



Jennifer Custer  
Board Member  
District 1B

## Board of Education | City of Chicago

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When I was elected last November, I felt a profound sense of gratitude and responsibility. Every decision I make as a board member is guided by the following three questions:

1. Does it put our kids first?
2. Does it support the tens of thousands of employees who serve them everyday?
3. Does it protect the long-term financial stability of one of the largest public school systems in the country?

Through that lens, I cannot support Dr. King. During our interview process, Dr. King repeatedly refused to answer basic, but critical questions about the serious financial challenges facing our district. Her evasive behavior left me, and many of my colleagues, deeply concerned about her willingness or ability to confront tough fiscal realities.

When a CEO won't say whether she'll take our payday loans against our children's future, or whether she'll spend down our working capital to cover obligations that aren't even legally ours, it's not just alarming-it's dangerous. We've seen what happens when leadership fails to protect our financial foundation: teachers get pink slips, paraprofessionals are stretched too thin, support staff get eliminated. Dr. King offered no clarity, no vision, and no commitment to protect the people who keep our schools running.

Most importantly, I want to speak directly to any board member considering a vote for Dr. King: Imagine your own child, niece, nephew, or grandchild attending a school where a student was thrown to the ground by a staff member, or suffered a broken arm and the family was never even notified. Imagine a school where the leadership allowed behavior like this with no consequence. Would you feel comfortable sending a child you love into that building? Would you trust that school's principal to then lead the entire district?

Parents trust us to keep their kids safe. Dr. King's record makes that trust impossible to uphold. While I pray that nothing close to what happened under her leadership as a principal ever happens again, I cannot in good conscience vote to elevate someone with that track record. Not when we have finalists with clean, strong, and proven leadership histories. This is not about politics. This is about responsibility-to our employees, to the taxpayers who entrust us with billions of dollars and the future of public education in this city, and their most valuable asset-their children.

For all these reasons, I will not be voting for Dr. King's candidacy.

Thank you,  
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Jennifer Custer  
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