AUSTIN–NORTH LAWNDALE NETWORK SCHOOLS COMMUNITY
MEETING No. 1

February 13th, 2013

7:00 o'clock p.m.

The Report of Proceedings had in the
meeting of the above-entitled cause, taken before PAMELA A.
MARZULLO, a Certified Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public
in and for the County of Cook and State of Illinois, at
3531 South Roosevelt Road, February 13th, 2013, at the hour
of approximately 7:00 o'clock p.m.

PRESENT:

MR. PHILLIP HAMPTON, Chief of Family and Community
Engagement
MR. STEVE ZRIKE, Chief of Pilsen Little Village
MS. SANDRA JAMES, Austin North Lawndale
MS. SHONDA HUERY HARDMAN, Chief of Fullerton
MR. RANDEL JOSERAND, Deputy Chief of Schools
MR. ADAM ANDERSON, Office of Portfolio Planning &
Strategy
MR. ARNIE RIVERA, Deputy Chief of Staff
SANDRA JAMES, Austin-Lawndale
MS ANNETTE BURLEY, Chief of Teaching and Learning
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MR HAMPTON: Ladies and gentlemen, good evening. We would like to begin our meeting this evening, so everybody has an opportunity to be heard. We welcome your enthusiasm, but in order that each of you will have a chance to participate, we ask that you allow us to open this meeting in the right way, where we'll invite Dr. Lincoln Scott, who was so gracious to allow us to have this meeting this evening here at God's House of Prayer.

Dr. Scott?

DR. SCOTT: We're here for serious business today. We want your undivided attention here. We open these doors strictly today for business, and business we're going to have here tonight.

We are here just in reverence today.

Everybody just bow your head in reverence for just a moment.

Dear God, we are so grateful and thankful for all your goodness and all your mercy and all your kindness. It was you that woke us up this morning, giving us the activities of all of our limbs. We're grateful, God, for living and moving and having our beings.

Now we pray tonight. Rest every heart
that are here, to be educated in wisdom and
knowledge. Bless our officials that are present
here, that our mind may be increased tonight. That
we may do business peaceful and joyful, and we leave
with growth and understanding. This we ask in Jesus
name. Amen.

MR HAMPTON: Dr. Scott, again, thank you for
allowing us to have this meeting here this evening
much. My name is Phillip Hampton. I'm the Chief
and Community Engagement Officer for Chicago Public
Schools.

We're glad to be here to have this second
meeting, relative to our school utilization issue.
We have information that we think is very important
that we provide to you today.

I'm going very quickly, there are many who
are here to speak. We're going to give you what we
think are the grounds. I'll repeat several times
over and over, I just want to mention this: Every
school that remains under consideration, and again
this is just under consideration, we want to make
sure we hear from you first tonight. Okay?

I encourage that when we hear from you,
just as in the first round of the meetings which led
to establishing criteria that reduced the myths of schools that were under consideration for this network, we encourage you to give us concrete information, as we continue to help inform us as we get to the March 31st deadline before we make final recommendations.

This lady standing next to me is very respected in this community, and we wanted to further her a part of the welcome this evening. She's Dr. Betty Green, who is a long-time educator for this area from the North Lawndale path.

SO, I'm going to pass it over to Dr. Betty Green.

DR. GREEN:  Good evening, North Lawndale and Austin. Can you hear me now?  I just want to take a moment and thank you for coming out to the second meeting that we have on school utilization.

Your presence here tells us that you are people who care about children. Thank you for coming and welcome. One thing that I would like to ask is that we would respect all of our schools, and give presence to those schools who are still on the list; and when I say the list, the closing list.

We know that there are many great things
that are going on in all the schools in North
Lawndale, and all the schools in Austin, but the
world may not know that. They will only know if we
will allow them to tell us that story tonight.

So, let's give these 16 schools that are
listed on this list the opportunity to come up and
tell us all the great things that are going on in
their schools.

Now, we do want to hear from our
politicians. We want to hear from community people.
We would also like to hear from our parents, but we
are asking first that you will give our schools a
chance to tell that story.

I would now like to turn you back over to
Mr. Hampton.

MR HAMPTON: Thank you, Dr. Green. To my right
at the end of the table, or in front of the table,
we have Ms. Marzullo, who is our reporter, recorder,
for this meeting.

So, you should know that every comment
that is made, will be formed into a report that will
go to Dr. Barbara Byrd-Bennett, relative to the
decisions that have to be made.

Quickly, I also want to announce that
several leaders from Chicago Public Schools that are here, sitting at the tables before you. Quickly, I want to being acknowledge who they are. Ms. Annette Gurley, who is the Chief of Teaching and Learning; Shonda Huery, who is our Fullerton Network Chief; Sandra James, who is the Austin-North Lawndale Chief, Steve Zrike, who is the Pilsen Little Village Chief; Wanda Washington, who is the Chief of Garfield-Humboldt; and then we have several deputy chiefs that are here as well.

Forgive me for the hour. I want to proceed. There are several individuals who will be speaking. You should know that when we invite you up for your public comment, we have a timekeeper and a gentleman who will be encouraging us to consider the time, so that we can hear from as many people as possible.

The final comment that I will make, before we give way to our elected officials to have an opportunity to make comment, I want to make sure that each of you have in your possession a document that will be referred to as a part our presentation, a very brief presentation that we'll talk about why we are here.
We'll talk to the number of schools and those schools that remain under consideration. Those comments will be provided by Mr. Adam Anderson, who is the Officer of Planning and Strategy.

First we want to hear from our elected officials, and then Mr. Adam Anderson will be shortly coming thereafter. We want to invite, and we assure you we're going to hear from patients, but we must give our elected officials the opportunity to provide us brief comments.

We want to start with Alderman Deborah Graham of the 29th Ward. Alderman Graham.

OFFICIAL

ALDERMAN GRAHAM: Boy, you guys have already started out being a tough crowd tonight. Let me assure you one thing, we're all on the same page here. We're asking them to save our schools; but I also want you guys, when you take this mic, we want to hear about the statistics of the school.

So, let me talk real briefly about the schools. I have five schools that are on the list. I'm fighting for all our schools that work really hard. They've made some improvements. They come
from the Austin Community Action Council, CAD, and they work real hard with their students.

I hear them laboring regularly about the services that they need to get their kids from point A to point B in their education. Two of my schools, I've looked at all of the services that they offer our children, and seen our children go from one point to the other.

I've seen third graders write book reports. I've never seen that before for our children. So, I know our schools are moving in leaps and bounds. So, I have Armstrong, De Priest, Emmet, Key, Lewis, May. I'm fighting on your behalf.

I know you made some improvements. Armstrong has moved from 54 percent to 63 percent. De Priest has moved there 65 percent to 68 percent. Emmet has moved slightly. Key has made some steadily improvements. Lewis has made moved from 71 to 69; but sometimes from year to year, we make some little slips, we ask you to keep us intact as we move forward.

May has moved from 58 to 60 percent, and McNair from 60 to 58 percent. So, we want to make
sure that you don't disturb the educational growth our children are experiencing. So, keep our schools level; and as we get up here today, give them the facts. We all love our schools, but give them the details.

What are you doing to move our children forward? We're all on the same page tonight. Keep all of our schools open.


OFFICIAL

ALDERMAN FIORETTI: Thank you. As I said, I'm Alderman Bob Fioretti from the 2nd Ward that extends from the lakefront to the far west side and down into Bronzeville. I've got 40 schools, seven are still on the list, and seven them are still fighting to stay open.

You know, in fact, somebody should tell the fifth floor and CPS that our greatest asset is our children and our schools. I walked into this door, and I saw people that I've known, people from various schools, parents here, and who have served our children.

When Horner, Oblin, Rockwell Gardens came down, what remained as a stable element in our
community, serving our children, serving our community, it was the schools.

Whatever problems our schools have, they serve many children, and many of them are from, and where are we, low-income neighborhoods, underutilized neighborhoods, underserved communities.

They provide, schools provide, nutrition recreation and social services. They are the true neighborhood schools that we have here today; and from this crowd here tonight, you can see that the people of this community truly value our schools.

I have to ask one question, where are the member of the Board of Education? What about the leadership of CPS, where are they? The people charged with making the decisions are absent from these meetings. They've been absent from all the meetings. They need to see, feel and hear the spirit in this room tonight.

This community is fighting for our public schools. We are fighting for the future of our children. We are fighting for the future of our neighborhoods. Can we have stable, safe neighborhoods without neighborhood schools? No. No
These schools are public resources. Can they use improvement? Of course. But you can't improve a school once it's shut down. Once it's shut down, it's gone forever.

It's public space we can never get back.

Instead of closing schools, instead of giving them away to private companies, we need to have an honest budget discussion.

The audit of the Chicago Public School finances for the year ending June 30th, 2012, revealed CPS had close to a $400 million surplus heading into this school year. The CPS document blows a gigantic hole into CPS's claim into the glowing billion dollar deficit.

Meanwhile, schools, like the parents that we have here, the schools represented here, have been begging, begging, for smaller class sizes, more art teachers, music teachers, world languages, librarians and social workers.

You know, I ask you to please join me tonight in recommitting to our public schools. Raise your hand if you agree. No more school closings. No more school closings. Fix our
schools. Fix our schools. Don't close them down.

You know, I want to say today over 30 aldermen had the courage to sign a resolution that somehow got sidetracked to a rules committee about the aspect of charter schools; and I got to tell you, 30 aldermen said, "No, no more charter schools." Why? Because we know they are destroying neighborhood schools.

And if, and if, somebody thinks that we're going to close a school, I think back to what happened with Ruben Ivy at Crane when he was killed on March 7th, or March of 2008.

You know, we didn't need money to create Operation Safe Passage as they are paying in some areas right now. We did it, the pastors did it, the community did it, the police did it to get our kids back to school.

And with parents that are committed, like parents at Crane are committed to keep that school open, we got kids back to school. I know that everyone in this room feels the same way.

Let's make sure that we don't have any school closings; and I ask this panel here today, and everyone to make that recommendation, to listen
to these parents, because this is the future of our
city.

