Alliance. I am the educator of the committee chair. I am a parent. My oldest child started school at age 3. I am also an LSC member of Martha M. Robess and advisory council vice chair.
And I just wanted to get this, and I want to send this to you as well because this is my statement. My issue is this: Why Chicago Public School systems set up to fail the children in our communities. The communities I'm speaking of are the urban communities which are primarily minority-based and Title 1 funded.

The Board of Education seems to have systematically allowed these schools to fail because, other than failure, what reason would there be to allow the schools to remain on academic probation for four years before the implementation of a corrective action plan is even considered? Let's face it, four years is a long time to wait for assistance for the school that needs help.

It seems to me the Board is more concerned with immunization than education. Think about it. CPS will remove a child from a school immediately if they have ringworm or head lice, there's no time wasted because they don't want that type of infection to spread throughout the school, but on the other hand, they will allow the school to spread the disease of continued underachievement and lack of resources for four years where resuscitation is barely an option before
assistance is offered, then place the blame on the
teachers when the children are failing academically, not
to mention, they piggyback those actions or lack thereof
to lowering the academic bar and being deceptive about
the progress they made while allowing children to
graduate eighth grade without as much as a sixth grade
graduation.

When you couple that with the alienation of
parents and community and the school, the reasons we're
in the shape we're in today, underutilization is the
terminology used to mask the real motive behind these
school closings.

Underutilization is what happens when CPS is
deceptive by saying that there's no money available to
fund the much needed teaching staff, librarians, nurses
and programs that are vital to the success of the
children when they know that, in fact, there's millions
dollars of surplus money at their disposal.

Maybe they're unclear that the program and the
staff that have been taken from us were once housed in
the rooms that are now classified as unused.

Do they not know that 30 to 40 children in a
classroom with one teacher is unacceptable and is not
conducive to a learning environment?
In my opinion --

THE TIMEKEEPER: (Indicating.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): I'm sorry. Let me see.

Do they know that, if they had returned what was stolen from us, closing our schools wouldn't be an option?

The reality is not underutilization, it's underfunding. The fact of the matter is underutilization is what CPS is guilty of.

CPS finds money to hire retired CPS employees and pay them as a consultant three times their regular salary, to answer phones, but none of your questions, only to direct you to the wrong department by the time you hang up from the call.

It seems -- It seems to me that CPS --

THE AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

SPEAKER (cont'd.): It seems to me that since CPS is so concerned with underutilization and closing facilities, they should start at 125 South Clark because that building has more underutilized -- unutilized space and unnecessary employees than any 15 schools in Chicago combined.

So let's be clear. CPS is not concerned with education, neither our children, nor their safety. CPS
is concerned only with three things; how quickly they
can abolish public schooling, how much money they can
line their pockets with by inserting as many charter and
turnaround schools in our neighborhoods and communities
as quickly as they can, how long can they pretend that
the millions of dollars of surplus money at their
possession isn't really theirs.

Ask yourself, aren't the funds used to support
programs, equipment, extra staff at charter and
turnaround schools coming from the same source? So why
is it that our urban schools cannot seem to obtain any
of these funds, programs, equipment and the extra staff
needed to help these children to progress in a
productive life?

Again, I want to mention that we are not
underutilized, we are underfunded. If you return some
of our teachers and some of our programs, these schools
will be able to be -- the rooms would be filled.

Any parent that is worth their salt, if you
have a failing school, you're going to take your kid out
so, therefore, your school population is going to
dwindle.

The reality is, we don't need any of our
schools closing, and unless you have a contingency plan
to get our children safely to and from wherever it is
you plan to ship them, closing is not an option in my
opinion.

MS. MC DADE: Next we have Bonoma Burrell
(phonetic).
Bonola Burrell, is Bonola Burrell here?
SPEAKER: Excuse me. I signed up.
MS. MC DADE: Okay.
SPEAKER (cont'd.): Okay. Don't start with me.
No, no. I signed. I signed. I signed up.
Have you put us on --
Did you do what you did last time? I signed up
when I came.
Excuse me. I signed up, and I've been here for
three hours.
MS. MC DADE: Okay. Mr. Martin.
SPEAKER: No disrespect to the panel. I kind of
wanted to address the audience.
MS. MC DADE: That's fine.
SPEAKER (cont'd.): My name is Bonola Burrell. I'm
a teacher at Bouchet.
I just wanted to spend out a warning to
patients, teachers and the community stakeholders that
are still present. The Chicago Board of Education is
threatening to close about 129 of our schools.

Do you know that in the Skyway Network they want to close ten elementary schools, which is about a fourth of the elementary schools in this area?

Other hard-hit areas include Burnham Park, which is 24 schools, Englewood is 19 schools, Austin Rondale 19 schools and other schools in the black and brown communities.

