



Board of Education | City of Chicago

Board Meeting Written Comments September 24, 2026

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Public Comments

- Andrew Martinek

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September 24, 2026, Board Meeting Written Comments
Received between Tuesday, September 22nd and Friday, September 25th
Submitted via Written Comments Form

1	Good morning! I would have liked to have spoken to you in person, but I only had a short window of availability. I am writing with a deep concern that a matter several of you suggested to me was resolved, has arisen again in our LSC elections. You may recall that last year, after a 6 month ordeal, you determined that there were improper maneuverings to keep me from being appointed to my school's LSC. You did your due diligence, determined that I deserved the spot, and voted unanimously to appoint me in a manner that honored the staff poll conducted at our school. Several of you told me that if a person is fit for their role, they are fit for the LSC and only the winner of a staff poll should be placed on your consent agenda. Unfortunately, shenanigans are happening again. I have heard of several teacher and staff members who won their poll in the Spring elections, but the losing candidate was placed on your consent agenda and appointed instead. I am assuming that this was done without consulting the Board. I would urge you to easily verify this matter with data on the LSC website. Unfortunately, all of the election results have been erased from the public facing interactive map. I have even heard of an instance where a poll winner attended their LSC organizational meeting in July, only to be informed IN AUGUST that they were not appointed in June. I can attest from experience that if these subversions of democracy are happening in a manner that disrespects our LSCs and the will of this Board, there is likely a host of other abuses, retaliations and concerns happening at the affected schools. Such actions undermine directly the ability of LSCs to improve schools and provide the budgetary oversight that protects our district from fraud and abuse. It is imperative that this Board investigate and repair all such harms related to the Spring LSC elections and institute new policies that reinforce, empower, uplift, and protect Local School Council members and candidates. At the very least take up this matter in your respective committees. If you require assistance with this matter, this CPS parent and teacher stands ready to help. I will be reaching out to you individually with policy suggestions for your October agenda. I look forward to not just continuing this conversation, but finding a firm resolution how we improve support for our Local School Councils and Professional Personnel Leadership Committees.