Neighborhood schools are our future. Our
children are our future. Thank you. I just have to
say Alderman Scott Waguespack is here. He said
whatever remarks I say, is the same remarks that I'm
saying. So, let's hear it for Scott. Thank you.

OFFICIAL

ALDERMAN WAGUESPACK: I'm Alderman Scott
Waguespack. I'm from the north side. Two nights
ago we had a meeting just like this, where we had
about 800 people listening to each one of the
parents that got up, each one of the children.

I hope there is a lot of children speaking
tonight, because that is what excited me the other
night. The kids said it better than anybody else
could, "Save our schools."

I'm not going to go on. I just don't want
everybody to come up here and think that you have to
throw up a white flag. Do not surrender your
schools. Stand up as one.

When a parent comes up from Pope or from
Mason, make sure you support them, because this is
about all of our schools everywhere in this city.
Everybody get up tonight, be impassioned and prove to this panel tonight, prove to the CPS people, and prove to the mayor of this city that our kids are worth saving, and our schools are worth saving, and this is about our neighborhoods.

This is about the future of Chicago.

Let's get to it. Thank you.

MR HAMPTON: Alderman Mike Chandler 24th Ward.

OFFICIAL

ALDERMAN CHANDLER: Good evening. I said good evening. West side, save our schools. Save our schools. We're fired up. We won't take it no more. We're fired up. We won't take it no more. The people united.

We will never be defeated. The people united. You will never be defeated. Give yourself a round of applauds for coming out tonight.

Every meeting that I've been to around this issue, talking to the parents, talking to the children, they said we should be talking about bringing more resources into each and every school, more computer centers, more science labs, more libraries into each and every school.

We talk about buildings half empty.
There's great folks of this country that pay to send their child to a school that is not overcrowded. That is good thing in every place else, and we ought to keep it a good thing here in Chicago. Amen.

We are going to stand together as one. We are going to demand several things: One thing is that we're going to demand is that CPS do not balance their budget on the backs of our children, because that's exactly what they boldly say they plan to do.

The last thing I will leave you with, I will be brief, is that together as one we demand that all of our schools stay open. Thank you.

MR HAMPTON: Alderman Jason Irving, I want to give him the same opportunity.

OFFICIAL

ALDERMAN IRVING: Good evening. It seems like we're fired up, and we all on the same page for the same purpose.

Point number one, we want to make sure that all of our kids get the same thing, as I said earlier, as the kids at Lincoln Park, we want the same thing those kids have.

We want the same thing the kids up in
Edison Park have, we want that. In Austin, we want that. In Lawndale, we want the same treatment for our children, the same opportunities, the same resources we need for our community.

Anything other than that is not going to fly, because as long as you stand with us, and we stand with you, there's nothing we can't do. Let's stay together.

Stay on the same page and get what we need for our children, because I'm sick of going to funerals. I'm sick of going to jail. I'm sick of going to all these places when our kids need to be in classrooms.

So, let's keep it real and stay together; and as I said before, if we are willing to die for our children, we are feared. We're going to work this thing. We're going to be here to the day it ends, working to save these kids. God bless you.

MR HAMPTON: Thank you, Alderman. Mr. Adam Anderson from the Office of Planning and Strategy, he will make a very brief presentation just so understand the information you have in your hand.

MR. ANDERSON: Good evening, everybody. I will less than two minutes, and then we're going to get
into public comment.

First and foremost, I want to echo the thanks of Mr. Hampton, and all the elected officials, that everybody that came out tonight, family, teachers, community members and especially students, we almost remember that at the end of the day, that's what we're all here for is to support students. So, thank you all for coming.

What we're here to discuss tonight is a list of schools that still remain under consideration. Now, what we've done over the past few weeks is had a series of meetings, and today we released the criteria that reduced the number of schools from consideration from 330 to 129.

I want to emphasize, I want to emphasize that that 129 is under consideration. They will not all be closed, and the purpose of tonight is to continue to hear from those communities.

Very quickly, please, we want to hear from the schools. We have heard this message. We will take this message back. We do want to hear from each and every school. 30 more seconds with me.

The front of the handout that you all received, outlines the criteria that has been
informed by the community to date. It's been
applied across the city; and again, in Austin-North
Lawndale, there are 16 schools that we want to hear
from tonight.

Give me 15 more seconds. Give me 15 more
seconds. Give me 15 more seconds. The front
outlines the criteria. The back outlines the number
of questions that CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett has
specifically asked that she wants to hear from
schools.

Note that there is also a consideration
for any additional information. We have heard what
has been said so far. We want to add to it with the
questions that are listed on the bottom of this
sheet, and any other important considerations that
you want to share about your school.

With that, I want to reiterate thank you
for coming. We will continue to listen to every
comment that is heard. It will continued to be
reported back to CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett.

I'm going to turn it over to Ms. Sandra
James, the Chief of the Austin-North Lawndale
Network, so she can start to facilitate the
conversation. Thank you.
MS. JAMES: Good evening, everyone. Many of you I know, some of you I've seen before, but now is the opportunity to hear from all of you.

So, with that said, every school that remains on the list, and I'm going to start with those schools first, will have the opportunity to come to the mic and give your input, share what's going on in your schools.

Let's start with Armstrong. Every school will have six minutes.

SCHOOL: ARMSTRONG

SPEAKER: Good evening, everyone. My name is Sanji Rudd, and I'm a parent of sixth-grade triplets at Louis Armstrong. My family loves Armstrong. When I enter the building, I can feel the calm and quiet learning environment.

I have watched beautiful things happen. First of all, ISAT scores have continued to go up and up. In 2010, the overall ISAT composed score has had 18.1 increase, which is now 63.9.

Reading has increased from 44.1 percent to now 61 percent. Math has increased from 50.3 percent to now 71 percent; and our science scores have increased from 35 percent to
51.5 percent.

Now, those increases just happened within the last two years. Just imagine what would happen if we get another two years. From 2010, the percentage of misconduct resulting in suspensions has also decreased by over 33 percent, which means that the students are in class more.

We've also incorporated a Saturday for Success Program to address the behavior choices that students are making and provide them with opportunities to role play and to develop an understanding of how another person feels.

Armstrong's in 2010 school progress report is set up for success. We have the right administration, the right students and the right parents.

As reported on the My Voice, My School Survey Armstrong, Armstrong is as follows: Strong, which comes from the family. Very strong, which is supportive environment. Strong, which is ambitious instruction. Strong, effective leaders and strong collaborative teachers.

The progress reports also tell the story of the teachers and the students. Last year, the
students attendance increased to 95.5 percent. For
the last two years, Armstrong has 100 percent parent
turnout. All our parents come to pick up report
cards.

Armstrong realizes that building a
partnership with the community is vital. We have a
strong connection with Prince of Peace, which is
just blocks away from the school. They provide our
school with donations, beginning with life-changing
partnership for the students.

We also have partnership with the Big Ten
organization. This supports the reading program,
and they also donate monetary amounts to the school
for class libraries and other things.

And finally, we have 100 percent support
with the neighborhood and the community.

SPEAKER: Good meaning. My name is Kimberly
Cooper. I am a parent of a sixth-grade student at
Lewis Armstrong School. Lewis Armstrong School
believes empowering parents and have worked hard to
make all parents feel welcome at Lewis Armstrong
School.

One way that parents are invited is to
observe their children's classroom for 20 minutes,
several times throughout the year. As I a parent, I
love to watch my child in their classroom
environment to see how he is learning.

I am not asked to do anything other than
watch my child interact with the lessons. I also
walk away with several ideas on how I can better
help with him to do his homework. This is so
important to me.

I am not a teacher, so it is not -- it is
wonderful that I can learn some things while I am
watching him and observe. Parent workshops are held
at various times throughout the week and weekend.

Ms. Bunch, our school principal, just held
a Saturday parent meeting to reveal the ISAT
strategy and to strategize with parents in ways to
decrease students conflicts.

Parents who attend left the meeting with a
bag full of activities that we can work on at home
to help our children and become college and career
ready. We were taught how to use these materials so
we can use them at home right away as a work parent.

I know that at times, it may be hard to
get to Lewis Armstrong School, to get my child
report card, but Lewis Armstrong works with parents
to make sure we are able to get our child's grades
and information on their progress.

The school is open early and staff stay
after to designate time to make sure we receive our
child's information. This is just another way that
Lewis Armstrong works with parents to help our
children to become college and career ready.

As a parent, I may not always have the
expertise how to best help my child when he is
struggling, but Lewis Armstrong staff is more than
willing to meet with me to brainstorm ideas on how
to best help my child. There is no other school
where I would want my child to be educated at but
Lewis Armstrong.

MS. JAMES: Chalmers? Is anyone here from
Chalmers? After Chalmers, we'll have Crown.

SCHOOL: CHALMERS

SPEAKER: Good evening, everyone. My name is
Tina Carter, and I work for A Safe Haven. A safe
haven is an organization that serves the homeless
population, as well as those that is in crisis.

We provide quality housing for them as
well as support of services. Across the street from
the headquarters of A Safe Haven, you find Chalmers
Elementary; and at our headquarters, we service 400 people, at least 100 of those are families; and without Chalmers Elementary, we would not be able to service those children who are homeless.

They are in need of stability, as well as quality education services; and I know for a fact that Chalmers Elementary makes it happen. Without Chalmers Elementary, we, A Save Haven, cannot do our jobs. So, save our schools. Do not close Chalmers Elementary or no school in North Lawndale-Austin.

I, personally, work with Dr. Nolan, A.P. Banks, the wonderful education teachers back there to help me fulfill the needs at North Lawndale. Together we have increased the family literacy scores of people who live in North Lawndale. We have helped to prevent some of the violence that happens in North Lawndale.

Again, I ask, I demand, that you do not close Chalmers Elementary. Without them, we cannot service the many children who come through our doors feeling hopeless and in despair. So, they do help our children, and they also help us to stabilize the parents.