The Board is using underutilization crises to justify the replacement of neighborhood schools by privatized charters.

CPS is famous for saying children first. If our children come first, would CS close all the schools in black and brown communities? Would CPS spend a lot of time and effort to justify closing our schools? Would CPS destabilize our communities?

They have not shown a transition and safety plan for effective schools. They haven't listened to parents and community leaders about the risk of losing dedicated teachers and increased safety concerns.

If this is what they mean by children first? I hate to see what their list would look like if they came last. Remember, none of us are safe until all of us are safe.
Let's take a stand and not allow CPS to close any more of our schools. Call CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett at (773) 553-1500 and demand her to stop closing our schools and privatizing public education. She must put an end to educational apartheid in Chicago Public Schools.

Thank you.

MS. MC DADE: Ms. Saunders.

SPEAKER: Excuse me. One of the things I did want to say to the panel here, as Alderman Sawyer said, the process is flawed.

We have community people here, and we have people who live in these communities. They don't get paid, they're not on anybody's payroll, but these are our schools, we're taxpayers, we're the ones who come up here to speak about the things that are going on in our community. Everybody else is taking a check home.

We speak for our communities. That's why we're here. So don't play us like we're nothing. When we come up here -- When we come up here and give two or three hours of our time just sitting while the elected officials, while the paid people come up, this is where we live, this is where we work, this is our community, that's why we're here.
So I just want to say, as we come out, because it does take a village, it takes a village, and our village has been destroyed, our village is being destroyed by CPS, there's nothing anybody can say to make us drink this poisonous Kool Aid, we're not going to ingest it, and we need CPS to understand that there were needs to be a moratorium on school closings immediately.

We have Rose Joshua from the NAACP who came up and told you that the NAACP will be collecting complaints. The Department of Civil Rights is collecting complaints.

And what I'm saying to you and to the community here, they have support. So when the community comes out, we need our schools to know that they have support in this community.

I am the Outreach chair, and, you know, we don't always see eye to eye, but I do have the -- I do want to be able to come up here and speak as for the schools, and it's a painful thing because, not only have my children -- I have four children that went through these schools for 25 years, I taught in these schools for 23 years, and every last one of these schools I've been in, these are my friends, these are my colleagues,
these are my neighbors, these are the people in my community that you are destroying, every one of these schools, there's somebody that I know in them personally, I know the principals, I know the teachers.

This is our community, and we need to put a stop to this nonsense as soon as possible because we are organizing and we're going to fight.

MS. MC DADE: Regit Collins (phonetic).

SPEAKER: Good evening to all the parents and all the children in the schools that came this evening.

You know, there are times in history where you really can see God's children, and it makes you proud to be one of them.

To see all of you take your time to come here and stand up for your schools, I'm also a board member of the NAACP West Side so it's good to see, you know, you are going to have to be attacked on both ends, south and west.

One of the things we want to talk about today, and I know you've heard all the stats and different things like that, you know, lists, people, the great thing about America is it's balanced, you know, justice has scales of balance.

Well, come 2015 we don't have a list that
utilizes and says that the fifth floor is unutilized.

Let's make Rahm Emanuel, take this message back to him, he could be a one-term myth.

So we all got lists, too, and he has a right to send his kids where he wants to send his kids, we agree with that, but we also have a right to send our kids where we want to send our kids to.

And if you can get the community to come out and complain, guess how many will come out to vote?

I'm so glad to see you all here, and that shows something, but when I go to the bank and I want to get that loan, I like to talk to the president. I'd like to have the mayor here for one of these meetings. That's the bank president. I think that would be more important.

We understand that you're in a position, you have to do what your job requires you to do, but we also understand you have a conscience, and I can see the look on some of your faces, and you're saying, hey, look, you know what, I agree with you, and that's why I asked for some of the information, because some of the information we gave you is incorrect, we didn't necessarily do it, but whoever we gave it to do, it is incorrect, and the order that you were probably given, that was incorrect,
What I'm asking you to do is to go back to the mayor, not to those in between, because, ultimately, he spent every day during election time out south on the CTA, in the community, at the schools, at the restaurants, get him to understand that those same people that gave him an opportunity now want him to give their children an opportunity.

My child attends Herzl, and it's on the list, but we're going to do everything we can to block every bulldozer, everybody trying to tear the community apart, every opportunity that we have within our legal rights to protect our children. We will do that just as you would do for your family. These are families out here. Don't destroy family.

MS. MC DADE: Mr. Collins was our last speaker for the evening.

I would like to thank everyone for coming out and supporting Skyway Network Schools.

Have a pleasant evening. This concludes our community meeting for tonight.

(Which were all of the proceedings had in the above-entitled cause.)