

**July 25, 2024 Board Meeting Written Comments
Received between Tuesday, July 23rd and Friday, July 26th
Submitted via Written Comments Form**

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United Northwest Side is an independent political organization on the Northwest Side of Chicago, consisting of members and Chicago Public School families from the 38th, 41st, 45th, and surrounding wards. We're here today to express our support for the Chicago Board of Education's decision to formally remove school resource officers from all Chicago Public Schools (including district, charter, contract, and options schools) at the end of the 2023-2024 school year, in service of its Whole School Safety Policy.

We know that the Board's decision today is not taken lightly, but rather in response to an ever-growing body of research that demonstrates that the removal of SROs in schools, when combined with restorative justice programs, is connected to both fewer disciplinary incidents and a greater sense of student safety overall. These are important reasons why we support the removal of SROs from the schools that our own families attend.

We also know that the Board's decision is taken in response to years of grassroots organizing by CPS students themselves, who have refused to let us forget that one important result of police in public schools is the disproportionate criminalization of Black and brown students, students with disabilities, and other marginalized groups in our communities. It is in solidarity with these important organizing efforts that we support the removal of SROs across our city.

Finally, as identified by our members here on the far Northwest Side, we reaffirm our publicly-stated commitment to "restorative justice over policing" in our public schools. Today, we urge the Board to do the same.

2

Good morning Board "Happy Anniversary!"

Last year, we had over 38,500 bus seats available every day. CPS only used 8700 of them. March 21st, chalk beat analysis said, Many routes were over 80% empty and had less than 10 students assigned (143)

What a waste- (143) - Just to compare Louisville bussed over 60,000 students and had an average of 106 students assigned to every route.

Let's do better this year:

In light of the transportation update which is making good progress
I've got something a little more lighthearted for you this morning .

Since 1980 this system has been turning
And many minds made better for its churning

Schools worst in the nation it was once proffered
To some of the best this country has to offer

A system of tiers that while it's not perfect
Is better than others at completing the circuit (Fake cough "NY LA") 135

And many many high schools minting six figure scholars
and that's the full district, Not just SEES, Options, and Charters 129

But 10 schools of kids, stranded, bus capacity unused
With no way to school, but the soles of their shoes 123

More than 38,000 bus seats in big yellow
Less than 9,000 students routed, How is that mellow 117

You Say, Take them to school by car or by truck
It's plain to see this board doesn't give a (Cheeky look up) "Care about barriers to
access" 107

Kamalah, Sally and fellow friends
No bus, no ride and no stipends 101

I'd like to see Kim Jones behind yellow wheels
Or Charles, Morales, Shi, Fayhe Hughs? 55

Your ask is unreal more than 1200 buses
Your routing's the problem, and will lead you to cusses 49

1200 buses a capacity of 65,000 seats to wit
To transport 15,000 students, someones math is real (pause) ly bad 40

Worse than all you're creating duress
Having a system of Access by address 35

I can see now that my time is waning 31
"Speaker # 20 you have 30 Seconds remaining"

My time is short, so I'll double clutch and switch gears.
Don't add to the work of your volunteers

You've lost volunteer parents for the Time/cost of a TB test
Adding a module will weed out the rest.

I'm just a parent quoting M. L. "King"
"It's always the right time to do the right thing"

ATTACHMENTS

July 25, 2024

Dear Board Member:

Current CPS decisions with regard to the implementation of a new student transportation system exhibit a trajectory resulting in substantial unnecessary financial risk and potentially adversely impacting thousands of District students. This new system is not a simple upgrade but a complete overhaul that requires extensive training, integration, and testing. The potential risk to CPS is significant, as it could disrupt the transportation of thousands of students and lead to unnecessary yearly spending of \$11 million currently saved. A parallel approach utilizing the new and prior systems would mitigate the operational risks and financial impact. Despite the difficulties, risks, and lack of time to deliver the required functionality, CPS is not pursuing a parallel approach.

NOT TESTED—Specifically, CPS has yet to test and compare the new system's results with the prior system to verify no adverse results.

\$11 MILLION ADDITIONAL SPENDING—The new system lacks functions to generate cost-saving routes and effectively assign vendors. Without these functions, the District will spend an extra \$11 million on vehicles and bus aides and incur disruptive complexity.

NO BACKUP—CPS is rushing into the new system without a fallback solution. Delays and failures can disrupt transportation for thousands of students well into the coming school year, leading to delays, claims, possible damages, and unwanted consequences for CPS.

CPS WILL TRANSPORT FEWER STUDENTS—For the past two years, the prior routing system fulfilled all transportation requests received just three weeks before the start of school. This year, the new system is using a seven week cutoff for the first day of school, causing hundreds of students to miss the first few weeks of school.

THERE IS LIMITED TIME TO MITIGATE THESE RISKS—A transition to the new system using a parallel approach is feasible and the most effective way to mitigate these unnecessary transition risks. Implementing the parallel approach by no later than July 29 is still possible. It would allow all students with transportation requests received by August 5 to be transported on the first day of school.

Since 2011, I have provided CPS with transportation planning and operational services, introducing efficiencies that allowed the District to transport thousands more students and save the District tens of millions of dollars. While a transition to a new system is needed, a parallel approach will mitigate these risks.

Over the past two years, I helped CPS prepare multiple routing scenarios in July to ensure that all students can be transported with the available drivers and bus aides. These scenarios would be beneficial this year as CPS discontinues financial incentives and transports more students.