When you walk in the doors of Chalmers
Elementary, you are welcome with open arms. No one knows how much money you have or don't have, when you walk in Chalmers Elementary, because you are treated like a human being. You are treated with dignity.

You don't know. So, you will see me again if Chalmers and these other schools remain on the list. Again, my name is Tina Carter, and I represent A Save Haven, Chalmers Elementary and North Lawndale.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Lewis Lane, and I stand before you. I was once a student at Chalmers. I did my student teaching at Chalmers. I was hired as a para-professional at Chalmers, and now I am a third-grade teacher at Chalmers.

On behalf of the LSE, and the local Chalmers School community, I would like to assert following: The 53 space utilization rate was appealed over a month ago by our principal, Dr. Nolan, to James Spencer at CPS Office of Demographics and Planning.

We still have not heard from them yet.

The original assessment did not take into account for the following: We offer a full-day kindergarten
program, not a half day.

We have added two new home rooms, one in primary, one in our middle school. In accordance with our full school-day plan, we have had added art and music classes.

On the second floor north wing of our building is occupied by Nancy B. Jefferson Alternative High school. Cook County Board president Toni Preckwinkle would like to see it expanded, and that school is overcrowded.

We have three computer laboratories, two special education classes, a science laboratory, a library, a PE health class, and a museum.

Based on our calculations, we have over 75 percent utilization at Chalmers. Furthermore, for from 2011 to 2012, we have experienced a 45 percent increase in student enrollment, growing from 260 last year to 390 presently.

Our student attendance rate is 96 percent. CPS, 94. Our teacher attendance rate is over 97 percent. CPS rate is 95 percent.

On the spring of 2011 ISAT, our children realized a 15 percent increase in the number of students meeting and seeing ISAT reading standards,
which represented the highest gains in the area.

We're doing what we're supposed to do.

In spring 2012, our children realized

32 percent increase, and an number of students

meeting and seeing ISAT science standards, which

represent the highest achievement gains in science

in the North Austin-Lawndale Network.

Again, we're doing what we're supposed to
do. Leave us alone. According to Takile Winfro
(phonetic), a leasing agent at the Chicago Housing
Authority, a park district development, located
adjacent to Chalmers, CHA plans to further expand
130 new units.

Our facility has approximately $10 million

in mechanical and capital improvement over the last
five to seven years. According to our most recent
voice, my school survey, we have a very strong
leadership, and we are well organized for
improvement. We are doing what we are supposed to
do.

ALDERMAN IRVING: The bottom line for Chalmers
is a school that has increased enrollment

43 percent. The space utilization is off by 20. It
is not a school that needs to be on some kind of
When you see the utilization of Nancy Jefferson and Chalmers, when you see the increased enrollment at Chalmers, when you see additional units of housing plan to be developed in the immediate area around Chalmers, losing a school at that location does not make sense.

So, we want to go on record with all of those facts, speaking specifically to Chalmers Elementary School, and the increased enrollment, and the planned increased enrollment, as it relates to Chalmers Elementary. Thank you.

MS. JAMES: Next we have Crown, and then De Priest.

SCHOOL: CROWN

SPEAKER: There are many of us here today that believe it takes village to raise a child. Can I get an Amen? That's why we're here tonight. I'm Pastor Derrick Rollerson (phonetic). I pastor the church right across the street from Crown School.

We love Crown School. I don't want to talk a lot about statistics. It takes a place where children feel that they are loved in order for them to learn. I've been 21 years as a youth pastor,
five years as executive pastor, and I know that Crown cares about the children.

I'm across the street. I watch them. I am outside sometimes walking with the students. I see the teachers. I see Dr. Jackson, the principal, outside by the school.

I'll say this, our church is so committed to Crown, we have three of our youth workers who spend part of their payday in Crown on a regular basis, just about every day.

We're committed. Our church is also providing resources for the school on a regular basis, because we believe that the children are worth it. Now we feel like if we can go into our budget and do things for the school, we believe that CPS can do that as well.

SPEAKER: Good evening everyone. I am a parent of Crown Academy. I have a child who also graduated valedictorian at Crown Academy and also a son.

My daughter has a 5.0 grade-point average right now in high school, because of Crown Academy challenging her and pushing her and testing her.

You want to talk about facts? Crown has increased daily attendance that has helped all bring
parents and teachers together as one team and one
dream, insuring the education of our students.
Let's talk facts.

20 percent gains in science on the ISAT,
initiated small classes with looping at second and
third grade. Four National Board Certified teachers
with six fantastic new teachers. We offer high
school algebra for our students.

We partner with Ravinia, Chicago
Children's choir, Project AIM, Project Creates,
creating a community of contributions relating to
the needs of the community, opening doors of
opportunity, working with the leaders of tomorrow
nutritioning a neighborhood.

Save our future. My daughter wouldn't be
where she at right now, her or my son and all our
children. You are taking away from our kids, from
our community. Our kids need their school.

What do you want do when all the children
have to cross these roads in gang fights. Don't
take our school. Save our school.

SPEAKER: My name is Rachelle Cooch (phonetic)
and I work with Columbia College Chicago. We have
had a ten-year partnership with Crown Academy. It
is our longest standing school partnership, and one of our most dynamic, thanks to the wonderful leadership that enforces very open communication, the committed staff at Crown.

We've been able to raise, privately raise, millions of dollars for Crown over the past ten years. We have been able to sustain a parents' resource center within the school and have it fully staff, which provides workshops and early childhood learning for parents and community members.

We've been able to provide dozens of after-school programs at Crown School, which fill the school every night and often on Saturdays. I would invite anyone, Mr. Gurley, anyone from the board, to come and see how we fill that school with dance, with theater, with drumming, with countless ways of self-expression; and none of this would be possible if it wasn't for Crown School and the community that's been created within the school.

SPEAKER: Hi. My is Jada Pride. I am a student of Crown Academy. I am in fourth grade. I am on the honor roll and have had perfect attendance since first grade.

I love my school, my teachers and
principals. My sisters and I want to stay at Crown. My teachers taught me to try my best, and I believe Crown is the best place for me.

I take art, choir, science, computer class and math and reading with teachers who encourage me. Please let us keep our school open.

MS. JAMES: At this time let's give everyone an opportunity to speak. At this time I would like to acknowledge Alderman Arena. You're not going to speak, okay.

Next on the list, we have De Priest; and after De Priest, we have Emmet.

SCHOOL: DE PRIEST

SPEAKER: Good evening, west side family. I'm here for a cause that I know is dear to everyone's heart, education. I am a pre-K delegate for Oscar De Priest Head Start Program. I am the PTA chairperson for Austin De Priest.

I'm going to read you a paper that was passed out here for the schools that were underutilized, that may meet any one of the following criteria is no longer under consideration for closing.

Now, that No. 7, the school on the rise
meaning either. The school is a level two and has
gained enrollment over the last three years, or the
school meets all of the following.

Now I'm going to read you Oscar De
Priest's stats. Level two school for the past two
years not on probation. Scores have increased every
eight years on the current administration.

De Priest received an Illinois Honor Roll
Award for academic achievement in 2006, 2011, and
2012. In 2012, we are one of 81 schools state-wide
to receive an Academic Improvement Award.

We have three Golden Apple Award winners.
One teacher was just awarded the past school year.
We have had five National Board Certified Teachers.
Under the current administration, nine teachers were
awarded Master's Degrees in Education and five
teachers were awarded new endorsements.

I'm going to pass it on to our parent who
is no child left behind, who is going to give you
the rest of the information, and to let you know why
De Priest is going to stay here, and we're going to
make sure we stay open. If we got to rustle some
elected officials' jobs, we're going to do what we
have to do.
SPEAKER: I'm Tony Colem. I'm a proud parent.

We have a three-year partnership with Erikkson Institute to develop our primary department. We have a five-year partnership with 21st Century grant award for Federal Government and partnership with family focus to provide extra-curricular activities for our De Priest students.

We have a partnership with the Chicago community and schools to provide extra-curricular activities. We have a partnership with Chase Bank for ARTS and Austin. A partnership with FORES for extra-curricular activities. We also have a partnership with PNC for early childhood science programming.

De Priest is a special education cluster program school. We are the only school that has an early childhood visual impaired program in the city. We have an early childhood autistic program, a primary autistic program, and intermediate and upper-grade autistic program.

We are a universal design school that is handicapped accessible. De Priest administrators are both part of the Chicago leadership collaborative. The principal is part of the Rising
Principal Program led by the SUBES Academy.

Our assistant principal is one of 100 candidates to be accepted to work on her Doctorial Degree in Educational Supervision and Administration. We have developed a culture of calm and respect at De Priest School. Everyone is welcome to visit.

SPEAKER: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Lanesha Myles, and I am an Oscar De Priest parent representative. I am an LSD council member, and I'm a PTA representative. I'm an alumni of Ulysses S. Grant, which was the circumstance of a school closure. I'm a proud certified medical assistant who was taught and educated under the leadership of Chicago Public Schools.

I am just here in order to support Oscar De Priest and neighboring Chicago Public Schools from school closures. Our students deserve the best education possible, in order for them to be successful citizens.

I believe with good teachers, community support and patience, we can turn around any label placed on our children. Our children are the
future, and we are their mentor. Let's save our
children, and let's save our schools.

SPEAKER: We took the opportunity to tour Oscar
De Priest School; and when we looked at the cluster
of where our children were coming from, children as
far as almost the south side are coming to attend
Oscar De Priest School.

They have a beautiful music program that
is growing. It is also under consideration to be an
IB school. We've gone to tour it. We've looked at
it, and we are really in high favor of them not
closing our school and removing it from the list.

We are very proud of what Oscar De Priest
has accomplished there, the library program, and all
of the things. They have instruments that were
donated, and the programs are growing steadily. So,
we want you to remove our school from the list.

Remember, Oscar De Priest has more things
that is supposed to be under consideration from not
being closed. Thank you.

MS. JAMES: Next we have Emmet, followed by
Henson.