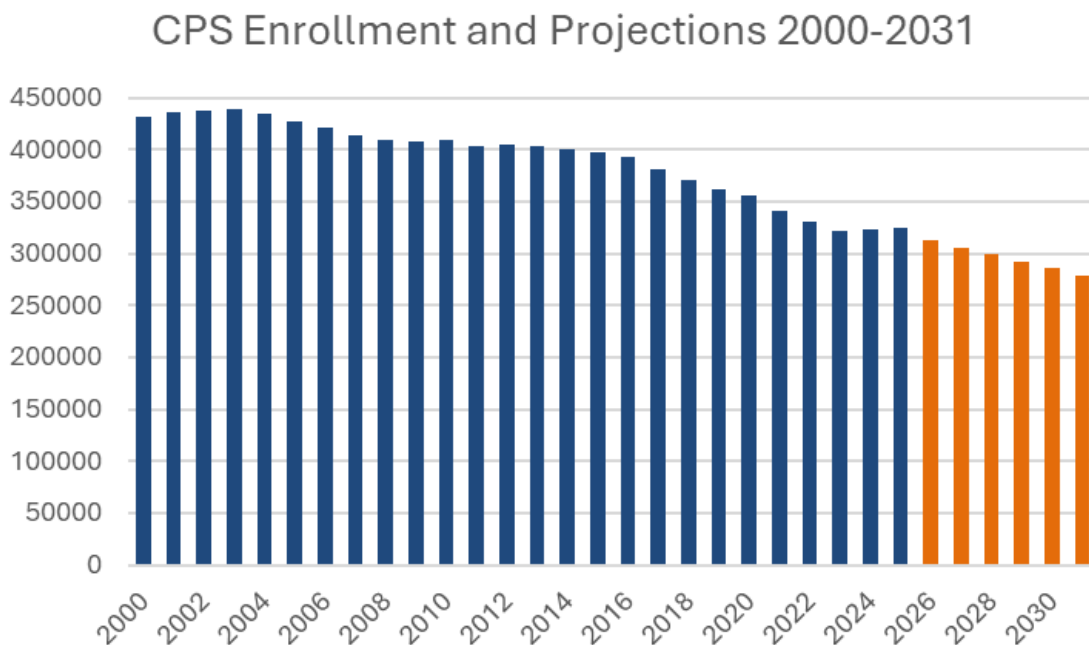


****ATTACHMENTS****

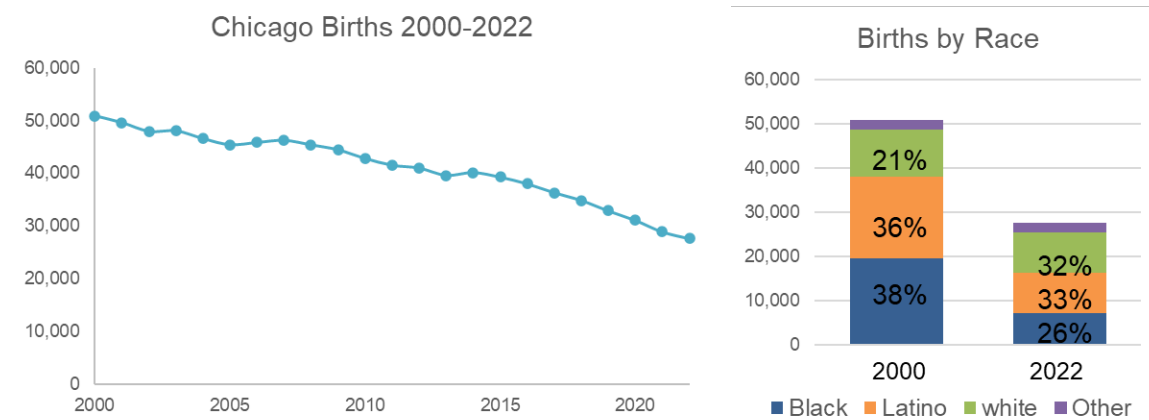
Dr. Angel Alvarez, CPS Board Written Public Comments Meeting 9/25/2026

Dear CPS Board Members:

I previously shared by concerns that CPS was going to face a further decade-long decline in enrollment. CPS enrolment figures fit perfectly with my previous predictions (see below).



As stated previously, this trend is driven by falling birth rates, particularly in Black families, as my analysis of State data shows. Given the segregation of Chicago, this will exacerbate under-enrollment in most of our South and Westside schools.



Meanwhile, costs for student support, facilities, and utilities continue to rise faster than inflation, and our deficit will only grow without decisive action.

The Board needs to take immediate action to prevent the further deterioration of our finances because the lower enrollment means less money from the state and federal government. I call on you to release your budget projections and assumptions to reveal the problems that exist. Provide accurate forward looking projections so we can protect students from further harm.

Be well,

Dr. Angel Alvarez



Chicago Board of Education
42 W. Madison Street
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear President Harden and Members of the Board:

Officers

Lance Gough
Chairman

Russell Spillman
Treasurer

James Patrick
Secretary

Craig K. Wimberly
President

Board Consultant

Roland Burris

Founding Member Organizations

100 Black Men of Chicago

Chicago Assembly

Chicago Connection

Druids Club

Frogs Club

Lunch Bunch

New Committee

Original 40 Club of Chicago

Rat Pack

Royal Coterie of Snakes

Saints

Sigma Pi Phi Beta-Boule

**UIC Male Forum /
Chicago Good Health
Group**

We write to urge the Board to fully operationalize the Black Student Achievement Committee on par with its other standing committees. We also ask the Board and District to publicly answer the questions below about the Committee's meeting schedule and implementation. The Illinois General Assembly created the Committee by law, effective March 18, 2024, and the Board formally established it on April 24, 2025. Nearly 17 months after the Board's vote, the Committee has yet to be operationalized with the structure and resources it needs to fulfill its statutory responsibilities.

The Coalition of African American Leaders (COAL) is a Chicago-based umbrella organization founded by 13 of the city's historic African American men's clubs. Our mission is to identify and resolve issues affecting the African American community and to improve our community's quality of opportunity, preparedness and outcomes. COAL was an active member of Illinois African Americans for Equitable Redistricting (IAAFER). Through that coalition, we advocated to protect the voting strength of Black communities across Illinois, including during Chicago's transition to an elected school board. That advocacy was never simply about who would sit on the Board. Representation was a means to a larger goal: giving Black communities a meaningful voice in decisions affecting the education of Black children.