Coincidentally, a Student Transportation presentation is on today's Board Meeting agenda. I propose some critical questions:

1. Why isn't CPS using a parallel approach?
2. Has CPS tested a fall startup using the new system?
3. Has a scenario been prepared to ensure CPS can transport all students, including those who previously received a financial incentive?
4. Have routing results from the new system been compared with those from the prior system?
5. How will CPS ensure that all students with valid transportation requests three weeks before the start of school are transported on the first day of school?

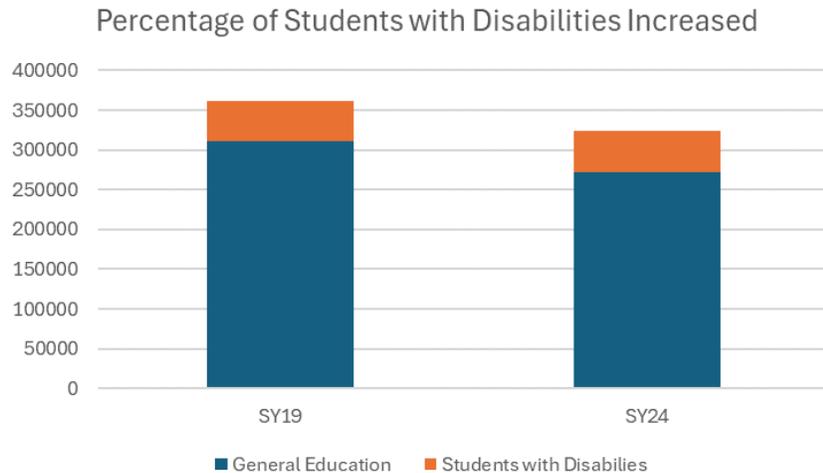
Sincerely,
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Dr. Angel Alvarez, CPS Board Written Public Comments 7/25/24

I feel every time I come to speak, you probably hear sad trombone music playing because I focus on your problems. I do so because I care.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

I want to briefly point out the progress you have made in expanding services to students with disabilities. Since SY2019, we have identified more students with disabilities, increasing the overall population from 14.1% to 16.1%. We have much further to go, including my recommendation of universal screening of all students to identify students and implement early interventions.

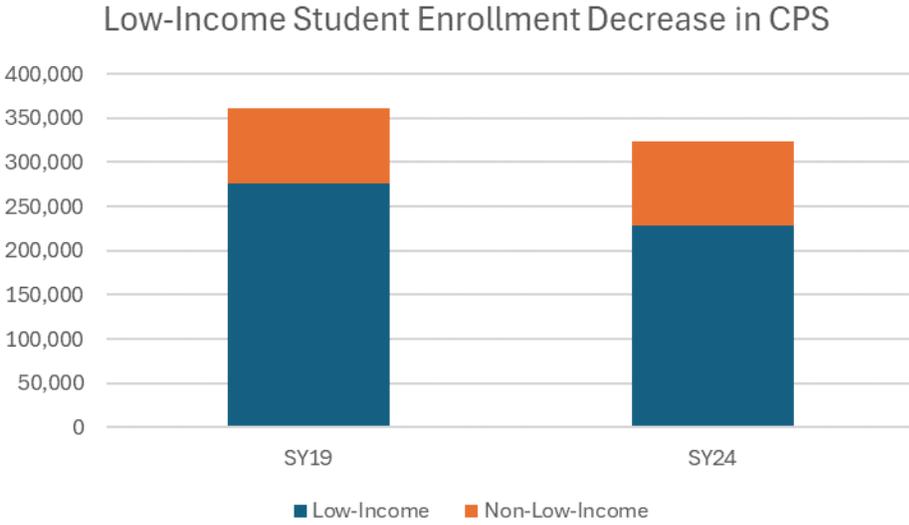
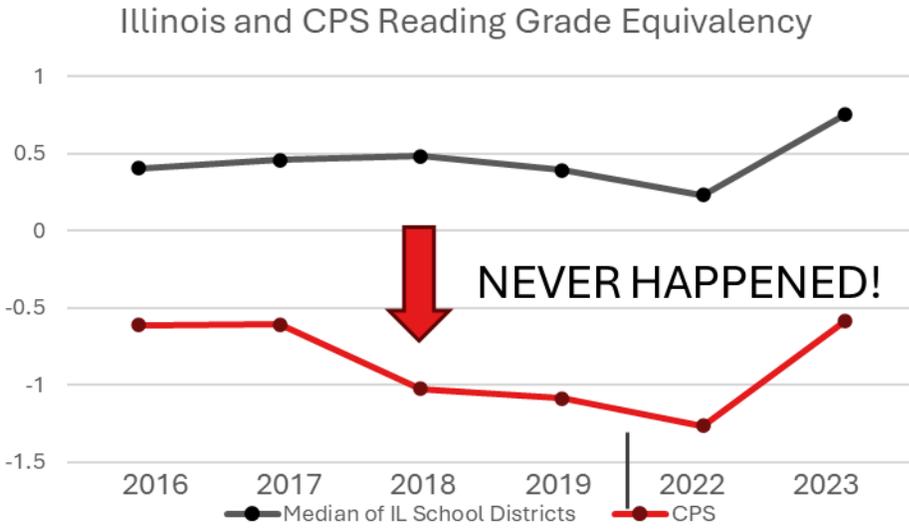


LSC

LSCs have limited input into their budgets or changes in personnel at their schools, including the transfer of special education support and custodial workers. You can't talk about empowering LSCs while denying us the ability to support our students fully.

RECOVERY

CPS is still touting the recovery, claiming students were doing better last year than before the pandemic. However, I showed you your own data last year showing that we weren't there yet, and those numbers fail to contextualize the significant drop in enrollment of low-income students.



BUDGET

You claim to have saved half a billion dollars without significantly impacting student learning. If that's not accounting trickery, why was this not done years ago?