SCHOOL: EMMET

SPEAKER: Hello. Name is Latrice James, and I
am the LSD president at Robert Emmet. I have four kids that attend Robert Emmet. I could go on and tell you about the kids, this, that, because they all doing good, but I'm not here for that.

Like they were saying, they want us to give information about how our schools are doing, what they need to be doing. I'm not here for that, because they already know that.

So, I am here to tell we need our school, all our schools, to stay open, because we went to these same schools. What make so better that our kids can't go there. Their kids went to these same things. They probably even went to these schools that they are trying to close.

We need to say that. We need these schools to stay open because that is what we're here for. We are not going to tell you what they already know. They know what our school is doing.

We may not be doing what the best schools are doing, but we doing what we can do. The teachers doing what they need to do to teach our kids. So why close the schools?

We need to get up and start talking because this is a war going on here. We need to go
to them. They can sit here all day and listen, but they are not going to tell us what we need to hear. So, we need to take it to of them.

They need to come and check us out and see what they need to see, because we need to do what we do. Our parents do what they need to do with their kids. Their kids go there all day every day.

My kids go to school from 8:15 to 6:00 o'clock. I know where my kids are. I'm here to tell you we don't need to close our schools. They need to stay open. Every school on the west side of Chicago, west, north side, east side, every school needs to stay open.

That's what we're here for. Our schools need to stay open. Stay open. That was we're here for. Stay open. Stay open.

SPEAKER: Good evening. How you doing? There again, my name is Dwayne Trust (phonetic). I'm the vice-chair of the Austin Community Council.

What I wanted to show you here what we did for the 10th District and 15th District. We want to show CPS the fact that this is a map of the different gangs in our communities and neighborhoods, in terms of what our kids have to go
through, our babies, our kids, what they have to go
through.

Their kids don't have to go through this. Their kids don't have to go through this. If you
want to track the schools here, you got Emmet here
and you got De Priest here.

You are talking about sending those kids
from this side of Austin, I mean, we got to admit,
we got wars in the community, we got gangs in our
community. They don't become gang bangers in high
school. They start from somewhere else.

So, these kids are about to go from here
to here. So, we're talking about tearing our kids'
life. We have the big thing about them being
senselessly murdered. So, why we're going to add
fuel to the fire and put our kids in harm's way?

Kids in Iraq get better protection from
U.S. forces than our children get from Chicago
Police Department, because the mayor is withholding
money for them. So, this is really about our kids,
and for our kids' safety.

So, no schools closing. Our kids' safety
and education come first. Thank you.

MS. JAMES: Next we have Henson followed by
Herzl. Please remember to give me your papers, once you've spoken.

SCHOOL: HENSON

SPEAKER: My name is Josh Hallerberg. I'm a teacher at Henson Elementary School. Two years ago if you were to ask me if our school was under utilized, I might have said yes.

We had several rooms that were unused, vacant or used for storage, but that's changed. A year-and-a-half ago, we received a new principal, new counselor and a new vice-principal; and they've made many strategic moves, one of them was to help utilize our school better.

I'm here today to tell you about how we do that. CPS, we have 28 classrooms. CPS allocates us seven ancillary rooms, which we use all seven. We have four special education rooms, a science lab, computer lab and a music room.

This leaves us with 21 rooms CPS bases its utilization formula on. Multiplying our 21 rooms by the ideal 30 students per classroom. I don't know about you, but I don't know any teacher out there who would tell you that 30 students per classroom is ideal.
In fact, you have to have more than 36 students in every classroom in order to be overcrowded. I am grateful that we don't have that problem at Henson. We have 21 classrooms, 10 of these are regular education rooms. Three of them are teacher resource rooms, packed and well organized with tools for us to perfect our craft and help educate our students.

The staff break room, where our teachers can take a well-deserved break. We use one of our rooms for our six clinicians, so they have space to meet with our students with extended needs, since our school wasn't built with enough adequate office space.

We've taken three rooms and created an indoor recess space for the students to take a break during the day, play games, and learn to socialize in positive ways. We have another room we use for in-school suspension, because they may not always make good choice, we don't want to send them out of the building. We want to move them in the right direction.

We use last two rooms to really make a difference in our school and community. One is an
intervention room, where we have created pods for our interventionists to have small group pull-outs for every class every day.

And finally, we created a parent room where our parents come together to learn ways to help their own children better themselves and work to support our staff and improve our schools. We don't have a large school, but we utilize every bit of it.

We don't have the ideal 30 students in every classroom, and we don't want it. We have a great staff, leadership team, students, parents and community partners. Don't close Henson. Education is liberation. Thank you.

SPEAKER: Hi. My name is Lemetria Johnson. I am an LSE chairperson at Henson Elementary. I am very active in Henson. I have seven children, and all my children have been blessed to be a part of Henson.

My oldest son started in kindergarten and now he is in college. If it had not been for the teachers at Henson supporting me, I don't know where my family would be today. I come to Henson every day to make sure that I am helping out as much as I can.
I have a child with disability, and the staff at Henson make sure that everything I need to make sure that they were getting the service that they need. I want to make sure that Henson stay open because it is an awesome school.

All of the teachers work really hard to make sure that the kids are learning how to be a peaceful, positive and productive. We also work hard to make sure that the curriculum is challenging and fun.

We want to make sure that our kids at Henson are really ready for high school and college. We expect great things from our schools, so they will turn out to be great one day. Thank you.

SPEAKER: Hi. I'm an eighth grader who attends Henson, and I honestly think that Henson should stay open. I mean, why close a school that reaches out to the community the most, with a full pantry to feed the community, and the only school to have a clinic to reach out and help the community.

This community needs healing in more than one way, so why close that down? Why close a school that acknowledges students who score above average? Why close a school with most devoted teachers, who
only get paid from 7:45 to 3:45, but work to from
7:00 to at least 5:00?

Why close a school where teachers have
meetings every other day to find out how to teach
our students better, though I think they teach the
best already? Why close a school where teachers
encourage students to do better than a C?

Why close a school where the principal,
the new you principal, thrives for each student to
be peaceful, positive and production, where students
pledge to do their best in high school, college and
their career and their life.

With the new principal we have, Henson can
go far, if you allow it to stay open. Why close a
school where teachers see the best in students who
act the worst? The other day I heard a teacher
blame herself for why she may think that she works
and teaches too fast for some and too slow for
others, but why blame yourself when we are doing
great already?

I have currently have straight As. So, if
it wasn't for Henson, I wouldn't even have that. A
little word to Ms. Pike, I'm grateful to have had
you for two years; and without you, I wouldn't be
where I am.

So, when you close Henson, you are closing Ms. Pike and our new principal. Thank you very much.

MS. JAMES: Now we will have Herzl, Followed by Hughes.

SCHOOL: HERZL

SPEAKER: My name is Wendy Pearson. As we have attended these meetings, there are supposed to be community meetings. We must accept that these meetings, like all the meetings set up by Chicago Board of Education are controlled by the Board of Education.

And those people that look like us, and our puppets, the problem isn't that they make mistakes. The problem is it that they won't acknowledge that they're mistakes, nor will they fix them, because cover-up, lies the blame game and passing the buck is how CPS plays the game.

Isn't this the same thing that they've said about our children, parents, grandparents and communities for 20 plus years, as they continue to send their puppets with no decision-making powers that sit before us as messengers?
No longer will we accept the Annette Gurely's at a price tag of $151,131.43, or will we accept the Ms. Sandra James at being paid $120,000 a year to deliver a two-minute speech to the superintendent, Barbara Byrd-Bennett, to CPS; and the Mayor Rahm Emanuel to tell us the results where schools close and charter schools open around the corner and down the street from our schools where our best teachers lost their jobs.

They weren't promoted after 20 years of service and dedicated teaching. They weren't patronized hires. They were fired. I want to talk to you about the $100,000 club. Okay? There is $100,000 club. You know what the $100,000 club is? If you don't know, look on the roster for CPS.

There are over 100,000 -- there is even over 100 people sitting on that roster that makes over $100,000. I want to talk to you about that. I want to talk to you about the 100 million dollars that went into Uno, $320 million surplus dollars. There is no surplus when we don't have libraries in our school, people.

It is time that CPS, the mayor, and the superintendent of schools stop sending puppets down
here. It is time that in Chicago and in Springfield
that we let them know that we're fed up. It is time
that those individuals that allow for the mayor of
the City of Chicago, and Barbara Byrd-Bennett, to go
down to Springfield and lobby to change the law
December 1st, where we all know, we all know what
schools are going to be affected in our community,
and let them change the law and not allow us to do
what we're fighting.

It is time we let them know we're fed up.
Fed up. Fed up. And we're not going to take it no
more. We're fed up. Fed up. I'm fed up. Fed up.
I'm not taking it no more, no more. I'm fed up.
Fed up. Fed up. I ain't taking it. I ain't taking
it. I ain't taking it. No more. $100,000 club got
to go. Got to go.

SPEAKER: Hello, everyone. Hello, everyone.
My name is Micky Johnson. I'm a former Chicago
Bulls player, and I come out of Herzl. My nephew
Lindon Johnson, who played for the San Antonio Spurs
and Chicago Bulls come out of Herzl also.

Herzl has a rich history of bringing
people up for the community, but I want to say one
other thing. There is two things you must
This is called, what the Chicago Board is doing, is called shock doctrine; and in the shock doctrine, the issue is to destabilize the kids in order for gentrification to happen.

When you destabilize the school system in the neighborhood, and I say follow the money and understand the history. If you look, the development has already hit us at Roosevelt and California.

Whenever there is gentrification, they build a new school or increase the school or fix the school where they at. For instance, Herzl, if they found that much money for capital funds for a private school, how come they couldn't find it for a public school?

The third thing, which is most important, you property owners, when you pay your taxes, you are supposed to pay for public, public, public benefits. You're tax dollars are being used for private.

So, I want you to understand, and we must not ask them that we don't want them closed, we must tell them we don't want them closed; or in the
ballot box, they will find out. Thank you.

MS. JAMES: Next we have Hughes. Let's be respectful to Hughes.