The General Assembly created the Black Student Achievement Committee as a standing committee of the Board, not as an advisory group, subcommittee, task force or ad hoc body. It charged the Committee with permanent, continuing responsibilities, including:

- developing strategies and recommendations on Black student achievement and opportunity
- conducting an evidence-based needs assessment
- developing a strategic management plan to achieve academic parity
- tracking metrics and key performance indicators
- reporting regularly to the Board and the public

The Committee Should Operate on Par with Other Standing Committees

The Board recently created three Agenda Reviewing Standing Committees and gave them designated leadership, membership, defined responsibilities and meeting schedules. Those committees are Finance and Audit, Operations, and Student Success. The Black Student Achievement Committee was not listed.

In July 2026, the Board ratified the creation of the Black Student Achievement Committee, named co-chairs and an initial slate of members to the Black Student Achievement Committee, with an understanding that additional members were being vetted, and would be added at a later time. We welcome these appointments. However, naming co-chairs and members is not the same as operationalizing a committee. The Board's published structure and planning calendar include no comparable meeting schedule for the Black Student Achievement Committee. This, despite the fact that the Black Student Achievement Committee is the only Chicago Board of Education Committee created by state law.

CPS has stated that Board-level reporting and progress monitoring of the Black Student Success Plan will be aligned with the law establishing the Committee. At a bare minimum, the Committee needs three things in order to successfully fill that role:

- a regular public meeting schedule
- staff and administrative support
- access to data

Staffing Must Match the Mandate

Chicago Public Schools is a district of more than 600 schools and more than 300,000 students. It is not clear whether or not the Chicago Board of Education Black Student Achievement Committee has any staff to support the implementation and ongoing operations of the Black Student Achievement Committee. Implementing a districtwide initiative is a substantial body of work, and requires significant infrastructure. If Black student success is a District priority, the allocation of people and resources should reflect it.

Questions for the Board and District

We respectfully request that the Board and District publicly answer the following:

1. When will the Black Student Achievement Committee be operationalized and included among the remaining Agenda Reviewing Standing Committees?
2. Can you publish the complete list of the Committee members, including those who were not yet fully vetted this past spring?
3. When will the Committee hold its first meeting, and what will its regular public meeting schedule be?
4. How will the Committee fulfill its statutory reporting responsibilities and take part in Board-level monitoring of the Black student achievement?

Our Request

We sincerely appreciate that the Board voted to establish the Black Student Achievement Committee. We now call on the Board to:

- operationalize the Committee on par with its other standing committees
- convene it as soon as possible under a regular public meeting schedule
- provide a written response to our letter
- meet with our members and provide an update on the implementation of the Black Student Achievement Committee

Black communities did not advocate for representation simply to secure seats at the table for a season and then walk away. The measure of representation is accountability, equitable policy and improved outcomes for Black children. The time for implementation is now. When Black children succeed, the District succeeds.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "CK Wimberly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Craig Wimberly, President
Coalition of African American Leaders (COAL)

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September 23, 2026

Mr. Sean B. Harden, President
and Members of the Chicago Board of Education
Chicago Board of Education
42 W. Madison Street
Chicago, IL 60602

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Craig Wimberly, President
Coalition of African American Leaders (COAL)

Thursday, September 24, 2026

Chicago Public Schools Board of Education
1 N Dearborn Ave, Suite 950
Chicago, IL 60602

Members of the Board of Education,

Last month, Chicago Magazine released its Best Chicago Public High Schools list. We're thrilled to share that charter schools hold 19 of the top 50 schools.

When comparing non-selective enrollment schools, charters hold 19 of the 40 high-ranked spots. This data is especially noteworthy when considering student growth accounts for 35% of the weighted measures, recognizing schools not simply for where students begin, but for how much they learn and grow in the classroom.

Chicago isn't the only one noticing these top performers. In the recently released Best High Schools in Chicago Public School District, U.S. News & World Report included dozens of charter public schools in their rankings. When comparing open-enrollment high schools, charters account for 30 of the top 50 ranked Chicago public high schools.

Chicago charter schools also continue to educate higher percentages of students of color and students from low-income families while receiving only about 83% of the funding provided to CPS district-operated schools. These rankings offer another powerful reminder of what charter students and educators are accomplishing, and what could be possible with truly equitable funding.

These results reinforce something our community sees every day: Chicago charter schools are delivering strong academic opportunities and outcomes for students across the city. It's even more impressive that schools can do so in spite of budget constraints and bureaucratic challenges.

Charter schools are and will continue to be a critical part of Chicago. The charter community stands ready to work with the Board to advance student-focused policies.

For our students,



Andrew Broy
President, Illinois Network of Charter Schools