SCHOOL: HUGHES

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Anthony Taylor. I'm an LSE member, parent, LSE parent at Charles Evans Hughes, which is a school I'm proud to be a part of. It's a school that's family. It's school that works hard with the kids.

I have six children. All of them went through Hughes and graduated, except one. I got a 13 year old that is coming out next year. They have wonderful programs. I done even work in the school as a parent volunteer. I done seen them work with kids that was having problems.

They them didn't just say, "Well, forget that child." They made a solution so that child wouldn't fall behind, and that's what I love about the staff. We just lost a young man who just graduated, and I seen old staff come back and help put this young man in a restful grave.

I'm talking about a family. The grades is coming up. I done see the scores coming up in the school. I'm proud to say I'm proud to be a part of
this community. The last thing I want to say is this, we have all these creative minds in here. Look at these children. Look at these children.

They took out time to come out when they might be sleeping to go to school in the morning. I want to say this, it's easy to put the towel in when you are not the fighter. It's easy to throw the towel when you're not fighting.

When we throw the towel in on children, what does that say for us? We're talking about we need to close schools. Where you going to put them? When you put them in another school, that means you are overcrowding the school that you are putting them in. You're complaining about the teachers not doing enough.

I heard this woman talk about all these salaries. See, my mother taught me this -- let me shut up. You can have all the Ph.D.s in the world, but a leader, a real leader, creates a real solution. They don't worry.

Martin Luther didn't worry. Malcom X didn't worry. I'm talking about strong historical leaders; and if you're talking about being a leader, or you are in a leadership position, this is what
you need to think about: Go back and look at a true
leader. Look at what they stood for. It's easy to
throw in the towel when you are not the one
fighting.

SPEAKER: My name is Emma Davidson, and I'm a
parent a grandparent, and a great grandparent of
Hughes Elementary school. Okay?

I'm sitting in my second generation to
Hughes, and these are my great grandchildren. I
walk them there every morning. I pick them up every
evening. They got programs. They are partnership
with Loyola, mobile immunization.

They got the Rock of Kids Music Program.
They have parents volunteers. They have
coordinators in schools for dental and vision
services. They have real men read. Chicago
community partnerships and partnerships also with
Franklin Park.

I'm going to talk to you about an
old-school parent. That's me. We didn't have no
problems with CPS. Okay? A lion will fight for her
cubs. Right? When her cubs get in danger, what she
gonna do? She gonna strike fire. Okay?

I'm here to strike fire tonight. It's no
sense for all these schools to be on the list to be closed. The teacher's union closed the downtown area. The parents and children could close down Chicago. We can close it down fighting for our children.

Marvin Gaye said, "Save the children."

Save the babies, and that's what we're here for, to save our children. Stop the school closings. Stop the violence and stop the killings. Save the children. Let's do this.


My name is Darron Tillis (phonetic). I'm a business owner in North Lawndale, as well as an LSE member of the great Hughes School in K town, the jewel of K town. Today I want to share the facts. I know you are giving me two minutes, and I may need to go over, but I need to share the facts.

All the times you talk about how bad our schools are, but Hughes represents all the schools that are in North Lawndale who are doing a great job of trying to educate our kids, despite the
challenges that we face every day.

So, let me get through them. Hughes has been educating children in North Lawndale for 50 years; and all of a sudden now they are saying we want to close this great institution in K town.

Hughes attendance rate increased to an all-time high of 95 percent. That's above the Board of Education's average and now you want to close the school?

Hughes made gains in every area, in every area of the ISAT, and now all of a sudden you say that you want to close our school that's doing well. Hughes 2012 ISAT overall composite score increased 6.2 to an all-time high of 71 percent, and now you say you want to close our school.

Hughes science scores, something that is desperately needed for our kids in our community, still programs increased 3.8 percent to 68.1 percent. Hughes has a full kindergarten, a full preschool program, and Hughes has science labs and also a bunch of partnerships in the community.

Right now, I may be representing Hughes, but I also want to represent the whole community; and if you can take just a quick second with me,
everybody to stand up, because this is not about Hughes. This is about North Lawndale and Austin. So, we need to stand up; and if your school is not on the list, one day it may be on the list. So, we need your support here at North Lawndale. We want to thank the Board for coming down. We appreciate everything that you are doing.

We want to have a candid conversation with you about what's going on with our schools. We got great leaders. We got energy in our community, and we don't want to fight, but what he want to have a conversation about this. We don't just want a list of our schools.

I am the co-chair of the Community Action Council, so I work closely with the Board of Education. What we're saying is we want to have a conversation. To the parents, we need you to go to your principals and say, "How can I make my school better?"

MS. JAMES: Next we have Key, followed by Lawndale.

SCHOOL: KEY

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Cleveland Gidney Clark. I would like to draw your attention
to this picture on the flier, on the right side of
the flier. On this flier, this is the cover of
Austin Voice.

On the Austin voice, the title of the
article is "Francis Scott Key is on the move." I do
believe that Francis Scott Key is on the move.

I have been at Key School since
kindergarten, and this is the first time that I can
honestly say I feel comfortable at Key School. I
love this school. I'm not going to let them close
my school.

We've got ten new clubs at school, at Key
School, that we have never had before. We've got
great new teachers like Ms. Tjekema. She just won
an award from CEO Bennett for being an outstanding
teacher in the City of Chicago.

The eighth graders have gone to Loyola to
get a taste of college. Believe me when I tell you,
Key is on the move. Save our schools. Save our
schools.

SPEAKER: My name is Kenneth Porter from Key
Elementary. My principal, Ms. G, asked me if I
could come and speak briefly for you all tonight.

I've had a lot of problems at other
schools; but at Key School, I've never had a problem. That is my safe house. That is my home. That's my family. You know what I'm saying?

We got ten new clubs. We even got brotherhood. We got glee club. Key School is on the rise.

You go past Lake, you got CNL. You go back past Chicago Avenue, you got GL. I don't want gangs on my back. I walk to school with my little brother every day. I don't want to worry about no gangs following us to school.

At Key School, we got a lot of new male role models there. They show us how to become men. All of our teachers challenge us to work at a high school level, encourage us towards success.

Key School is my family. Key is the new school. We got clubs, murals and more. If we can do this in six months, what can do this in six -- what can we do in 12 months? What can we do in one year? Key School is on the rise, believe me.

SPEAKER: Good evening, everybody. My name is Richard Azling (phonetic). I'm teacher at Francis Scott Key Elementary. I'm so proud of you guys.

So, I just wanted to let you guys know we
are on the rise. As a teacher in the classroom, and also as a member of our instruction leadership team, I've seen this. I see it in the data. I see it in the classroom every day.

I want to let you know we are definitely level two, and we are no longer on probation. Our ISAT composite score over the last four years has grown by 30 percent.

We now have 62.7 percent of our students meeting or exceeding expectations on the ISAT; and our kids are invested on the NWEA tests that we've been taking to measure growth.

They've set goals, from our third grade to our seventh grade. Over 72 percent of our students have either met or exceeded their growth scores. On the information that you have on the list that says that at the 20th day, we had 306 students. We are now at 320, and we are on the rise.

We have students coming from our schools saying that they've heard about the good things that have been happening at Key, and that they want to come and learn with us. Okay?

Our teachers, our administration, are working hard to bring resources to Key. We've got
five long-term sustainable grants that are bringing
after-school programs, like 21st Century and Gear Up
to our school, resources for the classrooms.

We are working hard, my colleagues and I,
to build independent thinkers and leaders for the
21st century; and I am so proud to be a part of
that, as I know all of my colleagues are.

I will leave with you with this: I'm a
product of a Chicago public school system. I went
to Chicago Public Schools from kindergarten through
12th grade, and I got a fantastic education, so I
know that it is possible.

And as I said, my colleagues and I are
working hard at Key to make that happen for our
students, who deserve nothing less.

SPEAKER: My name is Joyce Edwards. I'm not a
community rep from the LSD, but a stakeholder in the
Austin area.

My children went to Francis Scott Key and
they graduated. My daughter is a sophomore now and
her GPA is 3.5. She's a product of Key Elementary
School. We have great parent involvement in the
school.

Key has 98 percent of students coming to
school every day. Our enrollment, as he has said, has increased. Our concern for our children is to go out of the area. We have parents patrol at Key School.

Ms. Jones, Ms. Dobbs, all of us are a part of parents patrol that we formed ourselves. Crossing those boundaries, we had one student that ran to our corner because a man was trying to abduct her.

We had a student that was shot on Chicago Avenue and Central. We don't need our babies going anywhere else but where they are. Save our schools.

MS. JAMES: Next we have Lawndale, followed by Lewis. Lawndale.

SCHOOL: LAWNADE

SPEAKER: Good afternoon. I am a former employee of Lawndale Community Academy, 42 years with the board as a student advocate. I retired two years ago.

The building that housed Lawndale Academy, I want to give some history, because maybe the Board don't know the history. Maybe if they know the history, they will know the importance of our school.
The building that housed Lawndale Academy was the formerly the Jewish People Institution and was sold in 1954 to the Chicago Board of Education to be used only as an education facility.

In 1954 to 1981, the building housed the Julius Hays Hess upper grade center; and in September 1981, the school at 1256 South Homan, Lawson School closed, and the staff and students were moved to this building and the school was remained Lawndale Community Academy.

Lawndale Community Academy is listed as an option for knowledge school. 13 buses pulled in every year. After the Board stopped the free transportation for the buses, for bringing students outside of the boundary, our enrollment began to decline.

Lawndale Academy has had four principals within the coming up to this year, principals that were there have brought in extra funding through grants. Lawndale Academy partnership with community organizations, such as the Stean Foundation, Chicago Youth Centers, the Spertus Museum, local churches, to name a few.

Also, Lawndale Community Academy has
members who have reached out to various agencies for
support, local school council members. Student
ISATs have began to rise, and our still on the rise.
Check your scores.

Lawndale Academy is the heart of the
community and has served three generations of
students. Closing this school means breaking a
family tradition. Many of our family members look
at Lawndale Academy as being the more house
expanding.

Also, given the location of Lawndale
academy, it is four miles west of the loop and
accessible to the Eisenhower Express, advantageous
geographic position. Think about that. It's part
of the enterprise zone, the facade rebate program,
the property tax incentive.

It's not only about closing schools, it's
about the area where these schools are sitting at,
plans for a city development. Think about it.
Think about it. I have seen the changes. I've been
in Lawndale over 50 years.

SPEAKER: Hello, how are you doing? My name is
Ms. Noel (phonetic). I am the LSE representative
for Lawndale Academy. I am here today standing to
represent Lawndale Academy. In this letter you sent us today, you said safety was your number one concern, and you would not jeopardize it for any reason.

As a parent, I am a parent of six, five in Lawndale. Two of them came out. My daughter has a 4.6. She's a sophomore and she go to college. You heard me. Okay?

So, this year Lawndale received an influx of students from the Herzl and Lathrop because of the closing last year school. Every day our students are suffering because our students' safety has been jeopardized.

By adding students to our school, they have been in consistent, physical and verbal altercations with other students. We experience several gang fights, bullying, issues because of different territories, and that's the problem we're here for, territory. If our school close, we are going to have a territory problem, territory representative.

There is a invisible boundary line that separates Douglas from the surrounding areas. To close Lawndale will result in our students directly
exposed to more violence and bullying situation.

Now, let me tell you about the different things that's at Lawndale. First of all, our school has raised up eight points, eight points from what they told us we needed. Besides our scores raising, up our composition scores also raised up.

Our family rich achievement came together.

We have many schools in selective enrollment this year alone. Last year was the first year we had less than 10 kids that had to go to summer school.

We had three students accepted into Whitney Young, six at Lane Tech. We also had -- we partnership with Family Focus Lawndale, ABC, YMCA, BB, or Better Boys Foundation, UIC, Gear Up to college Reading Programs, Action for Children, the Jewish Community.

Our school has 50 percent our families transferred to charter schools. Guess what, they returned back because our kids wanted to come back. Let me tell you something else, our school also we have five teachers receive the Driven Award, five. That is the highest award you can get from CPS.

SPEAKER: Hello, my name is Cardelia Phillips (phonetic). I'm a parent of two of Lawndale
Community, seventh grade and pre-K.

We the people of the North Lawndale area are here on a low-income basis. If we can't afford to pay our housing, how can we afford to pay four our kids' education?

They say no child left behind, but I don't understand when they are trying to close our schools. I mean, if you all taking our schools away, what would that affect? They are talking about a bloody January. Imagine what would happen if our kids are just out here on the streets?

Our children must not be put in harm's way. There is a dividing line, a turf line, that is so dangerous to cross. Don't put our babies in harm's way. I mean, there are liquor stores and people standing on the corner.

If you all want to take anything away, take away these liquor stores that's on every corner. Leave our children alone. We're fighting for education, when we should be fighting for a safer place for our children to live.

MS. JAMES: Next we have Lewis, followed by Mason.
SCHOOL: LEWIS

SPEAKER: Hello. My name is Alice Moody. I'm a grandmother. I'm here to represent Lewis School, because my other school is okay. I just wanted to say instead of closing our neighborhood schools, give our school -- give our children -- keep our schools open and give our children what they need, like they do on the north side.

On the north side, they do not have charter schools. They do not have turn-around schools, and we don't want no charter schools and turn-around schools in our neighborhood.

We need books. We need technology. We need iPads. Give our children the stuff that they need to learn with, and we won't have to turn around and close no school.

SPEAKER: I'm here on behalf of Leslie Lewis School. The kids, the students, patients, friends. I want to just say not everybody starts at the top. Sometimes it's an uphill battle, and that's what we're doing.

We're battling. We're making it. We're progressing. The last thing we want to do is tell our kids start at the bottom again. That's wrong.
In Leslie Lewis, we're doing everything.
We got art, we got music. Before school,
after-school tutoring programs, a girls mentoring program, the Black Star Project, black Ensemble Theater.

We have 30 students waiting to get into our pre-K. We have a building that's not being used because it's under construction. There's nothing we can do about it. We want a music room. We want an art room.

When our special ed teaches are having their meetings, they have do it in the hallway. We can't use that building. We don't know would they are doing over there. How can we put students in there? It's under construction.

Long story short, I want to just say we're making it. Don't stop us. All of us teachers at Leslie Lewis we're putting our blood sweat and tears into these kids. We love them. I love my kids like they are my own sons and daughters, and this is not the message I'm going to send them. Thank you so much.

Now I have little Loren here. She wants to say something also.
SPEAKER: I don't want Lewis Elementary School to close. This is where I learn and grow. When I grow up, I want to be a doctor.

SPEAKER: Good evening. We're in the church. So I'm going to go there. Hebrew 4 and 16, let us therefore come boldly until the thrown of grace. That we obtain mercy and find grace to help in a time of need.

Good evening. My name is Wanda Hopkins. I am the community resident for representative for Lewis Elementary School. I say to the Board of Education how dare you. With the amount of children that's dying in the City of Chicago, how dare you. Closing schools and consolidating schools kills children. How dare you.

The blood would be on your hands, and if it don't happen on this generation, it will happen to your children. You better watch out. Ladies and gentlemen, we're fighting demonic spirits. When you are dealing with demonic spirits, things begin to divide, and that's why they're trying to divide the communities, and they take away.

They're taking away our schools, but those who know Jesus know that we believe in positives and
multiplying, and we're going to stand firm on that. Because if we have to turn over some tables, and throw some stuff up, we're going to save our schools.

So you all run back and tell Barbara Bennett, you tell Rahm Emanuel, you ain't saw nothing until you keep messing with the west side of Chicago. We are not going to let you close our schools and just let us sit back and nothing happens.

I dare you ladies and gentlemen, the blood will be on your hands. Thank you very much.

DR. GREEN: Karen Calhoun from Leslie Lewis School, and I like to say that school is under construction. Not only physical construction, but intellectual construction.

It is a culturally competent area. We have children who are proud of who they are. They say they are African-American, Hispanic-American together. African-American and native American. They understand their cultural. They understand their identity.

They desire to be there. They love one another. They represent the beloved community.
Martin Luther King fought for our beloved community, and it's right there at Leslie Lewis school. Don't close it now. Don't let the miracle pass us by, because that's exactly what's happening right there.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS. JAMES: Next we'll have Mason, followed by May.

SCHOOL: MASON

SPEAKER: Good evening, everybody. Mason make some noise. Wow. What a beautiful turnout. My name is Kevin Fuller, and I'm here to represent everybody.

I was trying to look at the consistency at three schools on the list that I have such a close commitment with. In 1968, when Martin Luther King came to Chicago, I was at Chalmers Grade School. My kids came up and went to May; and then I'm shocked to see Mason, one of the nicest schools we have in the city. I am proud of Mason.

Mason, I want to tell you, my daughter that came from your school is now teaching in Oklahoma City. Now teaching in Oklahoma City.

I want to also say hello to Ms. Gurley. A lot of you talked about people making $100,000. I
saw what she went through. I think some of our teachers need to make money.

But it's amazing to me how can find a billion dollars, I don't know if you heard about that, to refurbish Grant Park, but we can't find money to better our schools. It's amazing to me how can find money to get all these raises to all the politicians, but we can't find money to better our schools.

When we went to school, we had things that kept us coming back. We had workshops. We had wood shop. We had metal shop. We had automotive. We had things that got us excited by school. That was taken out for a reason. I'm not going to tell you why. It was taken out for a reason.

We need to policemen back on the street.

When we was young we had nuns walking down the street. You won't see none now. We need policemen back on the street. We need truancy officers back in our school.

We need programs back in our schools. I'm going to give you just a brief history on Mason real quick. I got to use my Dollar Store glasses. Seven year straight growth. Mason is outstanding. Mason
has instituted a science program, a reading and
mathematics program that has grown tremendously.

What happened is now they took the charter
schools and they put it inside Mason. When the
charter school was only 100 members, Mason was like
900. Now the charter is 500, mason is like 500.
They're competing inside the same community.

Of course things are going to go down. We
know what we need to do. Who told you all you all
was second? Who hold you all you all had to wait.

We need to do something now.

When Martin marched, things happened.
When Martin boycotted, things happened. We need to
make a change. I challenge our Mayor Rahm Emanuel
to look at our city and the renew this policy with
education.

I challenge him to find the money we need
not for casinos in Chicago, but for better
classrooms and for better children. Are you afraid
of our children succeeding? Are you afraid of our
children succeeding?

One more thing, I'm going to pass this
mic. Not to belittle anybody, we are given more
credit now to the homosexuals than to our education
for our children. We are giving more credit to
immigrants, as they should have respect, but more to
them than our children.

We are last in about everything, except
gas prices and taxes. We are the first and the
highest. We need to make a change. Thank you.

SPEAKER: I'm Rita McNeal. I'm currently a
fifth grade teacher Roswell B. Mason School. This
problem is grieving me.

You know, I can't sleep. It's worrying
me. I went for the screening today, and the lady
said, "Oh, my God, your blood pressure." I said,
"Well, I have a meeting tonight."

You know what, there's enough people in
this room tonight to change things. We are people
that are as tenacious as a weed. We can grow
through concrete. My people -- you know, the lady
said she's from church. I was raised in church, and
it says that for now we see through a glass darkly;
but then face to face now I only know in part. I
cannot begin to know how someone could try to close
one school. That's bad.

But a 100 and whatever schools is a
systematic genocide of our babies. We're going to
take it back. All right? We got to take them back.

Persecuted but not forsaken. We are cast down, but
not destroyed.

We are a people that came through trials
and tribulations. We came through when hope unborn
had died. So what is wrong with us today? We have
got to stand up and take back our schools.

And parents, you know what, we've got to
go up fighting, not fighting with our fists, but
fighting letting the world know that our children
are brave. I am from greatness. I am from
greatness; and in that, if I got to die, I'm going
to die nobly.

If you must die, I'm going to die
fighting, fighting doing what I do best, teaching.

So, you can look for me on the second floor of
Roswell B. Mason School in 215 teaching people. Our
school has not always been on probation; but once we
got off of probation, all of our resources was
taken.

They were taken away, but you know what,
we are a people that came from nothing and made
something out of that. So now parents, teachers and
administrative staff, we are an equilateral
triangle, and no leg is any higher than the other.

We've got to maintain our schools. We've
got to. We've got to go in fighting. If I die, I'm
going to dye teaching.

MS. JAMES: Now we will have May followed by
McNair.

SCHOOL: MAY

SPEAKER: How is everybody doing? My name is
Mr. Walton. I'm a resource coordinate with the YMCA
working out of May Community Academy. I don't know
all of the political reasons or the other reasons
they give why schools are closing, so I want to
speak on what I do know.

What I do know is May Community Academy is
the wrong school to think about closing. If you ask
anyone who knows about the Austin area, they will
bear witness to the drastic improvements that have
occurred at May Community Academy under principal
Lewis.

What I know is May Community Academy is a
community school with emphasis on the word
"community." We network with many agencies such as
the West Side Health Authority, Chicago Cares,
Communities and Schools, the YMCA, Fathers Who Care,
and other agencies work to uplift our community.

And what I know is May Community Academy provides resources and activities for our students and not just enrichment programs for the students. We also have family support services, job readiness classes, career development workshops for our parents and our parent resource center.

So, what I know is absolutely May Community Academy is absolutely the wrong school to suggest to close. Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Valerie Betts. I'm a grandparent, an LSE member and a teacher representative May Academy.

I came up here to basically tell you all the statistics. They are right there. Anybody can find them. I don't need to tell you will all the statistics, just like the other lady said.

I came up here to tell you all the different organizations that we work with, all the grants that our teachers have written, all the success stories, but why do I have to keep repeating myself? That's what I want to know. I already said all these things. I said all these things, and this is the third time I'm up here, and they tell me
somebody is listening. I want to know who it is.

If I have to keep repeating myself, over
and over and over again, who is listening to me?

Who? Somebody tell me who that is. I turn in all
my papers the last time. Why do I need to do it
again?

I said this I don't know how many times.

I've been misquoted. I went on the site. I've been
misquoted by CPS. The stuff on there I didn't say
it. There's stuff on there that supposedly my other
teachers said. She didn't say those things. So
what is the purpose of this? Somebody tell me what
the purpose of this meeting is.

We are gonna find a way to be heard. If
we're not going to be heard here, we're going
downtown. Whatever we have to do, that's what we're
going to do. You need to know that.

SPEAKER: Thank you. Excuse me, everybody. I
don't mean to turn my back to you, but I would like
everybody to rise up with me, because I don't only
represent myself. I represent every single one of
the 129 schools and the other hundreds of schools
that you've closed down.

I want to repeat something I said at the
last meeting. The officials at CPS have claimed
that 100,000 of our students have left the city.
That is a complete and utter lie, people.

In actuality, only 28,289 students have
left. In that time, you've opened up 120 new
schools. Many of those have been chartered, and
that hasn't stopped.

In the spring of 2012, CPS applied for a
$20 million Yates grant. In that grant, they
explicitly, explicitly wrote down they plan on
opening up at least 100 schools in the next five
years.

By my calculations, our operating budget
is between 500 and $800,000. That can save 40 to 25
of our public schools that you have slated to close
right now. The Renaissance School Fund has raised
over $30 million. At their last new school opening
at WBZ's analysis of the 100 schools in attendance,
found 34 percent of them were at a level three
rating.

What are you doing to assess their
utilization, I ask the Board? That can save you
another 17 to $27.2 million. And speaking of the
Renaissance School Fund, let's talk about what makes
that up, the new schools of Chicago.

The school utilization committee is staffed by the civic consorting alliance, who is housed in the same office as the new schools for Chicago. I ask you all why are we here? Why are we hear, when CPS can be doing spending $478,000 that they got from the Walton Fund to do an analysis of the fiscal spending at the board?

Dr. Scott, I would like to ask you how much they paid you to represents out the facilities of the $478,000 received for these community meetings?

I ask you why the mayor and CPS is not focusing on spending on existing schools. If you can go lobbying in $30 million to build an Uno school, you can get 35,000,000 for capital improvements for many of the schools slated to close.

I stand here with Alderman O'Shay, and his introduction of a resolution to he halt charter school expansion, but he said halt that in 2014 I am asking you to halt that right now.

I want you to do an in-depth analysis of school utilization that is not done by proponents of
charter schools. I want you to do a full audit of the budget, which last year showed a $334 million surplus; and over the last four years, has shown a surplus of $920 million.

Last year, you budgeted $350 million, but yet you give us the rhetoric that we're in a billion dollar shortfall. What are you here to do for us, I ask you?

MS. JAMES: Next we have McNair, followed by Penn.

SCHOOL: McNAIR

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Mary Moore, and I'm from Ronald McNair School. I am president of the LSE. I think my little baby at McNair would like to say a word or two.

SPEAKER: I want to start off by saying don't sit there and melt, because I feel like parents. That is as important than anybody else that spoke in this room. I feel I have to stand up for what I have to say, too.

SPEAKER: My name is Marquay Sines (phonetic). I'm an eighth grade honor student at McNair Academic Center. I stand before you today with the support of my family, friends and teachers. I ask you not
to close McNair.

I also stand in support of keeping all Chicago Public Schools open. Without our neighborhood schools, what would become of our future? We need to stand together and fight for any closings. Together we stand, divided we fall.

McNair has many after-school programs. We're open six days a week, and I feel that is full dedication from our teachers, parents and staff that participate in these programs, because they can go home at 3:00 o'clock just like we can, but we stay.

We stay to learn more. We give more to our school, and I feel like they should give it back to us instead of closing our school.

SPEAKER: My name is Dabias Howard (phonetic). I go to Ronald Eden McNair Elementary School. I am in second grade. My teacher's name is Ms. Hetti (phonetic). I'm learning a lot in second grade. We are now working on division. My teacher always remind us that we're in second grade, but she's teaching on a third-grade level. She wants us to be ready. Our teacher wants us to learn as much as we can.

I stand here now for Ronald McNair, but
for other schools in my area. Please don't close
our schools.

SPEAKER: Hello, my name is Britania Griffin
(phone): I am a parent of a fourth grade special
needs student after McNair Elementary School. I'm
also on the LSE, and our schools academic priority
goals are to improve reading, math and science and
to improve or attendance.

The unique circumstances we face in
serving our students is providing additional support
to our learned special needs population who may not
be able to attend school because medical needs and
requirements.

We have a new program to address our
primary grades called reading Recovery funded by a
local University, National Lewis. We are open from
8:00 to 5:30 p.m. daily to provide a save haven for
our schools.

SPEAKER: I know there's not a lot of time, but
please don't close down our schools.

SPEAKER: Hi, my name is Lazari Williams, and I
am an eighth grade student at McNair Academic
Center. Me and my peers have been working hard to
achieve our goals. I treat my teachers like my
mother and father. I treat my parents like my
brothers and sisters, and we have been working
together to give CPS a better name. This is not
only our school, but it is our family.

SPEAKER: To be a good follower, we have to
have a good leader. Isn't that right? Let me tell
you, first of all, our principal her name is
Dr. Dillard. She is has a degree in instructing and
leading in her field in teaching.

She speak two languages, English and
Spanish. This is her second term in being a
principal at McNair. Her first term, the scores of
ISAT tests were 22 percent.

Under her leadership, the test scores came
from 22 percent to 62 percent, as far as in 2010.
Our score now is between 57 percent to 62 percent,
in 2012. This year, we are striving to have a score
between 70 to 80 percent in McNair School.

All right, now, let me tell you about the
rest of our school. This was some of our school.
Here are some of the rooms and the information that
I have about our schools.

We have 30 to 40 percent of our school is
physical, mental young people, room 129. There are
15 students that are diagnosed with autistic behavior. Three of the students have a trait they have to speak to. All right?

In the staff room, there's a teacher and a nurse and an aide. Okay? In room 110, there are severe profound students, in lifetime areas. We have about five that is blind and speechless, and mostly their body is unfunctionable. That's the love we have in our school.

In room 310, we also have students that have IEP. That means individual educational program. They are ages are 11 through 14. Some of them they may be make a great presence in this community.

I just want you all to know some of the students that are in our school, that's all they know is McNair. So, don't close our school.

MS. JAMES: Next we will have Penn School, followed by Pope.

SCHOOL: PENN

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Calvin Track (phonetic). When I woke up this morning, honestly I didn't know specifically what to say. When they were speaking, they basically said when
you get up here, talk about what your school is
doing.

Sitting here tonight, everybody has done a
wonderful job talking about what their school has
done. I haven't heard anybody speak about what
their school has done in the past. I currently
stand here with my Bachelor's and my Mater's in
Economics; therefore, I am a proud, proud product of
my school.

I also was once a staff. So, I actually
have the energy of the staff that are here behind
me, just from the passion and the effort that they
employ with the children every day.

Statistically, Penn has done wonderful
through 2010. The ISAT score at the time was
52 percent. 2012, right now we're just under
60 percent. They are talking about they are trying
to close the school because of the school space
utilization being 65 percent.

I was looking at the numbers, and I'm,
like, okay, 2011, 2012, at the time they were
requiring 510 students necessarily needed for the
ideal enrollment.

This year it jumped up about 12 percent
increase by being 570 children that's needed. Just
by doing calculations, seeing the numbers by last
year, Penn, if they were still going under the 510
ideal enrollment, currently would be at 72 percent.

So, I'm just looking at the numbers, and
I'm playing it as an economist would. Statistically
we can play biasness with numbers all day, if we
want to do some type of correlation of what
independent variables or dependent variables we want
to use to try to say the metrics that we are trying
to measure all of our children under is one
constrained line.

In my mind, that doesn't make sense,
because if we take 1,000 children from any ideal
cornerstone within the city, and we dump 1,000
children all in the same classroom, but just we're
all in the same grade level, but taking the same
classes, whether it be English, whether it be math,
whether it be philosophy, we dump their books right
here, we're going to see a pound of all types of
authors, all types of text that we want the children
to study.

But at the end of the day, we're still
trying to use one type of parameter to measure our
children on; and for Penn, it wasn't even an academic thing. It was a thing about the numbers, as far as the population within the school.

So, just for time constraint, I'm going to leave it alone, but the only problem that I want someone up here to talk about as well is if we're talking about the numbers, the population range with the school, then the attendance area boundary map that they have for the schools is the actual policy that is anti what they want for the schools.

If you are saying we can't allow children that is on a different address, a block or two blocks over, from enrollment up at a school such as William Penn, then how are we going to continue to say that Penn does not allow -- does not have the amount of children that they need?

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Barbara Garby (phonetic). I'm a volunteer at William Penn school, where my son attends. The Board had moved my son out of Penn to his neighborhood school; and after a few months of him being there, I moved him back to Penn, because he did not get the support and help he needed.

You call our school underutilized, but
this does not take into account the fact that we have 11 classrooms with 130 students that have severe disabilities and second language learners. These classrooms cannot legally have more than 15 students per classroom. What are you going to do with all these students when you close these schools? Will my son be on the school bus for hours when he is shipped to another school? Will those services and teachers be as good as the ones at Penn? We know that you're going to close public schools and more likely replace them with charters. We also know that these schools do not accept students with severe disabilities, English learners and children with behavior disorders. This is illegal.

I need to know what is their plan when you close all these schools? Will they be like what happened with longer school days where there is chaos, and there are no provisions for recess?

I want a moratorium on the school closings. I want a moratorium for charter schools. Save our schools. Save our schools.

SPEAKER: Good evening. My name is Levinia Hud
(phonetic). I am the community representative for William Penn. I am also on the LSE Board.

You have heard the statistics from every school in the building tonight. So I'm going to come from another perspective. Okay?

William Penn School is definitely not underutilized. It's utilized. It doesn't even have enough room for its own students, because it shares a space with Kip Charter School.

Now I want you to listen to this, and I want you to listen good. I'm also the executive director of mothers opposed to violence everywhere, whose acronym is MOVE. What MOVE did was put an after-school program in William Penn that involved the eighth and the seventh grade girls, it's a choir.

When we started that choir January the 15th, Kip students wanted to be part of that choir, too. Are we going to turn around a student? No, we're not. We took those students in, and they are singing in that choir. It's a combined choir.

Now, if CPS can provide the resources for Kip Charter, and Penn could share their choir with Kip Charter Schools, then surely CPS can put their
resources on the Penn side that's on the Kip side.

SPEAKER: I am not going to tell you about Penn report card because you could get it out of CPS. I am here to tell you that, yes, we have a charter school in our school, and the Board does not tell anybody that. We are not underutilized. Mason is not underutilized.

MS. JAMES: Pope Elementary, followed by Brandon Johnson, and then Pastor Robin Hood.

SCHOOL: POPE

SPEAKER: Hello, my name is Kenisha Simmone Lee. I am a former school of Nathaniel Pope Elementary School. I am now a sophomore at North Lawndale College Prep High School.

I just want to start out by saying that I attended Pope from kindergarten through eighth grade. I have been on the A and B honor roll since kindergarten.

Because of the awesome education I received, I was voted the valedictorian. My teachers prepared me not only for high school, but the real life and real-world experiences. During my eighth grade experience, we have a mentoring program.
Every staff member was paired up with an eighth grade student to insure their academic and personal success. We also went on a college tour. We went to Chicago State University to explore college life and learn what it takes for us to make it to that level.

Being valedictorian opened many doors for me. Freshman year and high school I had all honor classes. My GPA was a 3.8, and I was accepted into the National Honor Society. My first semester of my sophomore year, my GPA was a 4.3.

I am receiving acceptance letters from colleges. I have been accepted to over 15 majors colleges and universities. Ever since I left Pope, I have been able to come back and help out. The teachers are very supportive.

Everything they taught me prepared me for high school. I am a product of Pope. Again, my name is Kenisha Simmone Lee. I am because of the awesome education I received at Pope. I plead with you give all the future Pope Panthers the same opportunities I had. Don't close our school.

SPEAKER: Hello, my name is Lisa Pew (phonetic). I'm a parent at Pope Elementary School.
I am the LSE chairperson. I've been on the LSE since 2002.

My oldest daughter graduated from Pope, now she's attending college. She is in her third year of college. I have two children at Pope are honor roll students. My second grader is a straight A student who goes to our Walk into Reading and Math Program with the third graders.

So, we're here to today to say if each one of us can reach one of your guys, we want our school to stay alive. CPS is a database program. So, Pope is a result of database.

We have increased 1.6 increase at Pope. Our proposal is from 58 to 65 percent from 2001 to 2002. In three years, we have gained in reading from a 46 to a 66 percent. In math we have gained from a 66 percent to a 72 percent. We have reached our highest value added in our network in 2012.

There is no underutilizing at Pope. At Pope, at our school, we are using our space as utilized. We have a science lab. We have a computer lab. We have JPA counseling. We have American schools who brought in $1.5 million dollars in grants to enhance our after-school program.
We have our special ed education services on the third floor. We have a technology center for our children. We have a media center. We have the Rockets and Reading Program from K to 4. We also want to tell you to come out and visit our school.

Come out and look to see what Pope is doing. Pope has been on the rise since Dr. Jordan had been there. Dr. Jordan is a wonderful principal. She brought back a lot of our programs that we did not have. We have the basketball program.

Also Pope is a safe haven for our children. We don't really have too many problems with territory; but if you take our school from us, our children have to walk and go to different areas where there is gang territory.

We have our sixth grader, Jaden Jordan, who is going to talk to you about our safe haven for Pope.

SPEAKER: Hello, my name is Jaden Jordan. Pope is centered in the middle of a drug and gang war zone. Pope is a safe place to be. Pope sits among the streets of Cermak, Ogden, 19th Street and Austin.
Each of these streets are borderline to many dangerous drugs and gangs. On Cermak the Latin Kings claim the streets as their territory and their target opposite gangs who cross their lines.

If Pope closes, we students will be at risk of crossing into several dangerous gangs' territories. Children of our color are at great risk of gang violence when passing in an Hispanic gang, because they are from different sets.

Ogden which is the block for Pope is where the Traveling Vice Lords claim their claim. Pope is the centered around the Low Breeze 19th Street Gang.

If we have traveled past the Ogden line, we will be targets, because we are being forced to enter a territory that we are not a part of. This will put our lives at greater risk on our way to school and within the neighborhood school.

I am only eleven years old, and I don't want to die to gang violence. My uncles once traveled into the wrong gang territory, and they were killed. I do not want to be a statistic of gang violence, but this could possibly happen if Pope was closed, and I will be forced to go to another school.
Albany is the biggest slice of Black Disciples area. If Pope closed, Pope will be an area would become victims and a drug gang war will be sure to happen. CPS should consider how our lives as children are affected by the changes they make.

You are not looking at the whole picture of the reality of lives we live. I think CPS only looks at numbers and bills, not the underground culture that the buildings hold. Gang and drug life is real, and there have been many students to lose their lives as a result of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

PASTOR HOOD: I thank you all for your patience. I don't see no reason to look this way. I think I need it talk to you all. My name is Pastor Robin Hood, Redeem My Ministry. I'm the program manager for Cease Fire, and I've been working with Cease Fire ever since the beginning.

At this particular time, I am in North Lawndale. I'm in North Lawndale as the programs manager, which have been up and running since September of 2012.

However, I've been putting in place for
the last eight years the right people to do the
program to make the program work. I'm also one of
the founding pastors of Safe Passage, West Side Safe
Pass in particular, and we know that Safe Passage
works.

We know that it works at Manly. We know
that it works at Orr. We know that it works at
Johnson and also Marshall High School, because we
put that program in place.

As a matter of fact, our relationship with
CPS has been so great with that program, they kind
of model all programs after our program. I think
that says a lot from the work that we do.

Now, I got to say this, because I believe
in telling the truth, and the truth will make you
free, and I'm the type of person who wants everybody
to be free.

When I sat down with my epidemiologist at
the University of Illinois, and my street
epidemiologist that work on the streets, to put
together a safety plan for the schools on the west
side, if they just close one school, I want you all
to listen, if they just close one school, how
dangerous would it be.
I know we got master talk about gangs and stuff, but let me tell you something a gang can start right tonight and break up and be another gang on the same block tomorrow. We call it clicks. When I try to map out a safety plan from all this, I could not find a way where you close one school on the west side in North Lawndale, and don't have no violence or possible death for kids. Could you all hear me there? You all heard me?

Okay, I want to make sure you hear this good. One minute. I don't need but 30 seconds, and I got another closing. We need to understand this very clearly. It is a public safety problem if you close one school that is approximately six blocks away.

For instance, Penn, you couldn't close either one of those schools without worrying about a huge public safety problem. It's just impossible to do. So, I stopped trying to map it and say, "I got to tell it like it is."

Safe Passage work is good, but the way that you are trying to close these schools for underutilization, first of all, I need that to be described to me because, for instance, Penn
Elementary School, they just stopped teaching kids
in the basement in the back in the dark and brought
them up the stairs because they shared space with
Kip.

There is no room in that school. That
school is full from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at night.
So, how is it underutilized? The second thing you
need to realize, one out of every three kids in the
schools at North Lawndale are special ed children.
They are special ed children.

So, we have created public schools that
are really therapeutic schools. We have to realize
that before we make our decisions. Thank you.

MS. JAMES: I would like to thank everyone for
coming tonight giving your input. We've a court
reporter that's here that has been taking notes of
everything you said. Thank you.

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

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

___________________________
PAMELA A. MARZULLO
License No. 084-001624

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO
before me this_______day
of _______ 2013.

___________________________
Notary Public